

Memo

From: Alfred Von Mirbach
To: Joellen McHard, LCCJ Executive Director
Date: June 14, 2020
Re: 2021 Polar Bear Plunge – June update

Amir Van Alphen has done a great job of working within the Canada Helps portal to create a peer to peer site where people can now register to be a plunger and create their own profile page. This allows the plunger to then send a unique link to their friends via email or social media, and any donations made via that link will go directly to the LCCJ Canada Helps account, but be flagged as being collected by that plunger. Tax receipts would go out automatically to the donor, from Canada Helps.

The site is now technically “live” (see link below to get a sense of what it looks like and how it works). Once the Board makes a determination that circumstances with respect to COVID 19 are such that we can officially launch, we would start getting the word out via websites (ours and the main Polar Bear Plunge one), emails, social media, other media, and word of mouth.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/lanark-county-community-justice-program-inc/p2p/LCCJ2021Plunge/>

Amir also indicated that a local band he works with, RedFox, is potentially interested in getting involved, both by plunging, and by playing an after-event gig (we were thinking maybe at Weatherhead). RedFox has some local connections and a strong local following.

Launch Decision

The Board might consider a discussion at their next meeting regarding whether the recent easing of restrictions might be enough to warrant making the decision to public launch the campaign. The event could not be held in the way it has been run in the past, unless provincial restrictions ease further between now and January 1, but it is anticipated that further easing will be announce in the coming weeks or months. However, there might be a second wave come fall or early winter that would tighten restrictions again.

Any launch announcement would therefore have to address these uncertainties, so it should be a “conditional” launch. LCCJ could commit to holding the plunge, subject to the following criteria (and any others the Board or others might recommend):

- abide by all provincial and local health unit recommendations regarding public events and physical distancing, including, if needed, allowing only one or two plungers at a time, controlling the number of (or banning) spectators at the event, scrapping the breakfast, controlling registration etc
- in a worst-case scenario, the plunge could still be carried out on New Year's Day with a “virtual” version using the ice-bucket challenge model, done at each plungers home
- if there is a second wave in the fall or early winter, and it becomes clear there is some more urgent community need for the funds raised, LCCJ would consider redirecting some or all of the funds raised to this need.