



Subject: 2026 Volunteer Awards Location & Date
To: Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee
Date Prepared: October 10, 2025
Related Motions: N/A
Prepared by: Aurora Douthwright, Tourism & Events Supervisor
Approved by: Alana Tapper, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture

Summary

For the 2026 East Hants Volunteer Awards and Volunteer Firefighter Long Service Awards ceremony, staff recommend the date of Friday, April 24, 2026 during National Volunteer Week (April 19 -25, 2026) and the recommended venue is the Mount Uniacke Royal Canadian Legion Branch 165, with a backup location of Rawdon.

Financial Impact Statement

Staff are proposing an event budget of \$7,500 in the 2026/2027 operating budget for Council consideration.

Recommendation

That Council approve to host the East Hants Volunteer Awards and Firefighter Long Service Awards on April 24, 2026 at the Mount Uniacke Royal Canadian Legion Branch 165. Staff have been made aware that catering may be a challenge to secure for the Mount Uniacke Legion; therefore, staff recommend adding Rawdon as a backup location for the event if that is the case.

Recommended Motion

Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommends that Council approve to host the East Hants Volunteer Awards and Firefighter Long Service Awards ceremony on April 24, 2026 at the Mount Uniacke Royal Canadian Legion Branch 165. If a caterer is not available for Mount Uniacke, Council approves that the event be held in Rawdon.

Background

The East Hants Volunteer Awards are held annually as a way to recognize the important role that volunteers play in our community. Each year a different location for the award ceremony is chosen throughout the municipality. In 2025, the event was held at the Noel & District Volunteer Fire Department and other recent locations include the Enfield Fire Hall (2024), Uniacke Legion (2023) and Rawdon Fire Hall (2022).

In 2025, 25 volunteers were recognized: 7 long service firefighters and 18 volunteer award recipients. One *Model Volunteer of the Year* award is given to a standout nominee for their extraordinary caring and commitment through volunteering. This recipient then represents East Hants at the annual Provincial Volunteer Awards.

Discussion

The East Hants Volunteer Awards include a ceremony and dinner. In 2025, the event was attended by approximately 120 volunteers, long service firefighter recipients, guests, staff and Council.

Each year a different location for the award ceremony is chosen throughout the municipality and the proposed location for 2026 is the Mount Uniacke Royal Canadian Legion Branch 165.

The Mount Uniacke Legion has been tentatively booked for April 24, 2026 date pending Council approval; however, staff have been told by the Legion that it may be challenging to secure a caterer (there are not volunteers at this Legion who regularly cater dinner events).

Staff are prepared to explore further local options (e.g. Wishgivers or church groups), but should these options not be available, staff recommend hosting the event in a space where onsite catering can be provided. In this case, Rawdon would be staff's next choice based on its central location.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Honoring volunteers' ties into our strong community by recognizing those that enhance the services, programs and facilities offered to residents.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staff are proposing an event budget of \$7,500 in the 2026/2027 operating budget for Council consideration.

Alternatives

An alternate date and location as per direction from Council.