



City of Richmond

Report to Committee


To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
Date: September 26, 2017

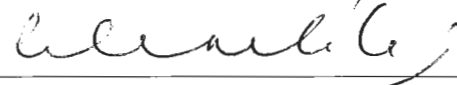

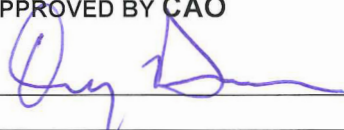
From: Jane Fernyhough
Director Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
File: 11-7000-01/2017-Vol 01

Re: Delegation to Mystic Seaport

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled "Delegation to Mystic Seaport," dated September 26, 2017 from the Director Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be received for information.

per 
Jane Fernyhough
Director Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

At the July 20, 2017 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting staff received the following referral:

That staff examine the costs of sending a Richmond delegation to Mystic, Connecticut in the Fall of 2017 to view their waterfront development and report back.

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #2 A Vibrant, Active and Connected City:

Continue the development and implementation of an excellent and accessible system of programs, services, and public spaces that reflect Richmond's demographics, rich heritage, diverse needs, and unique opportunities, and that facilitate active, caring, and connected communities.

2.3. Outstanding places, programs and services that support active living, wellness and a sense of belonging.

Analysis

Mystic Seaport

Mystic Seaport is America's leading maritime museum with the mission to "to inspire an enduring connection to the American maritime experience."

The 19 acre site was developed around a former shipyard and now receives more than 260,000 visitors annually. It is operated by a non-profit society and registered charity which was established in 1929. The Society currently has more than 22,000 members, 300 full and part-time staff, and 600 volunteers.

Exhibit and program highlights include:

- a working shipyard that employs a number of full-time professional shipwrights actively restoring Mystic's fleet of vessels;
- the largest collection of historic vessels in the US;
- a recreated 19th Century Seafaring Village that includes a rope-making factory, blacksmith shop, other businesses and residences;
- exhibit galleries with a variety of permanent and temporary exhibits on maritime themes including a small boat collection, maritime art and a masthead collection;
- children's Museum and children's areas integrated throughout the site;
- daily schedule of programs and demonstrations such as sail rigging, sea-shanties, short dramatic plays and build a model boat program;
- full range of educational programs for school groups;

- water-based programs including tours on several historic boats and hourly rentals of small rowboats and sailboats; and
- special events and seasonal programs including wooden boat shows, plein air painting, sea music festival, antique motor show and model yacht regatta.

Mystic Seaport does not receive ongoing financial assistance from any level of government; 49% of the organization's operating budget comes from donations, endowment fund disbursements and project grants, 19% from gate admissions, 11 % from retail and food concession sales, 10% from program fees and 8% from membership.

Mystic Seaport maintains an artifact and archival collection that numbers in the millions of items relating to American maritime history.

Shoreline Trolley Museum

The Shoreline Trolley Museum is located a one hour drive from Mystic Seaport in East Haven, Connecticut. Operated by the Branford Electrical Railway Association, a non-profit society and registered charity, the Museum is home to a collection of 100 vintage trolley cars, indoor exhibit areas and a functioning tram that takes visitors on a ride through a scenic marshland area.

Given the September 11, 2017 Council endorsement of \$50,000 to undertake a feasibility study to operate the tram in Steveston, and the Shoreline Trolley Museum's proximity to Mystic Seaport, a visit to this attraction is also recommended.

Rationale and Benefits

A delegation to Mystic Seaport and the Shoreline Trolley Museum would be able to report back to Council and staff on the following:

- Ship repair and boat building best practices;
- New exhibit, program, event and marketing concepts for Britannia Shipyards; and
- Opportunities and challenges related to an operational tram.

Additionally, the Britannia Business Plan will be complete in advance of the trip. This plan will provide direction on both a recommended organizational structure and key program and business activities for Britannia. As such, the detailed daily itinerary and meetings with staff at these sites would be tailored to best match with the direction of that plan.

Proposed Itinerary

Should Council choose to send a delegation to Mystic, staff recommend planning this for a fifth week in the spring of 2018. Mystic Seaport is a seasonal operation and is fully operational between late-March and late-October. This timing will also provide adequate time for staff to develop a detailed and focused itinerary for the visit, including scheduling meetings with key staff at Mystic Seaport.

A suggested itinerary is as follows:

- Monday – Fly from Richmond to Hartford, CN, drive to Mystic, CN.
- Tuesday/Wednesday – Meet with Mystic staff and tour the site (due to the size and scope of the operations, two days is highly recommended).
- Thursday – Drive to East Haven, CN, meet with Shoreline Trolley Museum staff and tour the site.
- Friday – Return to Richmond.

Financial Impact

The estimated cost per person to send a delegation to Mystic Seaport is \$2,500. This is inclusive of all travel, hotels and per diems based on the proposed itinerary. A delegation of up to four people, including one staff member is recommended.

Should Council choose to send a delegation, it is recommended that these expenses be funded out of the Council Contingency Fund in 2018.

Conclusion

Mystic Seaport is America's largest maritime museum. With a large site that shares many collections, exhibit and programming opportunities as Britannia Shipyards, a well-planned best practices trip to this site could help to inform future planning at Britannia Shipyards.



Marie Fenwick
Manager, Museum and Heritage Services
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