



The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle

To: Members of the Parks, Recreation and Events Committee

Prepared by: Patti Funaro, Director of Culture and Recreation

Department: Culture and Recreation

Date of Report: April 8, 2024

Report Number: CR-2024-06

Subject: Sean Kenney's Animal Superpowers Exhibit preliminary evaluation report

Recommendation

That the report of the Director of Culture and Recreation dated April 8, 2024 (CR-2024-06) regarding the preliminary evaluation of the Sean Kenney Animal Superpowers exhibit be received.

Report

During the Special Meeting of Council – Council Orientation on January 26, 2023, Council requested that Administration prepare a report detailing the feasibility of hosting a large-scale travelling exhibit at the Event Centre. This report (CR-2023-20) was received by Council at the April 25, 2023 meeting and the recommendation to host a large scale travelling exhibit as a pilot project at the Event Centre in the Winter of 2024 was approved. Financial outcomes were estimated to be between a net loss of \$370,000 and all costs recovered.

Administration worked with Imagine Exhibitions to choose the exhibit based on availability, size and largest general appeal to the public. Sean Kenney's Animal Superpowers Made with Lego Bricks featuring 26 sculptures made from about 1.3 million Lego pieces was selected. In addition to the widespread appeal of Lego, the educational content of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) made this an ideal exhibit to attract school field trips.

The following chart displays the projected expenses and revenues as estimated in April 2023 along with the actuals as of April 8, 2024.

Table 1- Expenses

Expenses	Project Cost	Draft Actual
Exhibit Rental (3 months)	236,000	227,000
Shipping	27,000	14,700
Set-up & Tear Down (labour)	30,000	47,005
Equipment Rental	20,000	57,000
Daily Operations Staff (5)	100,000	52,270
Daily Security	20,000	1400
Cleaning	20,000	13,750
Marketing & Promotion	20,000	19,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	27,000	30,575
Total Estimated Expenses:	500,000	462,700

Table 2 - Revenue

Revenue	Low End	Draft Actual	High End
Ticket sales	100,000	238,500	255,000
Sponsorships	30,000	73,800	50,000
Grants	-	unsuccessful	125,000
Wage subsidy grant	-	TBD	70,000
Funding from waterfront reserve	370,000	150,400	-
Total Estimated Revenue:	500,000	462,700	500,000

The overall contribution from the waterfront reserve at this time is \$150,400.00.

In total, 19,349 people visited the exhibit between January 19 and April 6, 2024.

- 11,436 of those were paid general admissions.

- 5187 of those were group ticket sales from field trips, most from school groups from 72 area schools and other groups such as Girl Guides and day camps.
- Other (unpaid) visitors included sponsor recognition events/tickets and children under three years of age.
- 9 birthday parties were held.
- 1068 visitors from beyond region (areas such as Chatham-Kent, London, Kitchener, Niagara Falls, Toronto, Michigan and Ohio to name a few).

It is not uncommon for expenses to exceed the revenue in a first-time event and the success of the event should not be measured solely on the financial result. It brought many visitors from the region and beyond while offering an indoor family activity during the shoulder event season and it has been a positive opportunity for LaSalle and the region through economic impact and exposure.

The Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (TREIM) provided by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) was used to estimate the economic impact of the exhibit on the local economy. The model defines tourism as activities that people engage in when travelling outside their usual environment for any purpose from forty (40) kilometers or more away from their home. Further details on this model and a detailed economic impact report on the exhibit are included in Appendix A.

The model estimates an economic impact of \$479,564.00 in the Southwest Ontario Tourism Region (RTO 1). The local economy was further supported by the creation of 21 part-time jobs to directly support the exhibit. Further employment was supported by the contracting of entertainers and event suppliers and services throughout the event. This supports the hospitality and tourism sector in the shoulder event season and continues to support post-Covid recovery.

Furthermore, the investment in this event has helped to promote the Event Centre, LaSalle Landing, the Waterfront Business District and the Town of LaSalle. For example, the VIP Launch Event welcomed 90 people to the exhibit featuring the artist, Sean Kenney and AM 800's Mike Kakuk and showcased the event centre and the exhibit to local dignitaries and community partners. The launch of the exhibit drew attention from 11 local media outlets, building recognition of LaSalle throughout the region.

Administration was able to secure a significant amount of sponsorship dollars. In addition to supporting the revenue of the event, 24 relationships with sponsors were developed or expanded, providing opportunities for the future. As a result of this, 6 private sponsor events with 767 visitors were held showcasing the event centre, the exhibit and LaSalle. In addition, administration contacted restaurants along Front Road to include them in promotions that were shared with the school groups attending the exhibit and has received unsolicited feedback from two local food service establishments that they have seen an increase in business as a result of the exhibit. An additional two local businesses had the opportunity to increase their sales and exposure by providing food and beverage services onsite for the duration of the event.

A partnership that was expanded was with Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI) to help promote the exhibit through a Social Media Influencer Event that brought ten local influencers and their guests to the exhibit. They created videos that were posted on their social media channels with a following of over 45,000 people and reshared to TWEPI's and the Town's pages. TWEPI also created a promotional flyer highlighting local experiences for day trippers, delivered promotional material to local hotels and listed the event in various special event guides.

Promotion for the event was handled in house by the Strategy and Engagement Department and is largest campaign ever undertaken with 216 social media posts, 178 unique graphics designed, 9 video promotions created, radio and digital campaigns and numerous other promotions including multiple media releases and print advertisements. The Promotions Infographic Report (Appendix B) indicates a high level of engagement with more than 1.9 million impressions. Some highlights include:

- Total impressions through all Town social media channels was over 450,000 reaching Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent and Michigan.
- There were over 35,000 page views of the exhibit webpage.
- There were over 600,000 impressions through agreements with Bell Media and Blackburn Media reaching audiences in Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent.
- Eleven local media outlets covered the event.

Visitor survey results provided by Imagine Exhibitions indicates a high level of satisfaction with the experience being rated at 4.83 out of 5 stars. In addition, 78% of attendees reported that it was their first visit to the event centre.

This pilot project provided an extensive learning opportunity for Town staff at all levels. As we continue to develop LaSalle Landing and expand our unique cultural programming, the Town is well positioned to continue to be an industry leader for the delivery of festivals and events.

Consultations

Joe Milicia, C.A.O.

Dale Langlois, Director of Finance

Dawn Hadre, Director of Strategy and Engagement

Scott Bisson, Manager of Culture and Recreation

Tana Ferraro, Manager of Finance

Owen Stichhaller, Supervisor of Recreation

Sue Nantais, Corporate Communications and Promotions Officer

Financial Implications

The overall contribution from the waterfront reserve is \$150,400.00.

Prepared By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Funaro".

Director of Culture & Recreation

Patti Funaro

Link to Strategic Goals

1. Enhancing organizational excellence - Yes
2. Strengthen the community's engagement with the Town - Yes
3. Grow and diversify the local economy - Yes
4. Build on our high-quality of life - Yes
5. Sustaining strong public services and infrastructure - Not Applicable

Communications

n/a

Notifications

n/a

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CR-2024-06Sean Kenney's Animal Superpowers Status Report.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A TREIM_Manual_2017_ENG.pdf - Appendix A - TREIM Economic Impact Summary.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 9, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Chief Administrative Officer

Joe Milicia