
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 20, 2002
To: City Manager
From: Recreation Supervisor Programs
Subject: Recreation Opportunities Program Update – Coupon Book

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT City Council accepts the report from the Recreation Supervisor dated August 20, 2002, as an update on a program initiative to better address the needs of individuals who are financially disadvantaged in the area of recreational opportunities.

BACKGROUND:

In 2001 Recreation Services researched a program that supported the financially disadvantaged, called the L.I.F.E. Program (Leisure Involvement for Everyone). Council approved a supplemental budget item (one time \$5000.00 and an annual \$10,000 Tree of Hope fundraising event) to develop a similar program to suit and support our local situation called "Recreation Opportunities". Research of current City support indicates that we are very active in offering a combination of services and programs. The addition of the "Recreation Opportunities Program Coupon Book" would allow us to further expand opportunities in this area.

DISCUSSION:

Due to other Department initiatives we were not able to follow through with the project in 2001 and the money was carried over to 2002.

A research survey was done on programs helping the financially disabled on the local community, the region, and the province levels. A total of 22 communities were contacted and 21 responded. There were various approaches in the different communities. Some had no policy, and just dealt with it on an individual basis. Others discounted programs and entries from 25-100% off. Some were restricted to dollars or numbers and some had no limits. There was some community sponsorship or support for programs or a combination of both. Many of the communities were reviewing their policy, and are looking to go to a coupon system, and incorporating a corporate sponsorship program to help supplement it. Kelowna has within our community a combination of several of these components, the Recreation Opportunities Program Coupon Book would fill in a missing piece in this area.

The Recreation Opportunities Coupon Book provides for a combination of discounts and free admissions to programs and services.

The administration and distribution would be done through Rainbow of Opportunities that has an established referral process that includes 38 local agencies/societies/organizations that support financially disadvantaged individuals/families in Kelowna. Each group would receive a number of the coupon books that they would disperse to individual/families on a case-by-case situation. This would support our existing system and allow the administrative costs to be kept to a minimum.

We would produce 380 Family coupon books of a maximum redeemable value \$195.00. It may increase recreation program revenue due to the fact that individuals that may not have been able to register in programs before would now be able to access them, and since it is 50% user pay it may also bring in revenue.

SUMMARY:

Benefits of the Recreational Opportunities Program Coupon Book:

- Financed through external fundraising.
- It may generate revenue equal to, or more than its value.
- One year notice on funding availability.
- No additional or City manpower needed to screen/evaluate/determine distribution.
- It will provide an opportunity for individuals in our community that are financially disadvantaged to access recreation that may not have been accessible before.

Implementing a coupon book reflects the proactive approach of this municipality in responding to the needs of its citizens.

Jean Miles
Recreation Supervisor

cc: Director of Parks & Leisure Services
Acting Recreation Manager