



Date 8 March 2011

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

**Fr: Councillor Ron Lunny
Councillor Sharon Smith
Karen Brown**

Re: KAR, LOWDC and Special Events

Recommendation:

That Council hereby formally approves the transfer of special events to the Lake of the Woods Development Commission (the Commission) effective 1 January 2011; and

That the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Commission be updated accordingly; and

That the appropriate by-law be passed for this purpose; and

That Council hereby authorizes City Administration to negotiate a service agreement with the Kenora Assembly of Resources (KAR) to 31 December 2012 to continue to provide social programming; and

That Council approves the appropriate by-law once a suitable service agreement has been negotiated; and

That the administration of the KAR services agreement be separated from the Commission and special events and be dealt with directly by City administration, independent of the Commission; and further

That Council create an Ad Hoc Committee to review the social programming services provided under the KAR contract with the intent of developing a long term plan for the provision of those services beyond the extended KAR service agreement, including a transition plan, with review and recommendations to be completed in 2011, and phase in to occur during 2012.

Background:

On January 13, 2010, during a Budget Committee meeting, the following direction was provided by Council to City Administration, as taken from the minutes of that meeting:

- "Committee directed that responsibility for funding both the KAR programs and the \$17,000 donations previously given to the three major events, namely Canada Day, Harbourfest and KBI, be transferred to the Lake of the Woods Development Commission. The KAR funds are to remain intact under the KAR budget lines, although moving KAR will be seen to better coordinate activities between KAR and the Commission. With regards to the \$17,000 donation monies, the Commission can determine whether or not these are being used for the highest and best use, and whether these funds should be allocated to encourage new events within the City."

As a result, and in recognition that the KAR contract was expiring at the end of 2010 and was not anticipated to be renewed, the Commission formed a Special Events Ad Hoc Committee to "develop a transitional and business plan for the delivery of special events in 2011 and beyond". That Committee provided their report to the Commission on November 12, 2010 and that report was subsequently provided to the new Council. A copy of that report, together with the Commission's 2011 Special Events Business Plan, has been attached for your reference.

At that time, it was recognized by Council that the KAR services contract had provided the City with much more than special events. Rather, special events were one component of a broader contract. Also included within that contract was the provision of community social programs. The original vision in establishing the contract related to community social programs was to "enhance the quality of life in the community". Independently, the City was also approached by the KAR Board who indicated a willingness to consider a two year contract extension that would continue to recognize the other programs provided through the KAR contract, excluding special events.

On December 13, 2010, City Council authorized City administration to negotiate a four month extension to the City's agreement with KAR, excluding special events. This extension was approved by Council in January 2011. In addition, Council appointed an ad hoc committee, comprised of Councillors Sharon Smith and Ron Lunny as well as City CAO Karen Brown to review the services currently provided through the KAR service contract. This report is being generated as a result of that review and to report back on the recommendations of that Committee.

To be clear, it was not the intent, nor mandate, of this committee to review the work done by the previous ad hoc committee with regards to special events. It was agreed that the previous committee had done a lot of work related to this

transfer, and there was no intent to recreate that process. Rather, the review focused on the other programs as provided within the KAR contract, although some considerations have been noted with regards to special events.

Special Events

With regards to special events, the following should be noted:

- The Commission has been actively moving forward with special events, with Winter Carnival taking place over the past weekend, and the Beach Boys scheduled for mid-June 2011. The transfer of special events to the Commission, however, was never formally approved by Council. It is recommended that a resolution be passed formally transferring special events to the Commission, and that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be amended to reflect this transfer.
- There appears to be some question as to the equipment that was previously used by KAR to provide services under their support contract. This equipment includes the tents, owned by the City, as well as equipment transferred from the Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corporation (LOWBIC) to KAR when this function was first moved to KAR. While Celebrate Ontario has recently approved funding for equipment purchases in the amount of \$75K through a partnership with Harbourfest, the remaining equipment ownership needs to be resolved. KAR has provided the City with a copy of the agreement under which it received the special events equipment from LOWBIC, a copy of which is attached for your reference. This agreement includes a provision for transferring this equipment to the City of Kenora in the event that KAR does not wish to continue to be responsible for it, as well as a listing of the equipment transferred. The Commission and KAR need to meet as soon as possible to come to a resolve on this matter.
- There remain some specifics that need to be resolved in discussions between the Commission and KAR related to how the KAR contract will work. Meetings must be held between the Commission and KAR to address these details and come to a clear understanding on how things will work. The first meeting should be held as soon as possible, with subsequent meetings as appropriate as questions arise.
- The special events currently provided for under the KAR contract are not limited in scope to the Harbourfront area. Numerous special events occur throughout the City and many of these rely on the infrastructure previously housed within KAR as a result of this service agreement. Examples of these events include things such as Norman Days and the various celebrations in Keewatin, including Canada Day. It has been confirmed with the Economic Development Officer that the special events function will include coordinating and facilitating special events equipment at other areas within the City in addition to the Harbourfront.
- With Winter Carnival having taken place, the opportunity to review this event and its coordination will be open to the Commission. It is noted

that there was a reliance on City staff that may not have occurred under the previous structure. The opportunity to work in partnership with the KAR operations, including using these resources to aid in the success of events, should not be overlooked when the Commission performs this review, particularly with the intent of minimizing reliance on other City staff with regards to special events.

- It needs to be recognized that the Commission will require some staff resourcing to take on the special events function. Work done to date in this area has been coordinated by the Tourism Development Officer in conjunction with staff intern / contract. The resource issue must be addressed to effectively continue with these services in house.

KAR Service Agreement

With regards to the KAR service agreement, KAR is currently operating on a four month service agreement (to April 30, 2011) to provide social programming to the City. One of the reasons that KAR took on the special events and related functions was to help institute a social service program that would both help clean up the harbourfront area and related issues as well as provide assistance to marginalized individuals. As such, the services provided by KAR such as washroom maintenance, litter control (including needle pickup), sweeping and security (to name a few) are not seen as those that the City would wish to RFP out, but rather as part of a larger picture that facilitates the delivery of these social programs. Also included in the KAR program is the use and facilitation of the Court Diversion program.

The concern is that, if the KAR program is not continued, the Harbourfront area will deteriorate and issues such as vandalism, graffiti, vagrancy, public urination and defecation (to name a few) will become more prominent again. The KAR program has been seen as instrumental in helping to effectively reduce these issues. Those of us who have lived in Kenora prior to the commencement of these programs can likely readily recall the Harbourfront of the past and its related issues. We are also all to some extent familiar with the issues related to homelessness and transients in Kenora, and we have been advised by the Fellowship Centre that they have seen an increase in the demand on their services in recent years, principally due to the loss of housing formerly provided by the Norman Hotel and the Adams Block, as documented by Making Kenora Home in their report on Homelessness. Other contributing factors include the economic impact and related ripple effect of the Abitibi mill closure, as well as the shifts experienced over the past few years in the global economy. Indeed, the City has been lobbying for some time now in support of the Fellowship Centre and its programs in an effort to obtain a long term and year round funding source to help address these issues. It is recognized that the Fellowship Centre is one of many social agencies that exist in Kenora to address similar issues. At a time where demand seems to be growing, it does not make sense for the City to look towards eliminating this type of program.

The question becomes, if the City sees a value in the provision of these services – services that are not currently addressed through another social agency – then a longer term vision and related transition plan needs to be developed. On this matter, there is both a short term, and a longer term perspective that must be considered as it is both the shorter term and longer term that needs to be addressed:

- **Short Term Plan**

- In 2010, Council directed that the administration of the KAR agreement be transferred to the Commission due to the tie with special events. Unfortunately, it would appear that this transfer never occurred. With the separation of special events from the KAR agreement, it is recommended that it be formally recognized that the administration of the KAR agreement remain under the City's umbrella, and that the Parks Supervisor become the liaison between KAR and the Commission for future partnerships in assisting with resourcing for special events. In that function, it would also make sense for the Parks Supervisor to be the liaison for special events for any request related to City staff resources so that these can be coordinated through one individual point of contact. As such, the Parks Supervisor would also participate on any meetings held between the Commission and KAR. The KAR contract will continue to be administered through the City CAO's office.
- The Pavilion, with Council approval, is being closed around mid-March to accommodate building renovations. These renovations include an increase to the number of washroom facilities, which will result in a compression of the available staff space. In addition, the building is being remodeled from that of a utilitarian structure, to a more visitor friendly facility. The new layout does not have sufficient space to accommodate both the KAR program and the tourism staff. Nor does it have sufficient space to accommodate the supplies needed by KAR. Originally, the vision of this committee was that tourism and KAR would share the Pavilion space on a one year trial basis, however it would appear that this is no longer an option. Historically, the City has provided KAR with space in the Pavilion to run the programs. KAR's contract includes Pavilion and related washroom maintenance. In the short term, KAR has arranged to have a trailer situated on the green space adjacent to the south parking lot on the Harbourfront. The City's Building Inspector has confirmed that the City will be able to provide power at this location and that this will be a suitable short term accommodation. It is understood that this trailer is not intended to remain beyond June 15th, 2011 and will be moved earlier if required to accommodate setting up the tent on the South Harbourfront. It is recognized, however, that accommodating the KAR programs

either at or very close to the Harbourfront area may be a priority to ensure these programs remain effective. A mid-range plan for locating the KAR program must be put in place prior to the June move, recognizing that this location may not be that of the longer term vision. It is recommended that this issue be resolved by the existing committee, and that the resolution be implemented and reported back to Council for information purposes.

- With the Pavilion closed for renovations for about 2 – 3 months, public washrooms will no longer be available at the Harbourfront. The McLeod Park washrooms are summer service only. KAR did investigate the opportunity of moving a trailer with washroom facilities down to the Harbourfront, however the connections available are also summer service only, making this not possible. In place, KAR has made arrangements with the Fellowship Centre to make their washrooms available for the same hours as the public washrooms are, and in exchange the Fellowship Centre will be provided with supplies and a future partnership has been made with regards to a summer fundraising. This is an excellent example of the opportunity to partner with other social agencies for the provision of programming and related services.

- **Longer Term Vision**

- With the KAR contract being extended only to the end of 2012, a longer term vision needs to be developed. An Ad Hoc Committee should be formed, which would include representation from KAR and could include representation from other local social groups / agencies, with the intent of developing a longer term vision for providing this program. This Committee should be given the mandate to seek out partnerships within the community that will be able to ensure the continuation of these programs, with a plan to be developed in 2011, and transition during 2012.

Budget:

The KAR Service Agreement will be included in the 2011 budget. The special events resourcing will also need to be reviewed as part of the 2011 budget process.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Both KAR and the Commission will be advised of Council's decision on this matter. Local social groups / agencies will be contacted with the intent of establishing the Ad Hoc Committee for developing the longer term vision of these social programming services.