



STAFF REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Frotten

DATE: August 8, 2022

SUBJECT: Event Tent Usage

ORIGIN

There has been interest expressed from local non-profit groups and businesses to use/rent our 20' x 40' event tent, but no official framework is in place to do so. This report has been developed to seek direction from Council on how to rent the event tent in a fair and equitable manner to local non-profit organizations and businesses.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, we purchased the tent as part of a larger event and tourism project in which we received \$74,904 from ACOA. This project included the retrofit of the McGray Avenue boardwalk, pipe and drape, a portable stage, tables and chairs, an outdoor storage shed, electricity and internet upgrades to the arena, bleacher seating and a portable sound system. The total cost of the project was approximately \$150,000.

Due to COVID, many local events were cancelled, and others not planned so the event tent did not see any usage until this summer season. It was used by a local event production company last month and is scheduled to be used by the Local Organizing Committee of the 2022 World Double-Bit Axe Throwing Championships at the end of the month and possible once again by the event production company.

We've received informal inquiries earlier this year about the use of our event tent by local non-profit organizations and businesses. Subsequently, on May 16 of this year, I received an email from Erin Doane, the Vice-President of the Barrington Farmers' Market, requesting for us to set up tent the event tent for their bi-weekly farmers' market from the end of May to the end of September.

DISCUSSION

As with all requests from the public to use municipal property, we must consider several factors. When the Farmers' Market contacted us regarding the usage of the tent, I conferred with Cameron, Misty, and Suzy to make sure we considered all angles before responding.

After much discussion, I replied to Erin on May 20 that we would be able to offer the Farmers' Market the use of the tent, free of charge, but it would have to be put up and taken down each time by them and the individuals doing so would have to undergo some training to ensure they know how to do it safely. In addition, we would require a damage deposit of \$500, a release of liability waiver and a discussion on its location. This proposal was developed by taking into consideration the following:

These stipulations were developed by taking into account the following factors:

Safety/Security

This is a fairly large tent and the safety and security of the tent users, and the general public is of utmost importance. Vandalism is also a concern for us – albeit not prohibitive. For that reason, the individuals putting up and taking down and using the tent need to know how to do it safely and the tent site must be properly secured. In other areas, a local volunteer fire department has taken on the responsibility of doing this as a revenue generator and the Farmers' Market had spoken to a local fire department in the past it seemed as though there was interest in assisting with set up and take down.

Initial Intent/Municipal Needs

The tent was purchased with the intention of using it for municipal events (i.e. marathon) and short-term "one-off" events (i.e. Lobsterfest). This is the case as we wanted to ensure that the tent would last as long as possible and putting it up and taking it down, along with leaving it up for extended periods (possibly through intense/severe weather), generates a fair amount of wear and tear. In addition, we do not have enough staff to continuously put it up, secure the site and take it down on a regular basis. Storage and cleaning are two other considerations as the tent cannot be stored when wet, for example.

Fairness

Although this is the first official request, we had received from the community to use our tent, we wanted to make sure that we could offer the Farmers' Market something we could offer all not-for-profit organizations in the event we received requests from them.

In addition to the framework provided to Erin, it was decided that a fee of \$500 would be charged to local businesses to rent the tent for their purposes. This was in line with the Municipality of Clare's rates for their event tents (<https://www.clarenovascotia.com/en/recreation/facilities/events-tent-rental>).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

In considering the use of the tent, staff time would be the largest budget implication. Other costs such as insurance, repairs and maintenance would also exist but would likely be minimal barring any major issue.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

PUBLIC CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATIONS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

The use of tents has become popular for events such as festivals, sport competitions, concerts and weddings. There is definitely a market to lend/rent this equipment but it must be done in a safe, secure and fair way. In terms of the Farmers' Market's request, I can understand why they would like to have it up for their specific use. They are growing and an outdoor environment is typical of a market. That said, I believe we can assist them in achieving this goal by working with them to find a more permanent solution (i.e. funding applications, permanent location on municipal land, etc.), rather than bearing the responsibility of putting up the tent for their specific use.

For these reasons and based the factors described in the discussion section of this report, **I would recommend drafting a policy for the use of the event tent that would be in line with the framework set out in the section.**

SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to direct the CAO to develop a policy for the use of the municipal event tent based on the framework set out in the discussion section of this report.

ALTERNATIVES

- Draft a policy with a different framework.
- Not allow third party use of the municipal event tent.

ATTACHMENTS

- N/A