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Date: August 31, 2021
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Karen Loney
RE: National Truth and Reconciliation Holiday
Report No.: PR 2021 – 9

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That Council participates, and encourages others to participate in learning about the history and legacy of residential schools through the National Centre for Truth and Education Learning Series; and that Council honours Truth and Reconciliation Day by engaging in Actions described in this report.

BACKGROUND

In June, The Federal Government declared that September 30 will be a statutory holiday called the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The establishment of a the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is one of the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, to honour Survivors, their families and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process. It is a Federal holiday and not mandated within Ontario beyond Federal servants.

Many people recognize September 30 as 'Orange Shirt' day, representing every child matters. The colour orange has become synonymous with Phyllis Webstad's story of being six years old, excited to go to school with her new orange shirt only to have it taken away and never returned. Phyllis stated that, *"I didn't understand why they wouldn't give it back to me, it was mine! The color orange has always reminded me of that and how my feelings didn't matter, how no one cared and how I felt like I was worth nothing. All of us little children were crying and no one cared"*.¹ Phyllis was fortunate in that she came home from school, but history has taught us that many children were not kept safe.

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html> as of August 31, 2021

While it is easy to think of this as part of Canada's past history, the impact of residential schools continues to affect Indigenous communities today. September 30th provides an opportunity to learn about what occurred, honour those who gave their lives, provide tribute to those who live with the memories, and to unite as a community.

DISCUSSION

In support of the National Truth and Reconciliation day, the following activities are being planned in the Town of Kingsville.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgment

Providing a land acknowledgment showcases the understanding of the longstanding history of the land and our current place within this history. It provides a mindfulness of our present participation to prevent colonialism. The following acknowledgment was developed in consultation Darryl van Oirschot, Education & Cultural Experiences Delivery - Caldwell First Nation.

We acknowledge the Three Fires Confederacy (Ojibwe, Pottawatami and Odawa) and the Traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of Caldwell First Nation; the original people of Point Pele, Pelee Island and its surrounding waters. We recognize and respect the First Nations who are stewards of the land and waters of Turtle Island and who have embraced this stewardship since time immemorial. We would also like to acknowledge other nearby First Nations communities and First Nations across Turtle Island.

As learning on this topic is on-going the acknowledgement may be amended to reflect new learning. Starting September 27, 2021, this acknowledgment will be read at the beginning of each Council meeting, Committee of the Whole meetings, and significant events.

Learning

Council, staff and residents are encouraged to participate in the following education series, from [The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#). The Town will highlight and promote the series via social media.

- Monday September 20, at 2 pm [New Orange Shirt Day Book](#) Live Launch with Phyliss Webstad
- [Day 1 – Monday, September 27, 2021](#) - Treaties, Land Claims and Unceded Territories
- [Day 2 – Tuesday, September 28, 2021](#) - Language and Culture
- [Day 3 – Wednesday, September 29, 2021](#) - Truth and Reconciliation
- [Day 4 – Thursday, September 30, 2021](#) - Orange Shirt Day
- [Day 5 – Friday, October 1, 2021](#) - Knowledge Transfer, Elder and Youth Dialogues

Anyone can register for these learning opportunities at:
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/truth-and-reconciliation-week-tickets-153491752965>.

The Art's Society of Kingsville (ASK) will offer an event at the Carnegie Arts and Visitor Centre on the green from 1 to 4 PM. Indigenous members of ASK, from many nations, will host a traditional smudging, provide music with traditional drums and shakers. Braided sweet grass will be handed out to those who attend.

Honouring

Kingsville Goes Orange; As a simple way to remind ourselves and the community of Phyllis' orange shirt story, trees at the Carnegie Arts and Visitor Centre, and town facilities will be lit in orange where feasible.

During the event at the Carnegie, people will be asked to write notes to place on trees that honour those who have suffered, encourage unity today, or messages on how they will remember. These will then be showcased in the arena and Town office after the event.

Call to Action

To engage the community the following calls to actions will be done.

- Show your support by tying orange ribbons on your trees or lighting your house in orange
- Bring a pair of shoes to honour the children who are no longer here.
- Come to the Carnegie Arts and Visitor Centre to learn, write a tribute, and remember.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Strive to make the Town of Kingsville a more accessible community.

Promote the betterment, self-image and attitude of the community.

Link to Council 2021-2022 Priorities

- ☐ COVID-19 and the health and safety of the community
- ☐ Customer Service: Training, Technology, Staff, Review Standards/Level of service
- ☐ Housing: Affordability (lot sizes, developer incentives, second dwellings, density, etc.)
- ☐ Greenhouse: lights & dark sky, odours (site plan compliance, bylaws, other tools)
- ☐ Programming Increase: Youth and Seniors
- ☐ A development plan for Downtown Kingsville / Main Street
- ☐ Financial savings: Schools closings, Migration Hall
- ☐ Economic Development: strengthen tourism/hospitality

- ☐ COVID - economic recovery
- ☐ Communications: Strategy – Policy (social media), Website refresh and other tools, Public engagement
- ☐ Housing: Migrant Worker Housing – Inspections (Building/Fire), regulate, reduce, or increase
- ☐ Committees / Boards: Review and Report
- ☐ Policy Update: Procedural Bylaw
- ☐ Economic Development: diversify the economy, create local jobs, industrial, Cottam
- ☐ Infrastructure (non-Municipal): Union Water expansion & governance
- ☐ Infrastructure (Municipal): Asset Management Plan update, the infrastructure funding deficit
- ☒ No direct link to Council priorities

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

The cost to host these activities is approximately \$1,500 which includes an honorarium for the performers, purchase of outdoor lights, and supplies for activities. Funding for this will come from the Parks and Recreation program budget.

CONSULTATIONS

Arts Society of Kingsville
Caldwell First Nations

Karen Loney

Karen Loney, MA
Manager of Recreation Programs and Special Events

Name

Name, Credentials
Title/Position