

**STAFF REPORT:      ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**REPORT TO:**                    Infrastructure and Recreation  
   Committee  
**MEETING DATE:**            April 10, 2012  
**REPORT NO.:**                 EPW.12.026  
**SUBJECT:**                     Beach Certification Participation  
**PREPARED BY:**             Jeffery Fletcher, Manager of Solid  
   Waste and Environmental Initiatives

**A.      Recommendations**

THAT Council receive Staff Report EPW.12.026, entitled Beach Certification Participation, for their information.

**B.      Background**

The Town has participated in a beach certification program known as Blue Flag for the past 3 years and an additional pilot year in 2008. The Blue Flag program is a voluntary international “eco-label” program.

The Blue Flag program is owned and run by the independent non-profit organization Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and in Ontario the local programming is provided by Environmental Defence.

Participation in this program has helped implement a number of meaningful additions to the two participating beach areas (Little River and Northwinds), including public space recycling, new signage and additional lifesaving gear. The focus of the certification program is environmental improvements and beach safety and it is anticipated that many of the implemented improvements will continue on.

Increased financial constraints on the Town have lead to a reprioritization of staff time and finances. Town Staff in consultation with the Deputy Mayor, have notified Environmental Defence that the Town will not be submitting an application to FEE for Blue Flag Certification, for the 2012 season. The annual certification fee for this program was \$2,000. Staff time associated with promoting, organizing and running the related events will be reallocated to other environmental initiatives within the Town’s operations.

Blue Flag is a beneficial certification program, however, currently for the Town, the resources and Staff time required for this initiative are needed in other projects.

**C.      The Blue Mountains’ Strategic Plan**

Reallocation of resources away from the Blue Flag program “addresses the Town’s municipal infrastructure needs”.

**D. Environmental Impacts**

Similar awareness and educational programs will continue to occur at the Craigleith Heritage Depot and the local Health Unit will continue water sampling and awareness programs during the swimming season to monitor bacterial levels in the near shore waters.

**E. Financial Impact**

None

**F. In Consultation With**

Troy Speck, CAO  
Shawn Everitt, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Duncan McKinlay, Deputy Mayor

**G. Attached**

None

Respectfully submitted,

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