



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of April 18, 2024

To: Committee of the Whole

Date: March 26, 2024

From: Thomas Soulliere, Deputy City Manager

Subject: Support for Canadian Senior Women's Basketball Team Event

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- A. Approve up to \$25,000 in financial support for a 3-game series featuring the Canadian Senior Women's Basketball Team at Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre, to be funded through the Corporate Contingency budget, and
- B. Authorize the Deputy City Manager to execute any necessary agreements with the proponent, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2024, The Friends of Victoria Basketball Society will host three games between the Canadian Senior Women's Basketball Team and Portugal National Women's Team at Save-on-Foods Memorial Arena. The event is timed to align with the Canadian team's training in advance of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. The three-game series is planned for the week of June 24.

This major event is expected to provide economic benefits for the local community and social and entertainment value for citizens. As with other major sporting events, visitors and residents will have opportunities to experience activities both inside and outside of the competition venue.

The Friends of Victoria Basketball Society is seeking commitments to support hosting this event from numerous stakeholders, including all levels of government. Staff have reviewed the potential impact and recommend a City contribution of \$25,000 for event sponsorship.

Support for hosting this sport event aligns with the City's strategic objectives and is anticipated to have a positive impact on the city and region.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the details associated with potential City sponsorship of a series of games featuring the Canadian Senior Women's Basketball Team in June 2024.

BACKGROUND

International sporting events have been popular draws for the Greater Victoria region for many years, resulting in experiential and economic value for local communities. The City is often asked to sponsor or otherwise support such activities. Recent examples of this include the 2020 Olympic Qualifying Men's Basketball Tournament, and the World Junior Hockey Championship in 2019. These events provided high-quality entertainment, volunteering opportunities for citizens, financial benefits to local business owners and stakeholders, international media exposure, and a legacy for future activations.

Basketball is among Canada's most popular sports, with increased growth in recent years due in part to high numbers of professional players and strong results for the women's and men's national teams at international events.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The Friends of Victoria Basketball Society is planning a series of basketball games between Team Canada and Team Portugal in late June 2024. The Canadian team will be completing a training camp at the University of Victoria during this period, in preparation for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Attached to this report is a summary of the event proposal, including benefits and costs anticipated by the proponent (Attachment A). Financial support has been confirmed from the Province of BC, federal government, and Destination Greater Victoria. Corporate sponsorships are also being sought to help cover anticipated hosting costs. The requested amount from the City is \$25,000.

The location of the games is the City's arena, Save-On-Foods Memorial Arena. The City has an operating agreement with RG Properties, who run the facility on behalf of the municipality. Based on the projected capacity for the basketball games, staff anticipate the total revenue the City is likely to receive from the event will exceed the proposed sponsorship cost.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Option 1 - Council approval of funding support of up to \$25,000 for the Canadian Senior Women's Basketball Team event (Recommended)

Should Council approve this option, staff will coordinate with the organizers of the event to confirm the City as a local sponsor. As a funding partner, the City will be recognized in event marketing content, signage at the arena, as well as through any media broadcasts.

Option 2 – Council declines the request for funding support for the basketball event

Council may choose to decline the funding request from the proponents. It is unclear what impact this may have on the overall event planning.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The City's operating agreement with RG Facilities for the management of the Save-On-Foods Memorial Arena identifies among other requirements, the financial considerations for each party. It is important to note that the City receives a revenue share (\$2.00) for each ticket sold that helps to fund the City's long-term debt associated with the construction of the arena. Staff recommend allocating funding support for this event from the 2024 Contingency budget, which currently has a balance of \$65,000.

Accessibility Impact Statement

The basketball games are intended to provide opportunities for all citizens. Ticket pricing will be determined to account for costs while also ensuring affordability, with tickets offered at a range of prices.

CONCLUSIONS

Victoria has a long history of successfully hosting major events, including high performance sport. The Canadian Senior Women's Basketball event provides the City with an opportunity to partner with other governments and local stakeholders to accommodate games which are sure to provide multiple benefits for citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Soulliere
Deputy City Manager

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager: _____

Date: _____

List of Attachments:

Attachment A – Team Canada Basketball Proposal