



**RECREATION AND CULTURE  
SERVICES  
MEMORANDUM**

Page: 1  
File: R07H  
Pending #:

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: R. BELL, MANAGER OF RECREATION AND CULTURE FACILITIES**

**NOTED: B. ROTH, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE SERVICES**

**D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

**M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**RE: 1<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL BARRIE BOAT, FISHING AND OUTDOOR SHOW**

**DATE: APRIL 27, 2020**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update concerning the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Barrie Boat, Fishing and Outdoor Show that took place February 7 to 9, 2020 at the East Bayfield Community Centre. Recreation staff worked closely with the event organizer, Continuum Productions Inc. to bring a great show that “inspired, informed and entertained” residents and businesses within the Greater Barrie area.

The show drew 15,467 people to the three-day event. The feedback received from visitors at the show was positive and supportive. People enjoyed the show so much with activities such as kayaking and scuba diving in the pool, that in one instance, staff saw a family of five that signed up for the free scuba trial lessons, went home and returned with their bathing suits and towels. There were free seminars that taught people how to fish and tie fly’s. Television personality Troy Landry, the King of the Swamp, spoke about his show “Swamp People” and signed autographs. The winner of the “Design the Boat Show ad” from Terry Fox Public School, Kiley Dixon, had her picture taken with Mr. Landry on stage. From the “Birds of Prey” show, to Fish for a Trout pool and the Barrie Police Marine unit speaking with the public, there was something for everyone. MPs Doug Shipley and John Brassard both attended and expressed their support for the show through Twitter noting how wonderful it was to have such a show in the City of Barrie.

The Event hosted over 140 local and neighbouring companies that had the chance to meet and provide the public the opportunity to see, touch and discuss the benefits of outdoor recreation. Boating, fishing, scuba, and ATV companies thrived in the space and have expressed interest in returning next year. Continuum Productions reported that local companies such as Cabela’s want to be part of future shows; Cabela’s alone is looking for 3,000 sq. ft. This is a tremendous opportunity for businesses in Barrie. With the economic impact totalling over 500,000 dollars, this show will continue to grow and support the outdoor tourism industry so vital to Barrie.

Staff learned a lot from hosting this event including the impact on regular users of our Community Centres. Recreation and Culture Services received 27 formal complaints about the facility closure. Staff reached out to all and spoke about their concerns with a key issue being the closure of the fitness centre. The yearly maintenance of the fitness centre was scheduled for the same week as the show to avoid any other closures throughout the year and once that was explained, the concern was alleviated. The Hockey and Swimming organizations found the timeframe to be inconvenient and are planning their schedules around this week for next year. There were parking issues during a portion of the event, and it is proposed that next year, parking attendants ensure people do not park in Emergency routes that are located much closer to the building.



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Page: 2  
File: R07H  
Pending #:

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The Council authorization for the 2020 show included the potential for the event to be continued for a further two years, if both parties deemed it successful. City staff and Continuum Productions are of the opinion that the event was successful and will begin planning for the show in 2021. As part of the planning, staff and Continuum will ensure that the facility is more available to regular clients for fitness and pool use by not closing the facility to those activities until the Wednesday before the show. To accommodate the show, the East Bayfield Community Centre would be closed for regular activities from Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The arena portion of the facility would not be available from Monday February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The Centre would reopen for all regular activities on Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The proposed schedule would reduce 7 days impact for fitness and pool users, to 5 days impact for the rest of the Centre's users. It is our hope to host a show that continues to "inspire, inform, and entertain" residents and benefit the City of Barrie's economy.