

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE

DESCRIPTION

Re: Winterfest 2023 Options

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report of the Director of Recreation and Culture be received;

AND THAT the Recreation and Culture Standing Committee recommend to Council their support of Event Option B over the weekend of March 3rd -5th, 2023.

BACKGROUND

Winterfest is an event that has been hosted annually until a two-year hiatus from the pandemic. Winterfest provides opportunity for the community to attend outdoor events at a variety of locations. Past events have been hosted at Spruce Beach and Mt. Dufour ski hill. Winterfest has varied between a weekend-long festival or a single day festival. Winterfest often has a fireworks display on the Saturday evening of the festival at Mt. Dufour ski hill.

ANALYSIS

There has been many different budgets and scales of Winterfest in the past. Staff requires direction from the Recreation and Culture Standing Committee / Council on what scale of budget for the City of Elliot Lake will support and what involvement city staff will spend towards Winterfest 2023 based on the following options:

Event Option A: city staff run Winterfest similar to past years with the same budget as 2019 and 2020. This event will see events hosted at City Facilities and parks (i.e. Spruce Beach) during the daytime and a fireworks show one evening during the festival. Based on similar style events, the estimated staff hours to have a staff-run weekend event is 184 hours.

Event Option B: city staff will work with local organizations and businesses to put together a community run event. Staff will coordinate between organizations and businesses to schedule and promote the weekend events. This option sees staff spending more time working before the event and having less staff on the weekend of the event as other groups will be hosting events. Some of these events will be paid, and some will be sponsored (i.e. free skate sponsored by a business). This type of structured event

allows the city to support many organizations and businesses to host fundraisers and promote their services. The city will contribute towards promoting the weekend festival. The city will also contribute to working with sponsoring some events to offer free rentals (i.e. snow shoes and cross country skis) so the community members can take advantage of our outdoor trails and services. The city would also contribute towards prizes for some events other organizations will be hosting. This Event Option B does not have fireworks budgeted as a service for the festival. If council wishes for the event to have fireworks, the contracted services would require to mirror the contracted services budget in Event Option A. We are estimating a total of 60 hours of staff time will be required with this event option.

City staff have reached out to a few different businesses and organizations and have put together what a sample of this event would look like over a weekend. A list of events that businesses have offered to host events over the weekend are as follows: Family Bonspiel at the Elliot Lake Granite Sports and Social Club, Saturday evening Red Wings game, on-site snowshoe and cross country ski rentals at Spine Beach from Jack's Bike Shop, Sled Box Derby at Mt. Dufour and a Youth Fishing Derby hosted by SAD. Other organizations are exploring other possible events to host over this weekend but are holding off until there is approval from council. Some of these events include a sponsored skate at Centennial Arena, spaghetti fundraising dinner, youth social/dance and a guided snowshoe stroll.

Event Option C: city staff support a local organization to run Winterfest by hiring a business to perform a fireworks show for the event. By acting as a sponsor to the event, there would be approximately 5 hours of staff time required to assist with the event.

Event Option D: The City of Elliot Lake acts as a main sponsor for a local organization(s) willing to take over the event and host it on their own. The City provides a set monetary donation that could be used to help cover facility rentals or specific expenses that are required to run the event. This option requires the smallest amount of staff time; we are estimating that approximately 2 hours of staff time would be utilized for this option.

Selecting Dates

After further research, there are very few weekends that are left to host Winterfest for the community. Working around the Fishing Derby, we have either Family Day weekend, or the first weekend in March (March 3rd-5th). Following the first weekend in March, schools will break for March Break. We are trying to avoid hosting the event over the March Break, and any further than the March Break due to no guarantee of what outdoor activities we could offer.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Please see the attached document that demonstrates the budget breakdown for the different options listed above.

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This event aligns with the City's Strategic Plan through:

- Provide activities and promote healthy lifestyles through recreation for all age groups.

SUMMARY

In order to make Winterfest 2023 happen, staff are recommending that the Recreation and Culture Standing Committee recommend to council that staff move forward with Option B as the event and for it to take place over the first weekend in March (March 3rd – 5th).