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Item No.
Grants Committee
March 6, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of HRM Grants Committee

SUBMITTED BY: **Original Signed**

Chief Doug Trussler, Fire & Emergency Services

DATE: January 18, 2017

SUBJECT: **Volunteer Search and Rescue Grants Program: Recommended Awards –
Fiscal Year 2016-17**

ORIGIN

February 3, 2015 – Regional Council's approval of Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM Respecting Grants to Volunteer Search and Rescue Organizations.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- *HRM Charter* (2008) s. 79 (1) Council may expend money required by the Municipality for...
(av) a grant or contribution to
(v) a charitable, nursing, medical, athletic, educational, environmental, cultural, community, fraternal, recreational, religious, sporting or social organization
(vii) a registered Canadian charitable organization
- *Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM Respecting Grants to Volunteer Search and Rescue Organizations.*

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Grants Committee recommend Regional Council approve:

1. the award of four (4) operating grants as described in the Discussion section of this report for a combined total of \$125,148 from Account C801-8004;
2. the award of three (3) capital grants as described in the Discussion section of this report for a combined total of \$14,975 from Account C801-8004; and
3. the allocation of \$8,377 towards EMO JEM as described in the Discussion section of this report from Account C801-8004.

BACKGROUND

Volunteer search and rescue teams provide assistance to all three levels of government in the event of a missing person search, an evacuation, natural or man-made disaster, or evidence search. Although the four (4) organizations formally recognized by HRM are based in predominantly rural locations their search areas cover the entire region and on occasion more than one unit may be called upon to provide volunteer personnel and equipment.

Operating grants are based on an average of three years core recurring operating expenses. Capital grants support the purchase of real property; substantive structural repairs or expansion of a facility or infrastructure owned by the non-profit; purchase of specialized equipment. Capital grants are based on an evaluation of merit and in relation to the balance remaining in the program's budget after proposed operating grants are deducted. The scoring criteria for capital grants is included as Attachment 1 of this report.

Readers are directed to www.halifax.ca/legislation/adminorders/index.php for a copy of the program's policy Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM.

DISCUSSION

The value of recommended operating grant is based on the average of the preceding three (3) year actuals as presented in the applicant's financial reporting.

Table 1. Proposed Operating Grants – 2016		
Organization	Proposed Award	Status
Eastern Shore Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$30,052	Registered charity, property owner.
Halifax Regional Search & Rescue Team	\$47,807	Registered charity, property owner.
Musquodoboit Valley Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$17,681	Registered society. Occupant of HRM property.
Sheet Harbour Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$29,608	Registered society.
TOTAL	\$125,148	

In 2016, a total of five (5) capital grant applications were submitted for a combined total of \$54,342. The value of requests exceeds the balance remaining in the 2016 program budget. Recommended awards are summarized below in Table 2 followed by a narrative description.

Table 2. Proposed Capital Grants – 2016		
Organization	Proposed Award	Rationale
Eastern Shore Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$6,975	Purchase of two (2) kayaks and related safety equipment.
Halifax Regional Search & Rescue Team	\$2,500	\$2,500 upgrade to 12 TMR1 radios to TMR2 platform.
Musquodoboit Valley Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$5,500	Purchase of truck cap and rollout bed for vehicle.
TOTAL	\$14,975	

Eastern Shore Ground Search and Rescue Team (ESGSAR) – Head of Chezzetcook

ESGSAR is a registered Canadian charity and incorporated in Nova Scotia as a non-profit society. Two capital grants requested: (i) \$2,979 to fully fund the purchase of two canoes and safety equipment, and (ii) \$6,975 to fully fund the purchase of two kayaks and related equipment. The equipment is to enhance search and rescue capabilities in remote lake or coastal locations. The review selected the purchase of kayaks for ease of use, equipment, and four dry suits for year-round operations.

A capital grant of \$6,975 to the Eastern Shore Ground Search and Rescue Team recommended to fully fund the purchase of two (2) kayaks and related equipment.

Halifax Regional Search and Rescue Team (HRSAR) - Lakeview

HRSAR is a registered Canadian charity and incorporated in Nova Scotia as a non-profit society. Two capital grants requested: (i) \$2,500 to fund the conversion of TMR1 radios to the TMR2 platform, and (ii) \$36,388 to purchase a vehicle for a combined total of \$38,888.

- (i) HRM recently transitioned from TMR1 radio system to the TMR2 system for radio communications. During the change-over surplus radios were identified that still have a serviceable life. The applicant wishes to convert the radios to a common radio network in preference to using cellular telephones. The inclusion of monthly airtime charge (\$129) is considered a recurring operating expense and is deducted from 'capital' cost but the recommended award includes one-time fees for system activation.
- (ii) The purchase of a replacement all-terrain vehicle and assorted equipment is not recommended in 2016. The trade-in value is shown as \$5,000 and the balance of funding is unconfirmed. Refer to 2017 program with feedback.

A capital grant of \$2,500 to the Halifax Search and Rescue Team recommended to convert used radios for TMR2 system compatibility.

Musquodoboit Valley Ground Search and Rescue (MVGSAR) – Middle Musquodoboit

MVGSAR is incorporated in Nova Scotia as a non-profit society. A grant of \$5,500 requested to purchase a truck cap and pull-out bed totalling \$6,707.

A grant of \$5,500 to the Musquodoboit Valley Ground Search and Rescue Team recommended towards the purchase of vehicle equipment.

More than one application from the same organization, each submitted by different members, suggests either a lack of internal coordination and conflicting priorities. Feedback will be provided to applicants for consideration in any future submission. An amendment to policy may be required for clarification.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In 2016, an amount of \$148,500 has been budgeted in Account C801-8004, including \$8,377 for Joint Emergency Management Teams (JEM). These volunteer committees are not registered non-profit organizations; Fire & Emergency Services purchases equipment and supplies through HRM's procurement process and the assets remain the property of the Municipality.

C801-8004 Emergency Measures: Grants 2016 Budget	\$148,500
Less JEM allocation	(\$8,377)
Less Proposed Operating Grants (4)	(\$125,148)
Less Proposed Capital Grants (3)	<u>(\$14,975)</u>
Balance	\$0

RISK CONSIDERATION

Low. Financial reports are submitted annually to Fire & Emergency Services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Grants Committee comprises four (4) members of Regional Council of which one (1) must be a member of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee, and six (6) members of the general public. The Chair shall be appointed by the Audit & Finance Standing Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

The Grants Committee could amend or overturn a staff recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Capital Grants: Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

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Financial Approval by: Original Signed
Amanda Whitewood, Director of Finance and Information Technology/CFO, 902.490.6308

Attachment 1

Capital Grants: Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

As stated in policy (Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM) a capital grant is:

- a non-recurring financial award towards the purchase of large equipment, the purchase of real property, construction, expansion or retrofit of a facility or amenity including in-ground infrastructure and telecommunications capacity, instrumentation or specialized safety equipment, and major structural repairs to existing amenities (Section 2.g);
- supports the purchase of real property, substantive structural repairs or expansion of an existing facility or infrastructure owned by the non-profit organization¹, the purchase of instrumentation, specialized or safety equipment in excess of \$500 per item, including ancillary parts or operating system (Section 4.2);

The application form provides directions to potential applicants. The evaluation criteria for capital grants requested under the grants to volunteer search and rescue program is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1. Weighted Score for Capital Grant Evaluation		
Category	Rationale	Score
Mandatory Standards	Legislative requirement, insurance liability, code or by-law compliance, standards required by agent of jurisdiction	25
Safety	Life safety systems, specialized large-scale rescue equipment	20
Service Capacity	Vehicle, telecommunications, computerized service enhancement	20
Real Property	Acquisition, construction, expansion, retrofit, capital improvement, environmental remediation	20
Incremental Impact	The project cannot proceed in whole or in part without municipal funding	15
TOTAL		100

¹ An exception may be granted for a 20-year lease in relation to the balance of terms remaining under the lease and the owner's responsibilities.