

NO: **R081**

COUNCIL DATE: **MAY 12, 2014**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **May 5, 2013**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture** FILE: **0760-20/CH**

SUBJECT: **Community Meeting Rooms – City Hall**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommend that Council:

1. receive this report as information;
2. direct staff to waive the base rental fees for City Hall 1E and 2E Meeting Rooms until April 30, 2015; and
3. direct staff to administer the rental processes for the community spaces at City Hall as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the community access to meeting room space at City Hall and to obtain approval to waive base rental fees for the City Hall 1E and 2E Meeting Rooms for a one-year period.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council Meeting on April 14, Council requested an update on the status of community access to meeting rooms at City Hall. This report has been prepared in response to Council's request. It also outlines the opportunities for community access to other amenities in the facility.

City Hall is designed to create an open and accessible facility in City Centre that contributes to the vibrancy and engagement of the community. The meeting room spaces, City Room (Atrium), Council Chambers – Centre Stage and City Hall Plaza are all designed to enable community access. With City Hall in the heart of the City Centre, it is a very desirable location to book meetings and events by community associations, non-profit organizations and the business sector. The following is an overview of the different spaces available to be booked:

1. 1E Meeting Rooms – 2 spaces which may be booked as 2 medium-size meeting rooms (approximately 30-75 people per room) or as a single large room (approximately 70-120 people).

2. 2E Meeting Rooms - 2 spaces which may be booked as 2 medium-size meeting rooms (approximately 30-75 people per room) or as a single large room (approximately 70-120 people).
3. The Council Chambers have been designed to convert from a configuration that supports the business of a formal Council meeting to a 200 seat performing arts venue with theatre quality sound and lighting. Meeting rooms adjacent to Council Chambers can be booked to provide support space (such as dressing rooms) for performances.
4. The City Room (Atrium) is designed to host a variety of City business functions and is also available for community rental.
5. The City Hall Plaza has been designed to host a variety of special events. Some events will be produced by the City, such as *Party for the Planet* and the annual *Tree Lighting Festival*. The Plaza can also be booked by the community to host events. This summer the Surrey Farmer's Market will take place in the Plaza on Wednesday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. A number of other activations are in the planning stages for this summer.

DISCUSSION

Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) staff are responsible for the community booking of spaces at City Hall. PRC staffs are well positioned to manage the room and event bookings as they also manage community bookings at a wide variety of recreation and cultural facilities across the City. Their efforts are coordinated with the Clerk's Office, Facilities and Security, who provide a range of support services.

When accepting bookings for these spaces, staff prioritize the bookings in the following order:

1. Council Meetings and the meetings of Council Committees e.g., Diversity Advisory Committee, Senior Advisory and Accessibility Committee etc.;
2. City business; and
3. Community bookings with first priority given to Surrey-based non-profit organizations.

Booking of the Community Meeting rooms can be arranged by calling a **Booking Clerk at 604-598-5769**. The bookings are then coordinated with the appropriate contacts at City Hall to ensure the facilities are fully functional and meet the needs of the rental group.

The PRC Booking Guidelines will be generally utilized in the management of bookings at City Hall.

Rental Rates

Council annually approves the fees and charges for rental space at City facilities. The Council Chamber – Centre Stage and City Room (Atrium) were formally added to the fee schedule by-law for 2014 in the February 18, 2013 Council meeting. The City Hall 1E and 2E meeting rooms were not specifically identified in the room rental schedule at that time because a number of details were still being confirmed.

In order to promote the availability of the City Hall 1E and 2E meeting rooms and to encourage community utilization of these meeting rooms, it is proposed that base rental fees for these rooms be waived for a one-year period ending April 30 2015.

It is important to note that bookings of the City Hall 1E and 2E meeting rooms outside of Normal Hours (8 AM – 5 PM, Monday to Friday) may result in additional costs to the group renting the space, due to issues such as additional security or facility attendants, extra janitorial services, set up and take down, and audio visual costs. Groups wishing to use these rooms outside of Normal Hours will apprise in advance of any extra cost that would be charged.

The booking of the Plaza requires a standard Park Permit. However, events may vary tremendously in size and scope; therefore, additional charges for access to power, water hook-ups and other event-specific requirements will be negotiated for each event in advance of the bookings being finalized. Large events on the Plaza are also reviewed by the City's Festival and Events Support Events Team (FEST) which is administered by PRC.

Additional Services

With respect to audio visual standards, the rooms are provided with screens but additional audio visual requirements are the responsibility of the user group, unless alternative arrangements are made in advance through City staff.

The PRC Department has been promoting the Council Chamber – Centre Stage and City Room opportunities. Numerous organizations have expressed interest in the space; a list of these organizations is attached as Appendix I. There are currently 16 days of rentals confirmed for Centre Stage between May 1 to November 28 and 15 days for the City Room. Now that the facility is fully functional, it is anticipated that additional bookings will be confirmed in the coming months. Rental opportunities are outlined on the City's web-site.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

By allowing local business and community use of City Hall, Surrey will be advancing elements of the Sustainability Charter in relation to the development of a vibrant downtown core and engaged community.

Surrey's Sustainability Charter states: Surrey will be home to the Region's Second Downtown, Surrey will be the Fraser Valley's metropolitan centre, connected to major regional destinations by rapid transit and an efficient and road network designed to support economic activity. The City Centre will be a welcoming home to a diverse population and be on of North American's most sustainable downtowns.

City Hall will be utilized by the community for many purposes. The spaces have been designed to encourage the cultural performances and engagement. In that regard, Surrey's Sustainability Charter states: "Surrey has a network of widely accessible community health and social services, parks, recreation, library and cultural opportunities that promote wellness and active living. The City embraces its cultural diversity and promotes tolerance, social connections and a sense of belonging."

The Charter further states: “*Cultural activities are recognized as an important way for individuals to contribute to their communities. Culture is an essential tool in understanding the values, shared meanings and goals of residents in a community. Wide, inclusive participation in cultural activities contributes to community vitality and supports sustainability.*”

The community use of City Hall assists in achieving the socio-cultural objectives in the City’s Sustainability Charter through:

- Goal SC4: Cultural Awareness in the Community;
- Goal SC6: Accessible and Appropriately located Services within the City;
- Goal SC8: Municipal Outreach, Public Education and Awareness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above information it is recommended that Council:

1. receive this report as information;
2. direct staff to waive the base rental fees for City Hall 1E and 2E Meeting Rooms until April 30 2015; and
3. direct staff to administer the rental processes for the community spaces at City Hall as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix I – Organizations Expressing Interest/Potential Bookings

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Centre Stage and/or City Room

A.C.M.E. Arts Society

Arts Umbrella

BC Ukrainian Cultural Festival Society

British Columbia Girls Choir Society

Child Development Foundation of BC

Classic Steps Stage Productions

Cellar Jazz Vancouver

Diwali Fest

Downtown Surrey BIA

EJS School of Fine Art

Rimsky-Korsakov String Quartet (Eugene Skovorodnikov)

Fraser Valley Gilbert and Sullivan Society

Handel Society of Music

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Lyric Singers

Naad Foundation - NAAD Centre for Performing & Visual Arts

Peninsula Productions (full name is Peninsula Productions Society)

Praise T.E.A.M. Studio

PuSh International Performing Arts Festival

Royal Canadian Theatre Company

South Asian Arts Society (SAA)

South Fraser Branch - Registered Music Teachers Association

SOFIA Collective

Southeast Asian Cultural Heritage Society (SEACHS)

Surrey Centre Library

Surrey Symphony Society - Surrey Youth Orchestra

Surrey Tourism

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (Chamber Series)

Vancouver Opera (Opera Train and Youth Touring Productions)

Youth Arts Council of Surrey

Total: 29¹

¹ An additional 48 organizations have requested and received information via email/mail.
mail/mail.