



Staff Report

Community Services

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: August 26, 2024
Report Number: CSOPS.24.062
Title: Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee Appointment for Term of Council
Prepared by: Katie Love, Administrative Assistant Community Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CSOPS.24.062, entitled "Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee Appointment for Term of Council";

AND THAT Council directs staff to appoint the current Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee for the remainder of the current Term of Council;

AND THAT Council directs staff to appoint future Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittees to continually align with the Term of Council moving forward.

B. Overview

This report provides Council with an analysis of the 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards and Volunteer Fair with recommendations that will enhance the consistency of the program moving forward in a timely manner.

C. Background

"National Volunteer Week is celebrated annually during the third week of April. This week-long celebration is about placing a spotlight on inspiring figures whose invaluable seeds of kindness through volunteering are bettering the community and our world in general. This significant celebration which was established in 1974 provides the perfect opportunity to say thank you. It also challenges us to do better and look for ways to be active participants, joining hands to impact our local communities and calling for more support."

Through the 2022 budget deliberations, Council approved funding for the Volunteer Recognition Awards to move forward. They also selected 3 members of Council and 1 member of the public to participate in the Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee. The event took place in collaboration with the Marsh St. Centre, at the Marsh St. Centre on Saturday, April 30, 2022. The event hosted approximately 100 people for a light breakfast prior to the awards. The Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee then presented a brief bio and awards to

each of the 7 selected recipients. At the February 14, 2022, Council meeting, policy POL.COR.22.05, Volunteer Recognition Program (Attachment 1) was approved.

In 2023, the Town partnered with the Seniors Network Blue Mountains to host the Volunteer Recognition Awards, immediately followed by a Volunteer Fair, on Saturday, April 22nd at the Beaver Valley Community Centre. Through regular communication with our community partners that rely on volunteerism, they have asked for opportunities to engage residents and let them know what opportunities exist. We have also heard from residents that are seeking volunteer opportunities and do not know how to get involved. A Volunteer Fair included promotion for the event and an in-person “job-fair” style engagement opportunity for both potential volunteers as well as organizations seeking volunteers. The Fair included 14 exhibitors/organizations that were able to educate, make connections and recruit volunteers during the Fair. The feedback was very positive for the first time collaborating these two events on the same day.

In 2024 the Town continued the partnership with the Seniors Network Blue Mountains to host the Volunteer Fair and Volunteer Recognition Awards, on Wednesday, April 17. The Fair was held from 4pm – 7pm with a break at 5pm for the Volunteer Recognition Awards. This change was made after feedback and observing opportunities from the 2023 event. It was proposed in the debrief that scheduling the event during the week and in the evening may be a better fit and could result in higher attendance than on the weekend. The Fair included 18 exhibitors/organizations that participated. The evaluation of this event is outlined in Section D. Analysis.

D. Analysis

On April 17, 2024, the Town continued the successful partnership with the Seniors Network Blue Mountains to host the Volunteer Recognition Awards including the Volunteer Fair. Improvements that were made from the 2023 event:

Scheduling:

- In 2023, the event was scheduled on a Saturday of National Volunteer Week which also aligned with Earth Day. This was a busy day for the community including the Mayor and it was noted in the debrief to look at alternatives.
- This year, the event was scheduled during the week and in the evening to reach a higher attendance.
- By observation, the attendance was higher, but it was difficult to track an exact number of attendees for this event as there was access from multiple entrances. Collecting this data will be considered for the next event.

Structure of the Event:

- In 2023, the Awards kicked off first followed by the Volunteer Fair.

- This year, the Fair kicked off first with a break halfway through for the Awards, followed by the continuation of the Fair. This structure was suggested through debrief meetings to encourage attendance throughout the entirety of the event.
- The result proved to be successful as the Awards had increased attendance than the previous year including the Fair. This structure gave fair exhibitors an opportunity to recognize the work their organizations do and to thank their volunteers during the Awards.

Organization/Promotion of the Event:

- 2022-2024 - The selection process for the Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee has been planned around the Council schedule at the beginning of the New Year, every year. This has been difficult to have the Subcommittee selected in a timely manner as the schedule is not always a permanent calendar and changes are sometimes inevitable. This then pushes back the award selection process and decreases the amount of time for promotion of the winners.
- Recommending the Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee stays aligned with the Term of Council provides several benefits to the program.
 - o The Subcommittee is familiar with program and there is no coordination required every year.
 - o The Subcommittee can begin event planning earlier as a group and can work together on improvements from consistent debrief meetings and engagement. Posting for the Subcommittee every year, does not give the group enough time to be engaged in the planning aspect of the event.
 - o The Town can promote the entirety of the event earlier and improve scheduling timelines to increase awareness.

The 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee members are included in Attachment 2, through the previous resolution. All members of the 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee have confirmed their commitment for the remainder of this Term of Council.

If Council chooses not to consider this recommendation, the risk of delays in the Subcommittee and Awards selection process are possible. The goal is to continue improvements to this program to provide the community with a renowned event that is highly anticipated year after year to honor our volunteers who are bettering our Municipality.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

None regarding this report.

G. Financial Impacts

\$5,000.00 has been proposed within the Special Events base budget for this event in 2025.

This budget includes expenses for a light breakfast, decorations, promotion of the event and facility rental.

H. In Consultation With

Tanya Mazza, 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee

Patricia Wright, 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee

Councillor Paula Hope, 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee

Councillor June Porter, 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee

Councillor Shawn McKinlay, 2024 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Ryan Gibbons, Director Community Services directorcs@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Attachment 1 – Volunteer Recognition Program Policy POL.COR.22.05
2. Attachment 2 – Resolutions for 2024 Volunteer Recognition Subcommittee Appointments

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Love

Administrative Assistant, Community Services

For more information, please contact:
Katie Love, Administrative Assistant Community Services
klove@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 254

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CSOPS.24.062 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee Appointment for Term of Council.docx
Attachments:	- Att-1-POL-COR-22-05-Volunteer-Recognition-Policy.pdf - Att-2-Resolutions-2024-Volunteer-Subcommittee-Appointments.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Aug 15, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

No Signature - Task assigned to Ryan Gibbons was completed by assistant Katie Love

Ryan Gibbons - Aug 15, 2024 - 2:18 PM

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CSOPS.24.062 Volunteer Recognition Awards Subcommittee Appointment for Term of Council.docx
Attachments:	- Att-1-POL-COR-22-05-Volunteer-Recognition-Policy.pdf - Att-2-Resolutions-2024-Volunteer-Subcommittee-Appointments.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Aug 15, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

No Signature - Task assigned to Ryan Gibbons was completed by delegate Aaron McMullen

Ryan Gibbons - Aug 15, 2024 - 3:41 PM