

# REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

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## RE: Summary of Decisions from October 20, 2017 and November 17, 2017 Commission Meetings

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

For the information of the Commission.

### OVERVIEW

Below is a synopsis of the resolutions that were passed at the Commission meetings of October 20, 2017 and November 17, 2017:

#### October 20, 2017 Commission Meeting

##### **Niagara Parks' 2018 – 2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

That the Commission approves the Niagara Parks' 2018 – 2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan attached as Appendix A.

##### **Rates & Fees for 2018 and 2019**

That the Finance & Audit Committee recommend that the Commission approve the proposed 2018 and 2019 pricing to products as outlined in Appendix A.

##### **Boat Tour Lease & Operating Agreement – Early Commencement Request to 2018 Operating Season**

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that the Commission:

- a) Receive correspondence from Hornblower Niagara Cruises (HNC), dated October 3, 2017, attached as Appendix A, representing HNC's request for consideration of an early commencement of the 2018 boat tour operating season;
- b) Approve the boat tour operating season as March 28 – November 30, 2018;
- c) Direct staff to inform HNC that the approval for the early commencement is for the 2018 operating season only; and
- d) Authorize NPC's legal counsel to document the above approval in accordance with the Boat Tour Lease and Operating Agreement for execution by the Chair and Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the NPC.

##### **Fort Erie Friendship Festival**

That the Finance & Audit Committee recommend that the Commission:

- a) Approve waiving the venue fees for the 2017 Fort Erie Friendship Festival in the amount of \$6,300 as outlined in the contract with the Festival;
- b) Approve waiving the venue fees for the 2018 Fort Erie Friendship Festival in the amount of \$12,600; and,

- c) Direct staff to request a Strategic Plan from the Fort Erie Festivals Board that addresses future plans for the Fort Erie Friendship Festival including:
  - a. Size of the event, target audience, overall objectives
  - b. Revenue opportunities including community support
  - c. Expense efficiencies
- d) All future applications will be governed by the new NPC Events Policy

### **November 17, 2017 Commission Meeting**

#### **NPC Cycling Strategy and Bike Share Rental Opportunities**

That the Property and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the Commission:

1. Direct staff to develop a cycling strategy for the Niagara Parks Commission and report back to the Property and Infrastructure Committee by January 2018; and,
2. Authorize staff to explore options for the Commission's consideration for bike-share programs, including opportunities with Metrolinx, and report back to the Property and Infrastructure Committee in January 2018.

#### **New Service Road Construction – Accessing Developing Charges for Construction Costs**

That the Property and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the Commission:

1. Receive this report for information.
2. Direct staff to pursue investigation of alternative funding options for service road construction including voluntary payments in lieu of taxes with the assistance of Faskens.

#### **Power Plant Gap Analysis and Project Updates**

That the Property and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the Commission:

1. Direct the Chair and Chief Executive Officer to begin discussions with the Government of Ontario regarding the financing and phasing of stabilizing and potential future uses of the power plants; and,
2. Approve the adjustments to the timeline in the project charter.

#### **Willoughby Museum Licence Agreement**

That the Property and Infrastructure Committee recommend to the Commission to:

1. Approve the renewal of a licence agreement with the City of Niagara Falls for the use of Niagara Parks property located at 9935 Niagara River Parkway, known as the Willoughby Museum; and,
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Executive Officer to execute the licence agreement for a period of five (5) years from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022.

## **Ramsar Designation of the Niagara River Update**

That the Commission:

1. Receive this report as information only as an update to the Ramsar designation of the Niagara River.
2. Direct Chair Thomson to follow-up with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Chair to request a response to NPCA's correspondence regarding NPCA's updated position on this matter.

## **Risk Assessment Evaluation**

That the Governance, Ethics, and Human Resources Committee recommends that the Commission:

Approve the Risk Report attached as Appendix A to this report for submission to the Province.

## **Code of Conduct and Disclosure Procedures Review**

That the Governance, Ethics & Human Resources Committee recommends that the Commission:

Subject to the Committee's review, endorse the updated Code of Conduct, with amendments to reflect the title change from General Manager to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Presented by Chief Executive Officer:

Reegan McCullough \_\_\_\_\_



Date: December 12, 2017



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# **BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS REPORT**

DECEMBER 2017

COMMISSION MEETING

## Research & Development

- Culinary Services' Managers and Chefs continue to review data collected from Aloha to analyze past season results in support of menu development for the 2018 season.
- Wedding and Social Sales Managers attended the First Look Wedding Show hosted by Vineyard Bride at Hare & Co Winery and the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) is being considered to host a future show which attracts clientele from Toronto, Hamilton and Niagara.
- Emerald Ash tree removal and clean-up is continuing at Legends on the Niagara and Whirlpool Golf Courses.
- Old Fort Erie played host to a public information centre on the history of Bertie Hall. NPC's Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report process includes meeting with members of the community to record their views on the attributes and importance of our historic sites.
- Parks staff attended Gage Park Chrysanthemum Show in Hamilton to view the design and production of the mums as well as receive a tour of their facilities. This was a great opportunity for staff to network and exchange ideas.
- Students from Niagara College's Ecosystem Restoration post graduate program will be working on a project to identify and prioritize potential environmental restoration project sites in the South boulevards.
- Parks Waste & Recycling staff attended the Waste & Recycling Expo at the Scotia Bank Convention Centre to learn about new technology, meet suppliers and network.

## Human Resources

- Inspector Paul Forcier attended Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Level 2 training in Mississauga, Ontario from November 6-9.
- Parks staff attended training courses, workshops and conferences including Toronto Ravine Symposium, Ontario Trails Council webinar, and Working at Heights.
- Parks staff attended Centre for Applied Science in Ontario Protect Areas conference (CASIOPA) which focused on stewardship activities and research throughout Ontario's parks and protected areas.
- The Parks department has successfully recruited and filled the positions of Gardener/Operator and Arborist.

- Human Resources staff attended department meetings to provide support to business partners for organizational design, restructuring, succession, performance management, investigations, and employee engagement.
- Human Resources staff has commenced the process of reviewing and documenting procedures as the result of new technology implementations.
- The fall Town Hall meeting was conducted and 2017 employee awards were presented.
- A review of the Performance Appraisal process was completed.
- The Applicant Tracking System was reviewed and a number of improvements were made for 2018.
- Human Resources attended a series of staff and consultant meetings for the Table Rock Redevelopment project.
- An Employee Relations Committee meeting was held with OPSEU, Local 217 to discuss a number of labour issues.
- Staff attended the monthly Safety Group Advantage Program meeting to participate in project work related to continuous improvement of NPC's health and safety program.
- The annual Accessibility Public Consultation meeting was held to review NPC accomplishments in 2017 and to outline the new five-year Accessibility plan.
- The annual review of NPC's Code of Conduct was undertaken.
- Preparations were made for upcoming collective agreement negotiations with OPSEU, Local 217-Park Employees.
- Research and analysis was undertaken regarding the introduction of new and changing legislation related to the Employment Standards Act, Cannabis, Smoke-free Ontario and Road Safety Statute Amendment Act and the Public Service of Ontario Act.
- A training program was developed for Effective Report Writing.
- Curriculum and course arrangements were completed for Management and Supervisory training sessions to commence in January through Brock University's Goodman School of Business.
- Staff reviewed a new Analytics Module through ADP.
- Mental Health First Aid training was conducted for managers, supervisors and other interested staff.

- Staff assisted in the coordination of workshops for the Parks, Planning and Properties department related to 2018 operations and new strategic plan requirements.
- Human Resources staff began work with departments on various change management strategies related to the new strategic plan. Strategies include Change Management training plans, communication plans related to new projects, Corporate Values Testing and restructuring initiatives to improve efficiency.

### Partnerships

- On November 6, Niagara Parks and Niagara Falls Tourism jointly sponsored the Welcome Reception of the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario's 2017 Ontario Tourism Summit at the upper level of the Table Rock Complex. Elements on the Falls showcased Niagara purveyors of food, VQA wine and craft beer. Niagara's Fury and Journey Behind the Falls were open to all conference delegates. Attendees were greeted by members of the Niagara Parks Police Service Ceremonial Honour Guard.
- The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Niagara Parks Apprentice Showcase and Chefs dinner was held on November 2 at Queenston Heights Restaurant. Joseph Arcuri from Elements on the Falls Restaurant was the recipient of this year's Apprentice of the Year award and was presented with a professional knife kit donated by the Canadian Food and Wine Institute of Niagara College.
- Sales Staff attended the following:
  - October 22-26 – Bienvenue Quebec, Laval, Quebec
  - October 24-27 – Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE), St. John's, Newfoundland
  - November 5-8 – Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA), Toronto, Ontario
  - November 19-21 – Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), Niagara Falls, Ontario
- Whirlpool Golf Course achieved certification in the water conservation category for the Audubon International program. The achievement was received by utilizing weather data to determine course irrigation needs, hand watering instead of full irrigation cycles and installing part circle irrigation heads.
- In October, Mackenzie Printery hosted the annual meeting of the Printery Group. This enthusiastic group of volunteers have been working with Niagara Parks for over 25 years.

- Chief Mark K. McMullen and Inspector Paul Forcier attended the swearing in ceremony of Chief Bryan MacCulloch of the Niagara Regional Police Service on October 28.
- In collaboration with the Town of Fort Erie, the Fort Erie Recreation Trail Project, funded by the Ontario Municipal Cycling Infrastructure Program is underway. The successful contractor is Rankin Construction. Work is expected to commence early December with completion by December 23, 2017.
- The Niagara River Remedial Action Plan held a workshop at the Botanical Gardens, School of Horticulture on November 15. Approximately 20 community members attended to hear presentations from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ministry of Environment.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources, eight new staff members were trained by NPC staff in RX100 prescribed burn workers. This is the first time the Ministry of Natural Resources has allowed another organization, other than licensed trainers, to present the course.

### **Facilities & Technology**

- The drill and fill work on all of the putting greens at Whirlpool golf course was completed in early November. This will dramatically improve drainage and the profile of the greens over time and assist with winter injury prevention. An estimated 82 tons of sand was injected into the putting greens.
- Golf staff attended the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) Conference in Toronto December 4-5, 2017. The training covered major golf swing characteristics and multiple exercise protocols that will enable instructors to quickly identify any physical limitations and provide improved golf performance.
- Archaeology was conducted at Bertie Hall as part of the evaluation process for the site. Due to the construction of the home in the 1830s much of the surrounding land was heavily disturbed.
- Trail counter data continues to be collected from the Niagara Glen stairs. The total number of visitors that used the trails for 2017 is 109,725 compared to 128,447 in 2016. The decline in numbers is largely due to the wet spring/fall conditions.
- New reflective trail blazes for the Niagara Glen trails have been installed. Approximately 850 new trail blazes were installed, nearly doubling the amount of previous painted trail blazes to provide better direction and improve safety. The Glen to Whirlpool trail has also been marked for the first time. The Niagara Glen trail map was updated and installed at the top of the Glen stairs.



- The Permit to Take Water renewal application for the Queen Victoria Park area has been approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. The permit is valid for 10 years.

### **Finance**

- A series billed as the 'Niagara Parks Junior Series' will be introduced in 2018, consisting of Canadian Junior Golf Association events in April, May and July. The three competitive junior events will have participants from across Ontario and will take place at Legends.
- The Friendship Cup is a new multi-year commitment to Niagara Parks Golf Courses. The event will be played over three rounds with elite senior amateurs from North America.

### **Products & Services**

- A special American Thanksgiving feature menu was offered at Elements on the Falls Restaurant along with an a la carte menu.
- Niagara Parks' cross-departmental team is busy preparing for the annual New Year's Eve festivities. The show will be hosted by Rick Mercer and broadcast nationally on CBC and performers include Simple Plan, Marianas Trench, James Barker Band and Jess Moskaluke.
- Elements on the Falls Restaurant introduced a new seasonal prix fixe menu promotion as part of the Wonder Pass Coupon. It is also being tested out for future menu consideration as an upsell opportunity.
- The All Access program is available for sale to the public in limited quantities. The program features 20 or 50 round packages and a special 2018 promotion is currently available to the public.
- Old Fort Erie played host to another successful year of murder mysteries and Halloween ghost tours.
- Laura Secord wrapped up the well-received Canada's Literary Women speaker series and also hosted workshops for the holidays.
- The Buying Team attended meetings with Vendors throughout the Fall season to review the 2017 season and plan for 2018 merchandise.
- The Retail Buying Team hosted the fourth Vendor Open House of the year on November 16, 2017, with eight vendors attending.
- The closed seasonal locations of Floral Clock, Aero Car and White Water Walk transferred products to other locations and prepared for inventory counts.

- The Grand View Winter Marketplace was held November 23-26, in conjunction with the Winter Festival of Lights. Niagara Parks Shops also participated by setting up an upper market booth and an additional kiosk with appropriately themed products.



- The total number of trees removed for 2017 is 1298 of which 578 were Ash trees. As part of our Urban Forestry Management plan, a total of 3,807 trees were planted this year. An additional 268 native trees are to be planted in the south parkway this year.
- The fall extension of seasonal staff allowed additional tasks to be completed in preparation for the spring 2018:
  - Post and rail installations along the Parkway including Portage Road parkette;
  - Emerald Ash Borer stump cleanup;
  - Tree planting and pruning;
  - Sodding;
  - Cleaning and painting of site furnishings;
  - Clean-up of perennial beds and service areas;
  - Grass cutting and leaf cleanup;
  - Invasive species removal; and,
  - Winter preparation.
- One of the picnic islands was renovated and a new natural garden planted at Dufferin Islands.

- The Parks Waste & Recycling staff have diverted from landfill sites and recycled the following:
  - Cardboard – 58,650lbs (782 cubic yards)
  - Mixed recycling – 23,074lbs (166 cubic yards)
  - Recycled baled rain ponchos – 21,665 kg
  - Recycled baled cardboard – 17,855 kg
- Parks staff coordinated and led a tour of Niagara Parks facilities to a group of Grade 9 and 12 students from Sudbury who were interested in looking at career opportunities outside of Sudbury. The tour covered the Maintenance Centre, Niagara Glen, Environment Stewardship project sites, Hydro-generation infrastructure and Niagara Parks attractions.

### Image

- Culinary Services Tim Horton's venues launched its holiday-based goods and merchandise program at the Table Rock and Queen Victoria Place locations.
- Staff from the Botanical Gardens, School of Horticulture attended the 5th annual District School Board of Niagara "Empowering Young Women in Trades Conference". They were mentors at the conference providing insight to women working successfully in the Green Industry.
- As part of the continued involvement and promotion of the School of Horticulture, students will construct a 20' x 40' exhibit at the Landscape Ontario Conference in January 2018. The Butterfly Conservatory received approval and a special permit from the Canadian Food Inspection Authority to transport and display butterflies at the Conference as part of the exhibit.
- A media conference for the kick-off of the 2017-18 Winter Festival of Lights was held at the Floral Showhouse on November 1.
- Volunteers and heritage staff participated in the Fort Erie Santa Claus parade.



- The Garden Club of Niagara prepared McFarland House for another impressive display for the holidays.
- The Retail Buying Team set up a jewelry sale for the United Way Fashion Show luncheon held at the Crowne Plaza on November 29, 2017. All proceeds went to the United Way.



- On November 11, Chief Mark K. McMullen and members of the Niagara Parks Police Service attended Remembrance Day ceremonies throughout the Niagara Region
- Constable Elliott Skeoch represented the Niagara Parks Police Service at the Niagara Falls Santa Claus Parade on November 18, pictured below with Niagara Regional Police Services Chief Bryan MacCulloch and Crime Stoppers of Niagara.





## Appendix A

October 20, 2017 – December 14, 2017

### Media Releases

- October 3 – Niagara Parks Literary Speaker Series
- October 3 – Celebrate Thanksgiving Weekend with Niagara Parks
- October 6 – Niagara Parks to Host Tree Planting Event and Visit From the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA)
- October 11 – Niagara Parks to Host Annual Niagara Falls International Marathon
- October 13 – Celebrate the Traditions of Halloweens Past at Old Fort Erie
- October 18 – Media Advisory: Niagara Parks to Unveil Winning Design for Public Art Installation at the Botanical Gardens
- October 20 – Niagara Parks Unveils Winning design for Public Art Installation at the Botanical Gardens
- October 24 – The Niagara Parks Floral Showhouse Prepares for Transition to Spectacular Chrysanthemum Show
- October 25 – Reminder: Celebrate the Traditions of Halloweens Past at Old Fort Erie
- October 27 – Call for Vendors: Niagara Parks' Grand View Winter Marketplace
- October 30 – Museums of Niagara Association (MONA) to Hold First Friday Event at Old Fort Erie
- November 3 – 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Niagara Parks Apprentice Cooks and Chefs Showcase Dinner
- November 8 – Enhancing the Niagara River Corridor Experience: Upcoming Parkway and Recreation Trail Improvements to Take Place
- November 14 – Niagara Parks Hosts Public Information Centre: Overview and Discussion of Upcoming Heritage Study on Bertie Hall

### VIP Tours

- On Tuesday, October 10, Niagara Parks hosted a VIP delegation led by Mr. Wang Xiaofeng, Vice-Chairman of the China National Tourism Administration. With 2018 to be the year of China-Canada Tourism, Niagara Parks was pleased to host this delegation. Chair Thomson provided the group with a tour of the brink area of the Falls. Later the delegation visited Hornblower Niagara Cruises, before making their way to McFarland House for a ceremonial tree planting.



- On Thursday, October 26, Niagara Parks hosted a delegation led by the Irish Minister of State at the Department of Finance, Patrick O'Donovan. The group took part in a tour of the brink area of the Falls, followed by a visit to Journey Behind the Falls and a private lunch at Elements on the Falls.
- On Sunday, October 29, Niagara Parks hosted a delegation led by the Ukrainian Prime Minister. The delegation was greeted by Niagara Parks Chair, Janice Thomson, and taken on a tour of the brink area of the Falls, followed by a complimentary visit to Journey Behind the Falls and private lunch at Elements on the Falls Restaurant.
- On Friday, November 3, Niagara Parks hosted a 16-person delegation, made up of representatives of the United Nation's Global Forum on Human Settlement. The delegation was officially greeted by Niagara Parks CEO, Reegan McCullough and taken on walkabout tour of the brink area of the Falls, followed by a complimentary tour of Journey Behind the Falls. The delegation ended their visit to Niagara by joining Niagara Parks Chair Janice Thomson for a meeting in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



## Events

- October 21 & October 27-28 – All Hallows Eve at Old Fort Erie
- October 20 - Niagara Parks Unveils Winning Design for Public Art Installation at the Botanical Gardens



- October 28 – Chrysanthemum Show Unveiled at the Floral Showhouse
- November 1 – Take Our Kids to Work Day
- November 2 – Apprentice Cooks and Chefs Showcase Dinner
- November 2 – Coast to Coast: Canada’s Literary Women, Cathy Marie Buchanan (*The Day The Falls Stood Still*)
- November 3 – Employee Town Hall Meetings
- November 6 – Launch of Niagara Parks Wonder Pass and Soft Launch of New Brand Story
- November 6 – Niagara Parks Hosts Opening Reception for the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) Summit
- November 16 – Niagara Parks Hosts Accessibility Public Information Centre (PIC) to present the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- November 18 – Opening Ceremonies for the OPG Winter Festival of Lights
- November 18 – January 31 – 35<sup>th</sup> Annual OPG Winter Festival of Lights
- November 18 – January 26 – Winter Fireworks Series (Fridays)
- November 22 – November 26 – Lumina: Sound and Light Show at Oakes Garden Theatre

- November 23 – November 26 – Grand View Winter Marketplace
- November 25 – Start of Annual Christmas Display at the Floral Showhouse
- November 27 – Presentation to Town of Fort Erie Municipal Council – Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and Economic Impact Analysis
- December 1-2 – Deck the Falls Holiday Walking Tour
- December 2-3 – Annual Rotary Holiday House Tour – McFarland House
- December 5 – NPC Staff Holiday Party at the Floral Showhouse
- December 7 – Coast to Coast: Canada's Literary Women, Jessica Grant (*Come, Thou Tortoise*)



- December 8-9 – Deck the Falls Holiday Walking Tour
- December 9-10 – A Historic McFarland Christmas
- December 11 – Presentation to Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Municipal Council – Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and Economic Impact Analysis
- December 12 – Presentation to City of Niagara Falls Municipal Council – Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and Economic Impact Analysis