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**TO:** GENERAL COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT:** BARRIE BOAT SHOW

**WARD:** ALL

**PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:** L. BABCOCK, COMMUNITY EVENTS PROGRAMMER, EXT 4406

**SUBMITTED BY:** K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE ECONOMY DEPARTMENT

**GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:** Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:** M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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### **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

1. That staff in the Creative Economy Department proceed in facilitating the Barrie Boat Show through the standard Special Event permitting process but decline to waive applicable boat slip rental fees.

### **PURPOSE & BACKGROUND**

#### Report Overview

2. The purpose of this Staff Report is to present to City Council for its consideration the proposal put forward by the Downtown Barrie Business Association in partnership with Pride Marine Group that the fees for the rental of the Bayfield Marina transient docks slips and the Special Event Permit fees be waived for the 2018 Barrie Boat Show.
3. The Creative Economy Department recommends that no slip rental waivers be granted for the event.
4. In March of 2017, City Council adopted motion 17-A-041 regarding the Barrie Boat Show presented by the BIA and Pride Marine Group as follows:  
  
"That Pride Marine Group and the Downtown Barrie BIA be permitted to utilize the 20 transient slips and the west portion of Heritage Park for the proposed Barrie Boat Show to be held from June 16th to June 18th, 2017, at no cost, subject to the event being free for the public to attend and any other event requirements as determined by the Barrie Event Action Team (BEAT) being fulfilled by the event organizers."
5. As a result of the motion above, staff in the Creative Economy Department worked with the Downtown Barrie BIA to facilitate the event through the Special Event Permitting process. Several areas of concerns were noted through the process.
6. Staff were able to address concerns with the event organizer, and a Special Event Permit was able to be issued on Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> (the opening day of the event).
7. The majority of third-party operated events are required to provide a minimum permit fee of \$72.04 to assist in covering the staff time required for administration and facilitation of the event. The majority of events are also required to provide a minimum security deposit of \$250, which is subject

to increase for events that include high-risk activities such as vehicles driving into the parkland, on-water activity, midways, licensed areas and more. The security deposit is held by the Creative Economy Department and returned to the event organizer following the successful completion of the event. These funds are also used for cost recovery in cases where there is damage resulting from an event or event-related activities and are used to pay for repairs, fines or any other required fees.

8. Under an agreement between the City of Barrie and the BIA, permit fees are waived in recognition of the significant contributions that the BIA has and continues to make, to the community.
9. All events using City property are required to provide proof of a minimum of \$2 million in general liability insurance naming "The Corporation of the City of Barrie" as additional insured in order for a Special Event Permit to be issued.
10. As Downtown Barrie is considered to be a Committee of Council, Downtown Barrie's activities are currently covered under the City of Barrie's insurance policy and their events have historically been given priority over other third-party events, consistent with the Special Events Policy.

## **ANALYSIS**

11. The Downtown Barrie BIA and Pride Marine Group are partnering again to host the Barrie Boat Show in 2018. Pride Marine will draw on their network and relationships with industry suppliers to engage a broad representation of the boating industry in the event.
12. In the fall of 2017, Events Staff met with representatives from both the Downtown Barrie BIA and Pride Marine to discuss the challenges of the 2017 event, particularly as it was the first year of operating the event, and created a plan to address these challenges for the 2018 event.
13. As outlined in the proposal submitted by the BIA and the Pride Marine Group in advance of the 2017 event, the criteria of the event were outlined as follows:
  - a) Free to the public, funded by sponsorship and vendor participation, corporate community involvement, and the potential to develop the Barrie Boat Show into a large annual attraction to the benefit of Barrie and the surrounding community.
  - b) The proposal explained that the event would "help develop downtown Barrie as a true boaters destination on Lake Simcoe and the Trent Severn waterway".
14. According to organizers, the 2017 Barrie Boat Show drew an approximate attendance of 3,000-4,000 people over the course of the weekend. This estimate was based on the number of promotional swag kits that were given away by volunteers at the event, 1,400 kits total over three days, and visual estimates from event volunteers.
15. The event organizers indicated that the majority of visitors to last year's event were from Barrie, with a smaller number being visitors from Burlington, Oakville and Mississauga. These were areas targeted in the promotional campaign by event organizers. For 2018, The Barrie Boat Show intends to continue promoting Barrie as a boating destination to audiences in the GTA. The aim is to build a brand experience around "Getting a view from the water to see Barrie's best side". The event will appear in the 2018 Tourism Barrie Guide, which will be distributed by Tourism Barrie at the Toronto International Boat Show in January. The event will also be promoted in eight boating industry publications for 2018. The marketing plan includes robust radio, print and digital campaigns, anchored by <http://www.barrieboatshow.com>, and targeting the GTA. Furthermore, the event will be advertised within the Friday Harbour community, seeking to promote the show and exposing many new residents to downtown Barrie for the first time.

16. For the 2018 Boat Show, the Downtown BIA and Pride Marine have requested the use of all the available transient boat slips in the Bayfield Basin at no cost, in return for recognition of the City of Barrie as a sponsor of the event. This would mean that there is no rental revenue generated on that weekend and there will be no available dock slips for overnight rent by visiting boaters. Pride Marine and the BIA have stated that there is an intention to ensure that there are dock slips available for short term visiting boaters.
17. The City of Barrie has a limited number of transient dock slips that are available for rent by visiting boaters. There are a total of 51 transient slips (although 2 are only able to accommodate very small boats). Based on revenue reports from June 2017, on a weekend in June the average revenue drawn by the Marina is \$1768.36 from Friday to Sunday (inclusive).
18. The Marina is currently self-funded through the rental revenue generated by renting dock slips. In order to waive the fees for the Boat Show the lost revenue will have to be recovered from another City of Barrie account.
19. Last year, Council requested the slip rental fees be waived for 20 slips. Since this was a smaller number of slips, the cost for doing so was absorbed into departmental budgets.
20. In general for these types of events, the Creative Economy and Facilities Departments do not have an account that is set-up to cover fee waivers, meaning that the cost recovery for the rental fees would have to come from Council Strategic Priorities fund or a designated fund allocated for sponsorship.
21. Each year, the Creative Economy Department receives several requests for sponsorship of events or to have fees waived, including Special Event Permit fees, Right of Way Activity Permit fees and many other costs associated with hosting an event on City property. These requests often come from not-for-profit and charitable events whose organizational mandates require that all dollars raised are out towards the fundraising initiatives. With the exception of Downtown Barrie events, City organized events and partnered events, these requests have always been declined.
22. Currently staff do not have a process to assess whether fees should be waived, or a source of funding from which to offset the cost of waiving fees.. However, given the potential economic and/or community benefit that is possible with some events that could request fee waivers and City funding/sponsorship, there may be instances in which such requests could be supported. For this to happen in a fair and consistent manner, a framework is needed that would allow staff to evaluate these events, their benefit to the community and the economy, and the associated funding/waiver requests based on defined and predetermined criteria. In addition, a source of funding would need to be identified so that the total net contribution can be easily tracked. To that end, the Creative Economy Department is in the initial stages of an Events Strategy which would include a recommended framework for evaluating events that make a request for funding and/or waivers. This strategy will also include a system for evaluating requests for commercial ticketed events on the waterfront which do not make a request for funding, but which limit access to the waterfront to those with tickets. This component of the framework is in response to Council motion 17-G-118:
  - a. *"That staff in the Creative Economy Department be directed to provide criteria related to for-profit events on public property, specifying under what conditions the value to the City and economy present an opportunity for the City, and report back to General Committee."*

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

23. There are no environmental matters related to the recommendation.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

### **Alternative #1**

Council could maintain the existing practice with respect to the Barrie Boat show and agree to waive the Boat Slip fees for the event resulting in lost revenue of \$1768.36, representing the historical revenue generated from slip fee rentals over the time period of the event.

This alternative is not recommended as it would result in a loss of revenue to Corporate Facilities Departments. Additionally, this is an annual event, which will result in an ongoing loss of potential revenue for affected departments.

### **Alternative #2**

General Committee could alter the proposed recommendation by agreeing to waive 50% of the fees as listed above. This would result in only \$1131.79 of lost revenue.

Although this alternative is available, as with Alternative #1, any agreement to waive fees would result in the same outcomes outlined above.

## **FINANCIAL**

24. There are no financial impacts from the recommendation.

## **LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN**

25. The recommendation included in this Staff Report support the following goal identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:
- ☒ Responsible Spending
26. The Special Events Office currently permits a 115 events and event series including a variety of festivals and events that are vital to the Barrie's ongoing development as a vibrant community, promote community connections and enrich shared public spaces. These events represent a community festivals, commercial events, charitable fundraising events and many other different event types. Currently all of these events are required to pay a minimum permit fee as determined by their event type, event requirements, and anticipated attendance. Many of these events are also required to pay additional fees as determined by their needs including Right of Way Activity Permit fees, Building Permit fees, Parking fees, and many others. These fees allow the Creative Economy Department, and other Departments to ensure that Special Events are managed a manner consistent with City of Barrie by-laws and Special Events Policy, to ensure the safety of the public and to protect City assets.