

Looking ahead to future Music Festivals

By Brock Weir

Although Aurora Live! is dead in the water, other proponents of having a music festival of some sort in Aurora are keeping their eyes on Council not just this week, but over the next two as well.

Farley Flex, for instance, one of the key names that left Lucid Productions in the middle of their planning for Aurora Live said they would not rule out the possibility of applying for a permit for some sort of music event this year, but would not expand further pending Council's expected decision to reissue an RFP for summer music festival for next year.

To that end, Councillor John Abel will introduce a motion this week indicating the Town's desire to hold a music festival, but calling on the rest of Council to establish an ad-hoc committee with clear terms of reference to assist in the development and promotion of any application that comes forward.

Since news of Aurora Live's demise there have been rumblings that additional groups are poised to come in and pull something off this year if the opportunity presents itself. No further applications, however, have come forward so far.

Another set of eyes keeping a close watch on things is Sher St. Kitts, long-time organizer of the Aurora Jazz+ Festival, which now plans to hold their annual Civic Holiday Weekend festivities at Newmarket's Riverwalk Commons after the brouhaha last year over the use of Town Park for that particular weekend.

While there were always tension between organizers of the Jazz Fest and certain members of Council, matters came to a head late last summer following a motion from Councillor Evelyn Buck to open up the use of Town Park that weekend for all community groups wanting to use it for a music festival over the holiday.

Ultimately, Ms. St. Kitts and her Aurora Festival of the Arts group opted not to bid on the park and take their business elsewhere.

When asked last week in the aftermath of the Aurora Live implosion if she would be willing to give Aurora another look, she left the door open.

"We are so busy with our new festival, however it has always been our goal and desire to support and showcase local entertainers, musicians, and visual artists," she said. "To that end, we might consider this idea with input from our board."

"In many ways, given all the work it requires, it would all depend on whether or not Aurorans want the Aurora jazz+ Festival back and would be willing to support it."