



VANCOUVER
BOARD OF
PARKS AND
RECREATION

June 30, 2021

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Outdoor Lifeguard Shortage Update – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

As follow-up to the recent Board [briefing memo regarding outdoor lifeguard shortages](#), I am writing to advise that our Outdoor Aquatics Services team is continuing to experience these staffing shortages and is working through strategies to be able to safely staff all outdoor locations.

This summer we have seen a significant decrease in staff making themselves available for lifeguarding shifts. While this has been an industry trend across North America, some of the reasons we have received include uncertainty about the risk of COVID-19 transmission, preference to remain on Employment Insurance, or no longer available due to other employment opportunities. This time last year we had almost 200 outdoor lifeguards available for shifts; currently we have only about 122 staff hired and trained to work.

Staff are working hard to expedite hiring and training of new auxiliary outdoor lifeguards. Our Rescue Ready (COVID-19) training regime is robust and provides detailed protocols for all lifeguard practices during this pandemic. We program and conduct Lifesaving Society (LSS) Lifeguard Waterfront Certification courses for current pool lifeguards wishing to work in outdoor aquatics -- an additional course was completed last weekend and all candidates were provided details and information on how to be hired for work in Vancouver. We have also started conducting LSS Lifeguard courses for potential new lifeguards to join Vancouver Aquatic Services, but it will take months before anyone is certified.

The most recent recruitment efforts resulted in the hiring and training of nine (9) new lifeguards, who are now ready to work. A second round of recruitment closed on June 23, and staff are in the process of finalizing hiring, onboarding, and providing the COVID-19 protocol training. We are also asking CUPE 1004 to encourage any of their members who have yet to commit to lifeguarding this season to make themselves available during these challenging times. In addition, we will be investigating options to contact the indoor lifeguard team to augment outdoor pool operations, which would then enable relocating more waterfront trained lifeguards to beach locations.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Donnie Rosa', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/pf/jl/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team, PB Recreation Leadership Team, PB Communications