

From: Minett, Muskoka; April 2024

Dear Muskoka Lakes Township,

We are writing to express our appreciation that Mayor Peter Kelley is already concerned about JW Marriott's proposed 10,000 person event for this Canada Day weekend. Council has our full support to enact any legislation that would prevent such an event from occurring anywhere in Muskoka.

As seasonal cottagers and permanent residents on Lake Rosseau, Lake Joseph, Bruce Lake and the broader Minett community, we are strongly opposed to any event that will not only cause harm to both the environment and its inhabitants but also present a threat to public safety. In the case of the JW Marriott and not too dissimilar to other resort zoned properties in Muskoka, Minett is a rural neighbourhood that is over 40 kilometers away from the nearest hospital, too far for an emergency that could easily occur when 10,000 or more people congregate in a small space.

We are very familiar with Peninsula Road and environs, and we cannot but foresee the congestion issues that would arise if 10,000 additional people arrive and depart from Minett on any given day. Where are all these people planning to park their cars and boats? How will spectators in boats floating in the bay be managed? How are emergency services planning to assist any of these 10,000+ people, not to mention the residents along the corridor between Joe and Rosseau, if the roads are blocked? Even with regular traffic, the single-lane bridge at Port Sandfield can cause backups and the winding road to Rosseau is dangerous for bus travel. Where are all these people planning to sleep? Even if a small portion of the 10,000 participants cannot find accommodations between Minett, Rosseau and Port Carling, we could have tents pitched anywhere and possibly everywhere! How will their waste be managed? Rowdy crowds can also lead to vandalism and theft. Please, let's not subject Muskoka communities to events that would definitely require extra police patrol.

Muskoka is the perfect place to hold a small gathering of music-lovers. Muskoka Chautauqua's 2023 Summer Festival hosted several artists in Windermere for a few hundred people to enjoy relaxing music on the shore of Lake Rosseau, respectfully during the day and into the early evening. Muskoka is not a destination for loud outdoor concerts and enormous crowds. Events like the outdoor music festival that the JW Marriott is wanting to host are meant for large towns and cities where day traffic, busing, police and other support services are readily available.

Thank you for taking into consideration all of our concerns regarding far too large a gathering in the middle of a residential community with limited infrastructure. We are very concerned that tickets are already on sale for an event that has failed to be accompanied by a suitable plan for public health and safety. Please amend Special Event By-law 2024-046 to include permit requirements for any township event of over 500 people, outlining very specific obligations to prevent any harm plus very expensive penalties if those requirements are not followed. Signed Sincerely by Over 220 Concerned Muskoka Citizens ... so Far!