



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Service Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Special Fund Request for Coldest Night of the Year Walk
Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board
Report Date: 2025-01-14

Recommendation(s)

That the Niagara Police Service Board (Board) approves a special fund request of \$2,000.00 for the sponsorship of one to two teams of Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) members to participate in the Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk benefiting Project Share and Start Me Up Niagara.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval for a \$2,000.00 Special Fund donation for one to two teams of NRPS members to participate in the Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk.
- This walk is a fundraiser for agencies assisting those who are homeless or suffering from food insecurity. Walks are being held across the Region and our goal will be to have a team participate in both St Catharines and Niagara Falls.
- This event takes place on Saturday, February 22, 2025 starting at 4:00pm. The walk in St. Catharines will benefit Start Me Up Niagara and the walk in Niagara Falls will benefit Project Share with the \$2,000.00 donation being split evenly between them.

Financial Considerations

The Board has a discretionary pool of funds, which it uses for grants and donations. Disbursements from the fund are in accordance with guidelines provided in the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), and with Board By-law 403-2024, Administration, Limitations and Guidelines of the Special Fund. Section 258 (2) of the CSPA establishes that the Niagara Police Service Board has the sole authority for spending the proceeds from the sale of property which lawfully comes into the possession of the police service. The Act stipulates that "the Chief of Police may cause the property to be sold, and the Board may use the proceeds for any purpose that it considers in the public interest, including charitable donations." These funds do not form part of the police operating budget and are separate from the Regional tax base.

If this request is approved by the Board, the cheque can be made payable to the Niagara Regional Police Service.

Analysis

The Coldest Night of the Year fundraising walk is a national fundraising opportunity in support of local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness. This event was first held in 2011 and since then has raised over \$75,000,000.00 from 190 communities across Canada; 100% of profits stay with local outreach agencies.

The walk takes place through the dark and cold in February each year to declare concern for people who have no home and take shelter outdoors, understanding that anyone can lose their footing and then lose everything else. The goal of the organization is to bring those affected closer to safety, health, and home.

Project Share is located in Niagara Falls and has been providing emergency support services to residents of Niagara Falls for over 30 years. Project Share mainly focuses on providing emergency food to those in need, helping an average of 120 families per day. The walk in Niagara Falls will support this vital agency.

Start Me Up Niagara is located in St. Catharines and works with individuals facing significant life challenges such as compromised mental health, addictions, poverty, homelessness and unemployment. Their goal is to be part of a society where all people are included, healthy and self-sufficient. The walk in St Catharines will support this outreach agency.

As the NRPS Community Oriented Response and Engagement (CORE) Unit works closely with both of these agencies and their clients on a daily basis, participating in this fundraising walk will show our continued support in achieving their goals. A Service wide notification will be sent out, inviting anyone from the Service to join and participate in this event which will serve to increase our internal awareness of these agencies.

Alternatives Reviewed

To not support this request or consider supporting it with an alternative donation amount.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

This is a community engagement event where members of the NRPS will interact with the community and provide support to local partner agencies.

This program also aligns with the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, Goal 2: Community Engagement and Collaboration - Objective 1.0 To strengthen relationships and build trust with our community by giving members of the Niagara Regional Police Service the

opportunity to participate in events that enhance the image of the Service and its members in our community and with our partners.

Relevant Policy Considerations

Board By-Law 403-2024 – Special Fund Administration, Limitations and Guidelines.

Other Pertinent Reports

Not applicable.

This report was prepared by Jeff Bootsma, Staff Sergeant, Community Engagement, and reviewed by Murray Haday, A/Inspector, #2 District, and reviewed by A/Superintendent Rob LaPlante. Recommended by Mario Lagrotteria, Acting Deputy Chief, Community Services.



Submitted by:

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Chief of Police

Appendices

Not applicable.