



Date: June 25, 2009

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Special Event & Filming Permit Fees and Charges Adjustments

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the Fees & Charges adjustments for Special Event & Filming Permits, as detailed in Appendix A.

POLICY

The Board's policies on user fees and charges are summarized as follows:

- User fees and charges will be levied to recover all or a portion of overall operating costs.
- All rates and charges will be adjusted to accommodate the changes in the marketplace and in operating and maintenance costs.

BACKGROUND

At the November 24, 2008 Board meeting, the 2009 Fees and Charges were approved. In that report to the Board it was noted that further changes to the Fees and Charges for Special Event and Filming Permits were being contemplated pending further research and discussions with user groups.

A preliminary version of this report was brought before the Board's Services and Budgets Committee on June 16, 2009 and the recommendations within this report were supported by the Committee.

DISCUSSION

At present, special event and filming permits are issued under one of four general headings; "simple", "complex", "festival", or "filming/photography". Upon receipt of each application, staff must consult with applicants to determine which category is most fitting for each event proposal. Determining factors include the location, size and scale of function, activities planned, and impact to other users of the location. Due to increasing demand for permits and the increasing complexity of event proposals, the current process can be lengthy for users, requiring a considerable amount of staff time to determine the appropriate fees.

Through the summer of 2008, staff conducted a comparative analysis of permit fees and procedures in other major cities in North America. Please see Appendix B for a summary

of the market survey and details of the current Special Event Permit Rates. As a result of this study, a new method of calculating permit fees is recommended. The new method will more accurately reflect the impact of events in park locations. The proposed schedule will also assist organizers and staff to a more rapid identification of an appropriate permit fee given the increased level of detail provided in this schedule.

Proposed Changes

The new fees and user categories for special events are outlined in Appendix A and these changes are proposed to reflect the range and diversity of event types that occur in Vancouver parks, beaches, and other areas. The changes will bring Park Board fees in line with those of other municipalities, assist with the recovery of operational costs, and assist with the efficiency of the allocation process. The Special Events and Filming operation is presently subsidized by approximately \$120,000.

Per the proposed fee schedule, the majority of current event permits would have a minimal cost increase. The most significant changes relate to larger scale events which are currently charged a fee considered low in relation to the permit fees applied in other jurisdictions

The estimated impact to the budget from the above changes is not expected to be significant. The revenues for Special Event and Filming permits are projected to increase revenues by approximately \$25,000 (8%). These estimates are based on current usage statistics and may be impacted by external economic factors, weather, changes in use, and other related variables. Staff also propose the introduction of a non-refundable application fee (\$25.00), which will be applied to cost of an approved permit.

Public Consultation

Between December 2008 and April 2009 staff surveyed existing event organizers to obtain feedback on the proposed fee adjustments. Members of the public were asked to submit feedback by the end of April so that their input could be incorporated into this report. In addition, a consultation session was held at the Park Board office between staff and representatives of existing major events. The results of all public consultation have been summarized and included in this report. The feedback provides a snapshot of opinions on the proposed changes.

An email-based survey of the current list of major event organizers was administered between December 2008 and early 2009 and included the 2009 proposed fee schedule. The survey responses indicated general acceptance of the methodology used for the proposal. However, some respondents (~10%) raised concerns about increasing their own operational costs as a result of potentially higher permit costs.

In follow-up to the electronic communication, staff organized a meeting (March 19, 2009) for discussions on the proposal and invited all current event organizers to participate. While attendance was less than expected, the attendees represented some of the larger annual events. Consensus was reached on the fee categories as shown in the

proposed schedule (see Appendix A). There was extensive discussion about the proposed permit fees and the potential impact on existing or new events. Further, organizers requested that fees be increased gradually and in consideration for the event type (i.e. Charity/Community, Private/Commercial) to reflect the financial realities and income sources for such organizers. This request has been accommodated in the fee proposal, whereby Charity/Community event permits are priced lower than those for Private/Commercial event permits.

Future Considerations

In addition to the above noted changes being recommended for implementation at this time, this review has revealed other potential fee and program improvements.

For example, as a result of the review and associated stakeholder consultation, staff believe that multi-day special events (including those which extend for three consecutive days or longer) should be treated uniquely and are potentially better addressed through individual short-term lease arrangements with organizers. A more specific contract would clarify the expectations between staff and event organizers and consider a wider variety of factors in the application of fees. This option will be further investigated and would be part of a subsequent report following further consultation with the organizers of existing multi-day events and is therefore not included in this report.

Meanwhile, staff are working to improve the permit application and issuance process, including increased use of web-based resources, such as an online booking option. Effort towards making the permitting process more efficient for applicants and staff will continue.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board approve the proposed 2009 Fees and Charges schedule for Special Event and Filming Permits (Appendix A). These adjustments more accurately reflect the customer categories and market pricing, while also recovering a larger portion of the operational costs of the business unit. Staff recommend that these fees and charges take effect on September 1, 2009.

SUMMARY

After public consultation and analysis, staff have recommended a number of changes to the Fees and Charges schedules for Special Event Permits. The Board is requested to approve the recommended schedule noted in Appendix A.

Prepared by:

Stanley District, Recreation Services
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

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APPENDIX A

PROPOSED 2009 FEES – SPECIAL EVENT & FILMING PERMITS

<u>Event Type</u> (participants, attendees)		<u>Permit Fee</u> (\$)
Charity/Community		
1-50	Level 1	80.00
51-200	Level 2	200.00
201-500	Level 3	300.00
501-1,000	Level 4	400.00
>1,000	Level 5	500.00
Charity Athletic (runs, walks)		
51-200	Level 1	200.00
201-500	Level 2	300.00
501-1,000	Level 3	500.00
1,001-5,000	Level 4	800.00
>5,000	Level 5	1,000.00
Private/Commercial		
51-200	Level 1	600.00
201-500	Level 2	1,000.00
501-1,000	Level 3	1,600.00
1,001-5,000	Level 4	2,000.00
>5,000	Level 5	TBD
Community Festivals/Concerts		
51-300	Level 1	300.00
301-1,000	Level 2	500.00
1,001-5,000	Level 3	800.00
5,001-10,000	Level 4	1,000.00
>10,000	Level 5	TBD
Filming/Photography		
Documentary, Student		35.00
Film Lunch Tents		250.00
Set up / wrap		300.00
Neighbourhood Parks		600.00
Destination Parks		800.00
Photography	Level 1	150.00
	Level 2	300.00
Application Fee		25.00

APPENDIX B**SPECIAL EVENT & FILMING PERMITS – MARKET SURVEY**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Athletic</u>	<u>Corporate</u>	<u>Charity/ Community</u>	<u>Picnic</u>
Vancouver <i>(Proposed rates)</i>	\$150 - \$1000	\$600 - \$2000	\$80 - \$500	\$80
Los Angeles	\$1000	\$50 - \$1000	\$40 - \$500	\$150 - \$600
San Francisco	\$27 - \$1085	\$215 - \$1085	\$27 - \$217	\$27 - \$1085
Chicago	\$350 - \$10,500	\$6,300 - \$10,500	\$130 - \$620	N/A
Toronto	\$60 - \$300	N/A	\$60 - \$300	\$60 - \$300

Vancouver Park Board – Current Special Event Permit Rates	
Simple	\$242.00
Complex	\$327.00
Festival	\$428.00
Run/Walk	\$101.00
Filming	\$25 - \$519