



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 15-153**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Cynthia Beach, Commissioner, Corporate & Strategic Initiatives
Resource Staff: Colin Wiginton, Cultural Director
Date of Meeting: February 17, 2015
Subject: WAFFLES Community Robotics License Agreement for the Pump House Steam Museum, 23 Ontario Street

Executive Summary:

This report describes a proposed one-year community partner license agreement between the Pump House Steam Museum and the Kingston-based organization known as WAFFLES (Wild About Family and Friends Learning Engineering and Science) Community Robotics that is part of a larger national and international network of similar groups .

WAFFLES is a non-profit, volunteer-led organization involving a combination of elementary and high school students who work with mentors to participate in international level robotics competitions grounded in science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Since 2006, WAFFLES has run a number of programs for different age groups that foster the relationship between youth mentors and children. Currently, the local group includes members from schools across the city.

The Pump House Steam Museum is the only museum in Kingston that solely focuses on science, technology, engineering, arts and math-based education in its exhibits and programs and has been successful in the recent past partnering with different groups to fulfill its mandate. WAFFLES is currently looking for a space to operate and promote its programs and, given the close alignment of the two organization's core educational programs, staff believe a partnership between the Pump House Steam Museum and WAFFLES would be mutually beneficial.

Recommendation:

That Council authorize the Mayor and the Clerk to execute all necessary agreements and other documents as may be required to enter into a license agreement with WAFFLES Community Robotics to utilize space at the Pump House Steam Museum at 23 Ontario Street for the annual

rate of \$1.00 for an initial term of one year with an option for an extension of the agreement for up to five years (2016-2020) in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services.

Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Cynthia Beach, Commissioner,
Corporate & Strategic Initiatives**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Lanie Hurdle, Community Services	Not required
Denis Leger, Transportation, Facilities & Emergency Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President and CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desiree Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

Options/Discussion:

Background

Founded in 2006, WAFFLES (Wild About Family and Friends Learning Engineering and Science) Community Robotics is located in Kingston and includes members from schools across the city. It is a community-based, non-profit, volunteer-led organization of enthusiastic students and mentors engaged in international level robotics competitions. It functions as part of a larger national and international network of similar groups whose aim is to inspire students to consider careers in the technology industries and to transform how science and technology are viewed in our society. Mentors work alongside students to develop real-world skills as they build a new robot every year that entered into exciting annual tournaments.

The WAFFLES mission is “to ignite and fan a flame of passion in young people for STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) and business, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that inspire innovation and personal growth, fostering well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, leadership, and teamwork.”

WAFFLES operates a number of teams and educational opportunities for its members at three levels:

The Junior FIRST LEGO League team called the “Mini WAFFLES.” was first established in 2008. The team’s student members aged six to nine come from across the community and are mentored by members of the more senior First LEGO League and the First Robotics Competition teams.

The FIRST LEGO League team was created in 2006. It typically has four to seven members aged nine to fourteen. During the main FIRST LEGO League season the team meets twice a week (with homework in between) to design, build and program a competition robot, as well as to prepare a research presentation.

The FIRST Robotics Competition team combines the excitement of sport with the rigours of science and technology. Under strict rules and with limited time and resources, student teams are challenged to raise funds, design a team “brand”, hone teamwork skills, and build and program a robot to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors.

According to WAFFLES, this challenge is as close to “real world” engineering as a student can get. Professional mentors volunteer their time and talents to guide each team. The FIRST Robotics Competition team meets once a week for most of the year and during the build season in January and February, up to six or seven days a week. In March each year it meets with other Canadian and international teams for regional qualifying events. The assistance of community partnerships and parents help contribute to the team’s success.

In 2014, WAFFLES offered a successful one-week summer camp for children aged six to eleven and in 2015 the organization hopes to expand this to two weeks to facilitate increased demand.

It has also provided educational programming in museums and at the annual educational event Science Rendezvous organized by Queen's University through the Faculty of Education.

The Pump House Steam Museum and WAFFLES

The Pump House Steam Museum is the only museum in Kingston devoted to the promotion of science, technology, engineering, arts and math-based education in its exhibits and programs. The Museum's Gordon C. Leitch Discovery Centre is specifically dedicated as a place of learning and creative exploration for all ages in these areas. The Museum has been successful in the recent past working with different community partners to help expand and facilitate its programming. The opportunity to work with WAFFLES is of mutual benefit, helping the Museum to fulfill its mandate while working with a group that is looking for a space within which to operate its weekly club activities and to expand its summer camp offerings.

City staff feel that a partnership between the Pump House Steam Museum and WAFFLES will help to serve both organizations while, at the same time, building the capacity of a newer organization with a sympathetic mandate by offering support for programming, events, activities and membership meetings. If this license agreement is approved, WAFFLES will be offered a regular use of the Discovery Centre and adjoining workshop, as well as limited storage for equipment along with use of other spaces both inside and outside the Museum as deemed appropriate by staff.

In 2015, it is being proposed that WAFFLES will facilitate two drop-in programming days in the fall as well as a special event centred on robotics and science, technology, engineering, arts and math-based programming.

If the initial trial period of one year is deemed successful, staff propose an extension of up to five years. Over time, it is anticipated that this partnership will help to increase admissions, community use of the facility and increased awareness of the Museum as a local cultural institution and place of learning.

Process

In 2014, the Gordon C. Leitch Discovery Centre was added to the list of City facilities available for rent as an additional revenue generating opportunity in accordance with the Fees and Charges By-law. The Discovery Centre currently rents at a cost of \$63.86 per hour for evenings and weekends. In 2014 the Discovery Centre generated a modest amount of \$954.75 in site rental revenue. In accordance with established museum practice, core museum activities always take precedence over outside site rentals of facility space. The value to the Museum and community of WAFFLES providing core programming far outweighs any potential revenue that may be lost as a result of this partnership. A licence agreement with WAFFLES does not preclude staff from renting out other areas of the Museum or the Discovery Centre at times when WAFFLES is not scheduled to be in that space. The proposed license agreement would waive any regular rental fees in return for the services described above. WAFFLES would follow a predetermined schedule of access for its weekly club activities leaving the Discovery Centre available for continued use by others as intended under the Fees and Charges By-law.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

The City's Revenue Leasing and Licensing policy includes Section 15.4 for Community Licenses. While WAFFLES meets the desirable characteristics of a community group under Section 15.4, this policy does not apply to the proposed license agreement as it pertains to the waiver of fees for a permit to use facility space listed in the Fees and Charges By-law. The Revenue Leasing and Licensing policy pertains to exclusive use of space for lease or license not otherwise available for use under the Fees and Charges By-law.

Notice Provisions:

Not applicable

Accessibility Considerations:

Not applicable

Financial Considerations:

Not applicable

Contacts:

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Colin Wiginton, Cultural Director, 613-546-4291, extension 1357

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Paul Robertson, City Curator, Cultural Services

Gordon Robinson, Curator, Pump House Steam Museum

Kathy Gray, Property Specialist, Real Estate & Land Development

Exhibits Attached:

Not applicable