

Council Highlights

December 10, 2007 Meeting

Town Raises \$50,000 For The United Way of York Region

Mayor Barrow, along with the members of Council, announced that the Town raised a record amount of \$50,400 this year through Town staff's annual United Way fundraising campaign. Demonstrating their ongoing commitment to the community, Town staff took part in a series of fundraising activities organized by their fellow employees and surpassed this year's goal of \$45,000. Town staff participated in book fairs, a bake sale, 50/50 and raffle draws, and rolled up their sleeves this summer at the AMD Dragon Boat Race and Day of Caring. In addition, staff participated in a barbeque lunch, dressed up at the Annual Halloween Chili Luncheon, and generously donated through payroll deductions. Council also acknowledged the hard work of the staff organizing committee, who assisted in helping with the various staff events in addition to their regular duties. The United Way of York Region's Community Fund supports 40 York Region agencies in over 100 critical programs. For more information, please contact Shane Baker, Town of Richmond Hill Chair of United Way Committee at (905) 883-5444 (From Committee of the Whole Meeting held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Presentations).

Town Supports Robotics Team From Academy For Gifted Children

Council generously donated \$500 to the Academy for Gifted Children's *FIRST* Robotics Team in response to its funding request. This money will help offset the cost of the entry fee in an internationally renowned competition called **First Robotics** that requires teams to build programmable robots to perform specified tasks based on kits supplied to them (additional hardware may be added to the robots as teams see fit and at their own cost). The Academy's team is pursuing alternative energy sources for their project to raise awareness of renewable energies. The team's fundraising efforts are also environmentally oriented, as they are collecting used printer cartridges and old cell phones for recycling and reuse. In addition, they are selling compact fluorescent light bulbs and yard waste collection bags at the Academy. The **First Robotics** Competition offers students experience in business, technology and engineering in a friendly and competitive environment that is designed to foster a sense of teamwork, encourage leadership development and engender the love of engineering technologies in high school students. More than 80,000 students participate in this competition worldwide. This donation is one of the many programs the Town supports that positively impact youth in the community. For more information, contact A.P. Crawford, Manager, Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk, at (905) 771-8800, ext. 3021 (from Committee of the Whole Meeting held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Agenda Item No. 6).

Heritage In Richmond Hill Is Not Just About The Past

Council received a presentation by Diane Giangrande, Chair of the Heritage Richmond Hill Committee, concerning the importance of preserving the Town's rich heritage. In this special presentation to Council, Ms Giangrande explained that preserving the Town's heritage is significant for defining its character, contributing to a high quality of life, encouraging tourism and ensuring sustainability of the economy and supports the environment. This was the fifth such special public presentation since May 2007. Mayor Barrow noted that there are plans to continue to make presentations like this one to Council and the community on a topic of interest once a month. Previous topics have included environment in May, Strategic Plan/ Official Plan in June, Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts in September, Technical Rescue in October and heritage this month. These sessions are always held on the last meeting of

each month and information can be found on the Town's Website. For more information about the heritage presentation, contact Joanne Leung, Manager of Planning Urban Design at (905) 771-5498 (From Council Meeting held on Monday, December 10, 2007; Presentations).

Town Adopts Policies To Strengthen Openness And Accountability

As required by recent amendments to the *Municipal Act, 2001*, Council approved an Accountability and Transparency Policy, Notice Policy and Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy. These policies, along with existing policies and practices ensure the Town continues to operate in a responsible, open and accountable manner. The Town's new Accountability and Transparency Policy sets out a framework and principles to guide the development of future policies, practices and processes related to all aspects of its operations to ensure openness and transparency. The Town's Notice Policy has been updated to define where notice is required and in what specified form, manner and time as required by the recent amendments to the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy will allow Council to delegate housekeeping and administrative matters to staff while they focus on more substantive and strategic responsibilities. Council also appointed Local Authority Services Limited (LAS) to provide Meeting Investigator services for the Town, for a two-year term, beginning January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2009. The Meeting Investigator will provide investigator services for all requests received to investigate any closed meeting of Town of Richmond Hill Council and/or any of its Committees and/or local boards. LAS was created by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in 1992 and is mandated to work with municipalities by delivering programs and products, such as the LAS Investigator Program, to benefit municipalities. This initiative also demonstrates the Town's goal to ensure transparency and open communication with the community and proactively deal with any concerns that could arise in regard to closed Committee and Council meetings. For more information, contact David Melitzer, Clerk at (905) 771-8800. ext. 3822 (From Committee of the Whole Meeting held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Staff Reports SRCAO.07.37, SRCSD.07.26, SRCSD.07.30 and SRCSD.07.27, Agenda Item Nos. 7 – 10).

Town Welcomes New Character Community Member

On behalf of Council, Mayor Dave Barrow presented Community Living – York South with a special Character Community welcome package. Community Living – York South supports people with intellectual disabilities and helps them to live, learn, work and participate in their community. The organization supports individuals and their families through programs such as community outreach, participating in government-funded programs and conducting seminars and presentations relating to planning for the future, education, transition planning and sibling support. The Town currently has 33 Character Community Organizations registered. The Town of Richmond Hill has been a leader in the Character Community Initiative, receiving the "Community of Character" award last year at York Region's first annual Character Community Awards. Since becoming a Character Community, the Town has successfully promoted the initiative to staff and the community at large with events, guest speakers, a monthly e-letter, networking nights, Town vehicle decals, and logo printing on all Town Blue Boxes and Green Bins. A Character Community is one in which elected officials, community leaders and citizens-at-large recognize and promote the importance of good character by nurturing positive character attributes. For more information, contact Risa Healey, Character Community Committee Co-chair at (905) 771-5489 (From Committee of the Whole Meeting held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Presentations).

Winter Fun At 2008 Richmond Hill Winter Carnival

Council proclaimed the week of January 28 – February 3, 2008 to be Richmond Hill Winter Carnival Week. Council has also approved that skydivers will be allowed to jump from airplanes and land on the Mill Pond surface at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 2, 2008 and Sunday, February 3, 2008. Residents are reminded that Mill Street will be closed from Trench Street to Sugar Maple Lane on Friday, February 1, 2008 at 11 a.m. to Sunday, February 3, 2008 at 5 p.m. and appropriate barriers will be placed at the Mill Pond for the Winter Carnival weekend. Residents are encouraged where possible to take public transit, carpool or walk to the Carnival as parking is very limited. They are also asked to leave their Christmas lights on for Carnival Week to add to the festive atmosphere. For its part, the Town's Christmas lights and lights on the Town Christmas tree will also be left on throughout the Winter Carnival weekend. For more information, contact A.P. Crawford, Deputy Clerk at (905) 771-8800, ext. 3021 (From Council Meeting held on Monday, December 10, 2007; Staff Report SRCSD.07.31, Agenda Item No. 7).

Town Seeks Grant for Solar Water Heating

Council endorsed staff's intention to seek funding for the solar water heating project at the Town's main Municipal Offices at 225 East Beaver Creek Road, which was approved as part of the 2007 capital budget. The Town could potentially receive funding for the project under Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) *ecoEnergy for Renewable Heat* grant program, which offers incentives to the industrial/commercial/institutional sector to install active energy-efficient solar air and/or water heating systems. In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Energy has recently agreed to match the funding offered by NRCan through its Ontario Solar Thermal Heating Incentive Program. As a result, the combined grant program has the potential to provide an incentive of approximately \$27,500 towards the project (50 per cent of the eligible costs) with the Town contributing the remaining \$27,500. This application is part of the Town's Grant & Funding Strategy, of which, Environmental Management has been identified as a priority area. The Town of Richmond Hill is already considered a leader in municipal environmental practices through its programs to manage corporate impacts on the environment. The availability of grants and funding has the potential to advance the Town's efforts to ensure a sustainable community. For more information, contact Dan Olding, Manager of Grants and Strategic Initiatives, at (905) 771-8800, ext. 5505 (from Committee of the Whole held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Staff Report SRCAO.07.044; Agenda Item No. 29).

\$9.5 Million of 2008 Capital Budget Pre-Approved

Council approved funding in the amount of approximately \$9.5 million in the 2008 capital budget for road, watermain and sewermain projects as well as for purchasing vehicles and equipment. The 2008 Budget process is expected to be completed in spring 2008, but these items have been pre-approved at this earlier stage to achieve anticipated openings, construction schedules and achieve financial savings. Pre-approval of the budget for the road, watermain and sewermain projects are necessary to capitalize on the Town being in the most competitive tendering environment possible (usually with savings of more than 10 per cent), as one of the first GTA municipalities to tender its major municipal infrastructure projects early in the year. Early tendering also allows the Town to commence construction in the spring, as soon as the frost is gone, resulting in substantial completion of the projects by the summer. In addition, pre-approving the budget for

vehicles and equipment will ensure their timely delivery and ensure a high level of service for the appropriate season. For more information, contact David Dexter, Director of Financial Services at (905) 771-8800, ext. 3656 (From Budget Committee of the Whole meeting held on Monday, December 3, 2007; Staff Report SRFIN.07.063, Agenda Item No. 3.1).

The next Committee of the Whole Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 7, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. and the next Council Meeting is Monday, January 14, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. Both of these meetings will be held in Council Chambers.

This document was produced by the Communication Services Division staff at the Town of Richmond Hill. The contents of this summary are intended to be for information purposes only. The actual text of Council resolutions can be found on the Town's Website. Copies of staff reports and other correspondence can be obtained from the Council Support Services/Town Clerk Division.