

Topic: Parkland County Enforcement Services Water Safety Initiative Pilot Project

Introduction:

The Water Safety Initiative Pilot Project would see Parkland County Peace Officers provide a visible enforcement presence on water bodies within Parkland County for the summer of 2012. Public safety issues surrounding boating have been raised to Council in the past. Currently there is little or no enforcement of Transport Canada boating regulations in Parkland County. It is proposed Enforcement Services provide this service for the summer of 2012, similar to what Leduc County did in 2011. Our proposed initiative would follow the Leduc County Enforcement Services Water Safety Initiative. They focused on Wizard & Pigeon Lakes and felt during the summer of 2011 about 90% of safety issues were successfully addressed.

Parkland County Enforcement Services would apply to Transport Canada for authority to enforce the Small Vessel Regulation, this process should take only a matter of weeks. If this pilot project is successful, PCES would apply for authority to enforce the Vessel Operation Restriction Regulation, (this application process can take up to one year).

Facts (Background Information):

Parkland County Enforcement Services, (PCES), would apply to Transport Canada for authority to enforce the Small Vessel Regulation. PCES would patrol specific lakes 2 weekends per month from May to September. Recreational boating has increased over the last couple of years. Safety issues surrounding these activities have also increased. PCES would target Jackfish Lake, Mayatan Lake and Mink Lake. These concerns tie into Quality of Life; it is felt this initiative is consistent with the County's Value and Mission Statements, the Strategic Plan and Values.

Analysis:

Parkland County Enforcement Services, (PCES), provide a proactive approach to manage safety of watercraft users. This pilot project would see Enforcement Services obtain authority from Transport Canada to enforce the Small Vessel Regulations. PCES would patrol selected water bodies over the summer of 2012. The focus would be public education and awareness around safe boating. This would be achieved using a visible law enforcement presence on the water, contact with the boating public, educating, raising awareness and appropriate enforcement of the Federal Small Vessel Regulations plus enforcement of the Gaming & Liquor Act. It should be noted any fine revenues from the Federal Small Vessel Regulations will go to the Federal Government.

Properly trained and equipped, it is proposed to conduct water patrols 2 weekends per month May – September, 2012.

PCES will evaluate this pilot project and bring forth recommendations to Council in October, 2012.

Authority Process:

Parkland County would make application to the Manager of Compliance, Enforcement and Appeals, Regulatory Services and Quality Assurance, Marine Safety, Transport Canada to be designated as “Enforcement Officers” pursuant to /Section 45(d) of the Canada Shipping Act, Small Vessel Regulations. Transport Canada has informed Parkland County this process takes only a matter of weeks.

Capital Costs:

Boat – It is proposed to equip PCES with boat suitable for enforcement work, and the nature of the lakes identified for patrols in Parkland County.

- Boat Options:

1. Fire Services – Parkland County Fire Services will supply a boat to Enforcement Services at the rate of \$700 per day, plus expenses. This includes two fire fighters, who would use this as a training opportunity. The Approx cost would be \$14,000 for two weekends per month from May to September. Please note, in the case of a Fire Services water emergency, the enforcement patrol would be immediately suspended.
2. Rental - Approximately \$20,000 seasonal rental from May to September.
3. Purchase – Leduc County paid \$32,000 for their boat. Their rationale to purchase, was the purchase paid for itself in less than two boating seasons.

Training:

- PCES has a number of officers whom possess the Pleasure Craft Operators Licenses
 - County Fire Chief, Jim Phelan, would provide additional boating/water safety training.

Staffing Boat Patrols

- Staff the boat patrols only with qualified staff, as per Federal Regulations and the County Safety Program
- **Option #1:**
 - Bring off-duty officers in on Overtime
 - Pros – no reduction in service level in County
 - Cons – increase costs
 - Officers currently work a four week rotation, and work 2 weekends and are off 2 weekends
 - It is reasonable to expect off-duty officers to want to spend quality time with their families,

especially in the summer, therefore it may not be possible to staff patrols using this method

- **Option #2:**
- Utilize officers already scheduled to work
- Pros – Would be able to schedule patrols through the summer, making allowance for summer vacations
- Cons – Officers (always 2) working on the water, will not be able to respond to other calls.

Impact of Service Delivery:

- This pilot project will most likely have a negative impact service delivery in the County
- Officers patrolling on the water will not be able to respond to requests for service, such as Off-Highway Vehicle, traffic, fires, etc.
- All efforts will be made to have at least one general duty/traffic enforcement officer patrolling / responding request for service throughout the County.

Conclusion/Summary:

Administration recommends Parkland County Council support the Parkland County Enforcement Services Water Safety Initiative Pilot Project. Direct PCES apply to Transport Canada for authority to enforce the Small Vessel Regulation., to use the Fire Services boat and personnel and to schedule peace officers for water patrols. Further, to evaluate this pilot project and bring these results and recommendation for the possible continuation of the Water Safety Initiatives to Council.

Alternatives:

1. Parkland County not provide enforcement on water bodies in Parkland County.
- 2.
- 3.

Summary:

Parkland County Council support and direct Administration to implement the PCES Water Safety Initiatives Pilot Project. This Quality of Life initiative will see a visible presence and enforcement activities on water bodies in Parkland County. This pilot project will run from May to September 2012. After an evaluation, PCES will provide a report to Council will recommendations whether to continue this project.