



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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PERIOD REPORT

DATE: May 02, 2017

Report No. P&R-17-006

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Scott Hartman, Director of Parks and Recreation Services

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Department - 2017 First Period Report

The following is a report on the activities pertaining to the Parks and Recreation Department from January 1, 2017 to April 30, 2017.

I. DIVISION ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Parks Services

- There were 28 tree removal and 14 pruning permit applications submitted. All 42 permits were approved
- Park Bookings:
 - Saxe Point Park - 3 weddings, 1 picnic
 - Esquimalt Gorge Park - 3 bookings
 - Bullen Park - 30 bookings (weather caused many cancellations)
 - L'Ecole Brodeur - 56 bookings
 - Highrock Park - 1 event
- Pruned 70 municipal trees
- Removed 14 municipal trees
- Planted 38 municipal trees
- Area around the washrooms at Saxe Point Park was cleared for better sightlines
- 2 picnic tables and a bench installed at Gorge Park

- Drainage was installed in the meadow of Highrock Park
- Non-slip mesh was installed on Sioux Place pedestrian bridge at Gorge Park
- Rail fencing at Captain Jacobson Park was refurbished
- Park signage posts at Fleming Beach and Lampson Little League were replaced

2. Recreation Services

Fitness and Sports

- Registered Fitness classes continue to show higher registration numbers, registrations grew to 720 this year, up from 600 in the same period in 2016.
- The 2017 Esquimalt 5K was held on April 8th. 420 runners participated in the 5K and 100 children participated in the 1K Kids Run. This year the route was reversed and festivities were held at the Sports Centre.

Maintenance

- A number of ceiling pot lights have been converted over to LED lights replacing fluorescent light bulbs at the Recreation Centre.
- A new shutter door was installed in the skate shop.
- New LED light panels were installed in the front office at the Sports Centre.
- Curling ice was removed March 20th after the last bonspiel.
- Hockey ice was removed April 3rd after the Cougars finished their playoff games.
- Repairs to the Zamboni gate entering the hockey rink have been completed.

Marketing & Registration

- Online registration was implemented for select programs including the Esquimalt 5K, Bloomin' Beautiful Gardening Workshops & Summer Camps.
- 1,584 people have created accounts to register online.
- 10,000 postcards highlighting summer camp online registration are being distributed through Recreation and Sports Centre facilities and local businesses.
- 2,000 copies of a summer camp print publication, highlighting all camp offerings through the department, have been distributed.
- Esquimalt Parks & Recreation platforms continue to engage more followers with 4,217 followers on Twitter, 3,891 on Facebook and 972 on Instagram.
- Email newsletters continue to be well received with a 44% open rate (19% higher than the industry benchmark of 25%).

Preschool, Children and Youth Services

- Registration for next year's Out of School Care is full with a waitlist.
- This Spring Break we offered 2 Playground Camps, 1 OSC Licensed Camp and 2 Specialty

Camps. All Camps were full with 92 children. This is an increase from 60 children last year.

- Youth Services programs are seeing an average of 20 youth participating in After School “Ravens Club” for Grades 6-8 (at Rockheights School) and up to 38 youth in Teen Night (at the Recreation Centre) for Grades 9-12.

Arts, Culture, Social & Special Interest Programs

- A new creative arts pilot project called ArtLab was launched in January with funding from the United Way. ArtLab is an after-school creative arts studio for kids and youth offered on Tuesdays. ArtLab is facilitated by one of our creative arts instructors and guest artists have been invited once each month. This program has been extremely popular, averaging 22 participants each week and reaching an age group that has been difficult to engage in the past. We are offering new activities that inspire creativity, promote confidence and provide time for young people to socialize.
- The Creative Arts, Social & Special interest portfolio experienced huge growth overall, with 150 courses running and 1035 registrations in 2017 compared to 95 courses running with 670 registrations in 2016.
- Music classes grew in popularity for all age groups with 185 registrations in 2017 (guitar, ukulele, maracas and percussion) compared to 90 registrations in 2016.
- Participation in Visual Arts classes doubled, with a total of 325 registrations in the 2017 reporting period compared to 160 registrations in 2016.
- Youth participation in creative arts programming increased with 75 registrations in 2017 compared to 15 registrations in 2016.
- New courses offered in this time period:
 - Adults: Intro to colour for absolute beginners, watercolours inspired by famous artists, Latin Dance, IPad intermediate level, Intro to Japanese, American Sign Language, Flavours of Punjab Part 2, and American Sign Language
 - School-aged: ArtLab and American Sign Language
 - Preschool: Voyage en Francais for families
- We hosted our first kids art show, Dreamtime, at the Esquimalt Library March 10-31, with an opening reception on March 10. The show included 38 art pieces by 22 students enrolled in our kids Sunday morning Drawing and Storymaking classes. 60 people attended the opening reception.

Community Development and Events

- Approximately 700 people attended “Esquimalt Parks & Recreation Family Day” on Monday February 13th. With the assistance of a \$1000 grant from the Provincial Government, this free community event focused on family friendly activities. This year we included a family yoga class, family pickleball and family archery tag to our list of annual activities such as the bouncy castle, free family swim, free family skate and face painting. Community partners included the Esquimalt Lions Club who hosted a BBQ by donation, the Esquimalt Anglers sponsored the free family swim and Complete Vending supplied the coffee & tea.
- The annual Esquimalt Photography Club Spring Photo Show was held at the Recreation

Centre from March until mid-April. Ballots were available for people to vote for their favorite picture and the results will be posted to the website in May.

- Branch Out! International Day of Forests Event was held on March 21st at Gorge Park. The focus of this event was on younger children and families and included information and instruction on planting techniques for preschoolers.
- Both of the Gigantic Garage sales were a success with 25 vendors at the Kid's Garage Sale on February 18th and 90 vendors for the general garage sale on April 1st.
- Esquimalt Recreation celebrated National Poetry Month for the first time this year. A "Poet-tree" was erected in the Recreation Centre that encouraged visitors to write poems on paper leaves to help our tree grow.
- The Annual Esquimalt Lions' Easter Egg Hunt occurred on Sunday April 16th. The event included entertainment, crafts, face painting, kid's races, the bouncy castle and an Easter egg hunt. Approximately 600 people participated.
- The 5th Annual Earth Day Event was held on April 19th. This event drew over 800 people to Highrock Park to participate in tree planting, invasive species removal, trail building, goat feeding and learning opportunities provided by the many exhibitors at the event. Exhibitors for the event included: Parks Canada, Bartlett Tree Services, Compost Education Centre, FUN Society, HCP and the CRD. Partnerships that helped make the event a success were with: Simply Pure Water, Starbucks, Bartlett Tree Services, Kimoff, South Island Ferns and Country Grocer.
- Our Volunteer Appreciation event occurred on April 27th to celebrate National Volunteer Appreciation Week. Approximately 50 program and community event volunteers attended the event that took place in the ABSC Lounge.
- The Free Community Tax Clinics had 4 volunteers working to file over 280 returns for local community members free of charge.

Archie Browning Sports Centre

- The Archie Browning Sports Centre hosted 6 adult curling bonspiels during this time period.
- The Jr Curling Nationals were held at Archie Browning Sports Centre on January 21 - 29. Approximately 1000 people were in the building over the 9 day event.
- Roller Derby Game was held in the Archie Browning Sports Centre Curling Rink on April 1. There was a crowd of 600 people for this event.
- Gorge Soccer Association held their annual awards banquet in the Curling rink on April 12 with 450 soccer players and their families in attendance.
- The Military Tattoo was held in the Arena on April 22nd with 300 people attending.

Arena Programs

- The New Years Levee saw 90 people enjoying a festive afternoon skate.
- The Coast Capital Free Skate and Spring Thaw took place on April 1st. This annual event had 110 people attend; this is up from 86 in 2016.

- Sticks and Stones Drop-In Curling program doubled in participation this year going from 8 participants weekly to 16, with all ice sheets used.

II. COMMITTEES

- The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee met on April 26, 2017.