**Community Programming Checklist**

**Getting Started**

**Consider**

* What do you want to achieve with a program/special event?
* What are your organization’s overall goals?
* What opportunities will this event create for your organization?
* What are the needs and assets in your community?
* What are the board’s expectations: to make money, lose money, break even or subsidize the program/special event?
* Create an Organizing Committee
* Depending on the size of the event/program, the program director may be the chair of this committee
* Find members with talent, time, commitment and creativity in the following areas:
* Finance
* Marketing & Communications
* Site/Facility Prep
* Volunteer/Staff Coordination
* Contingency Planning

**Identify What Program or Special Event You Are Planning**

* Create/update your annual plan
* Find out what has been done in the past
* Ask what neighbouring communities are doing
* Look for potential partnerships
* Determine what activities are popular
* Consider your demographics – age, marital status, cultural diversity

**Program Planning Overview**

* The role of a program planner is to:
* Book appropriate facilities for your program
* Hire an instructor for your program
* Coordinate program registration and the collection of fees
* Advertise your programs
* Keep statistics for evaluation purposes
* Evaluate program and present final report to the Board of Directors

**Program Details**

* Date and Time
* Is this a one time program or will there be multiple sessions?
* Who are your participants?
* What is the best day of the week and time of the day for the program?
* Location
* What amenities are required to run the program (i.e., washrooms, kitchen, size of facility, material storage)?
* Do you have access to a facility that can accommodate these requirements?
* Is the facility accessible for people with disabilities?
* Does the facility have a first aid kit and incident/accident forms?
* Consider using a local school and contact 311 for more information on the school joint use program information

**Budget** (Does this need to be approved by the board?)

* Expenses: what are your costs to run this program/event?
* Instructor
* Special equipment
* Rental fees
* Insurance, licenses or permits
* Advertising
* Food
* Income: who is paying?
* Participants
* Community group (community league)
* Sponsors
* Grants
* A combination of the above
* Create your Budget
* Compile your list of expenses and income into one document
* Include a contingency amount that is 10 – 15% of your total budget
* Ensure that this financial outcome corresponds to the Board’s goal for the event
* Don’t overestimate your income
* Secure board approval for your budget, if required
* Managing your Budget
* Track your actual expenses and income for comparison with your budget
* Make adjustments, as necessary (for example determine if you need to make more money, reduce
* your expenses or spend more money to achieve the board approved goal for the program)

**Hiring Your Instructor**

* Confirm your instructor is qualified and meets the required certification for the program
* Obtain a completed Edmonton Police Service Information Check and Child Welfare Information
* Systems check
* If you are contracting or hiring an instructor’s services, a written instructor contract is recommended
* Please contact the Worker’s Compensation Board, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, and your
* insurance provider to determine how to best deal with each scenario

**Fee and Registration Procedure**

* Determine the board’s expectations: to make money, lose money, break even or subsidize the program
* Determine the program cost based on the board’s expectations
* Create a cancellation policy, collect contact information and ensure adequate notice is given to cancel a program
* Determine the best method for registration (e.g., phone or mail in, hosting a registration day, online ticket sales)
* Determine who will sell tickets and/or collect registration information
* Collect participant information including any medical considerations, behaviour issues and information on who can pick the participant up

**Advertising**

* Determine the best way to reach your potential participants (e.g., posters, newsletters, website, changeable copy signs, schools, flyer drop offs etc.).
* Build in enough time for the promotion of the program. Remember to try to find at least 3 ways to reach each person that you want to invite.
* Posters should include:
* Program details (e.g., title and description of the program, date, time, location, fees, age of participants, any equipment requirements)
* Contact information
* Registration information
* Cancellation policy

**The Program**

* Bring supplies, program registration/attendance forms, receipts
* Set up for the program based on program needs
* Ensure volunteer/staff knows their duties/roles
* Let the program happen!
* Clean Up
* Ensure all outstanding invoices have been paid

**Wrap-up**

**Volunteer Celebration**

* Consider the best way to recognize your volunteers after the event (e.g., host a small celebration at the very end, showcase/thank your volunteers in your community newsletter, invite volunteers to an annual volunteer gala etc.)

**Evaluation**

* How do you plan to use the evaluation information? This will help you in determining both who you want to collect information from (participants, committee, and/or volunteers) and how you want to collect it
* Do you feel it is worthwhile to run this program/event again, what went well, what could be improved upon, what did you learn?
* Consider how you will present the information to the board (verbal report, written report, statistical report)
* Record finalized budget
* Create an information/learning package so that future planning committees can do the same and then give it to the community league board to keep for future reference