

Orangeville council changes food truck rules

By **JAMES MATTHEWS, LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER**

Food truck operators can now volunteer for fundraisers in Orangeville without having a permit for that specific event.

But at least one representative of a non-profit group believes the bylaw amendment creates an unfair marketplace for some mobile food vendors.

Town council amended a couple of bylaws when it met on May 15 that exempted such operators from the permit requirement if the money they make is part of the charitable effort.

The special event organizers and mobile food vendors will be required to follow the processes established under Special Event Permit application process, which incorporate obtaining approvals from public health, fire services, and fulfilling insurance and other requirements.

This change maintains the requirements that ensure the public's health and safety. It also mitigates risk to the town while removing an administrative burden for event organizers.

Mobile food vendors won't have to go through a duplicate licensing or permit processes.

Mayor Lisa Post said there were some intricacies to the bylaw that were of concern to the local Royal Canadian Legion branch and some other organizations in town.

Carolina Khan, the town's clerk, said there is concern that the municipality isn't giving a fee reduction to local service clubs conducting fundraising events and want to use mobile food vendors as part of that effort.

Khan said the bylaw provides a fee reduction for local charitable organizations and service clubs that raise money for their own purpose. If they're using a food truck, the club or organization members have to be the people who prepare and handle the food.

"If an organization is using a mobile food vendor for that fundraising event, then the bylaw requires that mobile food vendor donate all of the proceeds ... to that organization," Khan said.

Council passed its Parks and Special Events Bylaw on March 20.

In working through the permitting process for upcoming special events taking place in the town, staff saw a need to consolidate the bylaw that regulates parks and special events and the bylaw that governs mobile food vendors operating in the town.

Staff felt legislation should exempt mobile food vendors operating under a special event, as permitted by the town pursuant to the Parks and Special Events Bylaw, from having to apply for a mobile food vendor licence to operate solely at that event.

Basically, a food truck operator can be part of a charitable fundraising event without getting a permit. But all other vendors still need the required permits if their operating near the fundraising event but not as part of the charitable effort.

Special events, however, such as the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival and Rotary Ribfest, do not fit the exemption criteria within the Mobile Food Vendors Bylaw as they are not part of the Market on Broadway, organized by the Orangeville Business Improvement Area or are town-initiated events.

Barry Kimber, president of the Royal Canadian Legion's Orangeville branch, said there remains an unfairness in the legislation.

The Legion is a non-profit organization that raises money. But they're not part of the Market on Broadway, and they're having a parking lot party fundraiser with a band, and such isn't a town-initiated event.

So any food truck at the Legion event isn't exempt from the permitting process.

"I think there's inconsistency there," Kimber said.

The Legion brass was planning events for June and July to raise some coins for the organization's insurance payments. To ask a food truck operator to help out when they would have to pay a \$600 licensing fee for two events is ridiculous, he said.

"Simply because we're a non-profit," Kimber said.

A food vendor working a town-initiated event keeps the money earned through sales, but the same vendor who sets up in the Legion parking lot for an event has to turn over all the earnings.

"That doesn't work," Kimber said. "I'm looking for consistency right across the board."

For the Legion to cover the vendor's permit fees, that would cut into any charitable donations.

"I think we should be bending over backwards for our Legion," said Councillor Andy Macintosh. "I think we need to find a way to fix this."

Khan said the special permit process requires vendors to ensure all the health and safety requirements. That makes the mobile food vendor bylaw requirements redundant.

"There's no real requirement for us to go through that process and make them do that paperwork for all of that stuff twice," Khan said. "It just doesn't really make a lot of sense."

She said staff could investigate what can be done to widen the provisions for non-profit groups and how they operate their fundraisers.

Providing a blanket fee reduction could be a disincentive for vendors to buy an annual \$600 permit to operate beyond fundraisers.

"What could potentially be the case is that they will come, asking to get a \$25 license up to 24 times," Khan said. "And we're issuing 24 licenses, potentially. So there is a balance to be struck there."

The mayor suggested the Legion apply for a one-time community grant from the council to cover the \$600 license for their mobile food vendor.

"Hopefully we'll find a solution for you this year," Post said.