

Theatre Orangeville plans concert on Hockley Road farm property

By JAMES MATTHEWS

One way Mono supports worthy causes is by waiving certain fees for charitable events.

Not-for-profit Theatre Orangeville requested Mono Council waive a \$500 application fee, a \$1,000 deposit for police services, and a \$2,000 deposit against damages to municipal infrastructure.

Mono resident Jack Baird and Gayle Henkenhof will open their Hockley property for an outdoor community gathering to support Theatre Orangeville on September 12 from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m.

The money raised will support the theatre company's youth programming.

"We're hoping that because the whole thing is a charitable event that you'll waive those fees," Baird said.

Council agreed unanimously during its July 14 meeting to waive the associated fees.

With space limited to 100 guests, it's a wonderful opportunity to support the local arts, said Laura Austin, the theatre company's chairperson.

The event will be supervised by theatre staff, and parking will be on-site.

"So that we don't have any on-road parking," Baird explained.

An accessible portable toilet will be on site, and trash collection will be controlled.

The afternoon features live music by Old School (Gerry Holden and Alain Brisson), with supporting acts Angie Forte, Murray Abraham, and Scott Jordan.

Auston said in a letter to council that the artists are donating their time and talents for the fundraiser.

The \$100 ticket price gets spectators a meal from a local caterer and complimentary non-alcoholic drinks. Patrons will get a receipt for tax deductions for \$65. The rest of the ticket price will go toward food and beverages.

"No alcohol is permitted on the property," Auston said.

She added that to best maintain a relaxed atmosphere, the concert will be an adult-only event.

Baird said theatre staff will assemble a stage suitable for the five musicians participating.

He invited councillors to visit the concert site to ensure it would be suitable for the event.

"We seem to be having enthusiastic support from the volunteers," Baird said.

Deputy Mayor Fred Nix said he believed the venue is a great space for such an event.

Coun. Elaine Capes said fees other than the application cost will go to police and emergency services, which "have nothing to do with the town, and you would have to pay if those were there so those are on you."

She wanted to know where concert-goers would walk from a secondary driveway to the venue.

Baird said concert-goers will use a path that's about eight feet wide and mowed.

?It's on level ground,? he said. ?As level as a farmer's field could be.?

He said the path is on his side of a fence that would keep patrons from even having to cross the road's soft shoulder.

Capes asked if the surrounding neighbours have been apprised of the concert plans.

Baird said he's spoken to one of three immediate neighbours.

?We thought, since it's an afternoon event, that it would be unlikely to be an annoyance to them,? he said. ?I can hear their radios on a Saturday afternoon, so I would think they would support it.?

Coun. Melinda Davie said Council considered its fee structure and the prices levied for various fees. It was decided that the amounts were reasonable. But whenever Council is approached about an event, an exemption is requested from the noise bylaw fee, especially.

?[The reason offered] is because it's a non-profit, or it's because it's a charity, or it's because it's my brother's whatever,? Davie said. ?I think we need to look at that.?

The reason for such fees is to cover the associated costs of staff reports about the event and council's time to consider it, she said.

?There's time and so that's a cost,? Davie said. ?Non-profits do not make profit, but they're also businesses.?

They generate funding to cover their business costs.

?I guess transactions that involve dollars are trade-offs,? Baird said and added that concert organizers are prepared to acknowledge the municipality's support.

?Including financial support of that sort,? he said.

Coun. Ralph Manktelow said Davie made a good point, but, ?We do keep forgiving (fees) for worthy causes, but it's a good thing that we have worthy cause.?

?They're not making millions out of this, so it's nice to not diminish the take-home that goes to Orangeville Theatre,? he said.