



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Information Item No. 1
Grants Committee
December 2, 2019

TO: Chair and Members of the Grants Committee

SUBMITTED BY: -Original Signed-
Jane Fraser, CFO/Director of Finance, Asset Management & ICT

-Original Signed-
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 7, 2019

SUBJECT: Central Access Point to Grants Information On Halifax.ca

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

December 10, 2018 Grants Committee Meeting: memorandum from staff entitled "Opportunities for Coordination of Municipal Grants Programs".

Motion approved: "*THAT the Grants Committee endorse the direction proposed by staff with respect to the Coordination of Municipal Grant Programs*".

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, S.N.S 2008, c.39

Section 79A

- (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if
 - (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality; ...

Grants Committee Terms of Reference:

4.1 Advise Regional Council on all matters related to the allocation of grants, as defined by Regional Council;

4.2 Develop eligibility criteria, priorities, policy and procedures for assistance under the respective programs and services managed under the auspices of the HRM Grants Program portfolio;

BACKGROUND

At the December 10, 2018 Grants Committee meeting a staff memorandum to the Grants Committee, “*Opportunities for Coordination of Municipal Grants Programs*” was on the agenda for discussion. The main topics of the memorandum included:

1. HRM Web Site – Access Page for Grants.
2. Schedule of Grants Committee Meetings,
3. Compliance with Section 79(2) of HRM Charter
4. Requests for Data
5. Added Items.

This information report only addresses item 1, HRM Web Site – Access Page for Grants and item 3. Compliance with Section 79(2) of the HRM Charter.

DISCUSSION

Halifax Regional Municipality offers a variety of grant and contribution programs available primarily for non-profit and charitable organizations.¹ The administration of the various grant programs does not fall solely under the authority of one municipal business unit. In conjunction with this, the promotion of the various grant programs through halifax.ca is fragmented and not consolidated in one web page/access site. To increase efficiency and improve customer service staff have developed a central on-line access point which directs the user to the appropriate web page of each individual program. This will also enable HRM staff not involved in the administration and delivery of grant programs as well as Councillors, the ability to direct all grant inquiries to one web page which contains the links to a majority of grant programs offered by HRM. General grant inquires can now be directed to a web page listed as Community/Non-Profit Resources. The URL is <http://halifax.ca/grants>.

Additional efficiencies presented to HRM:

In April 9, 2019 the Provincial Government passed Bill 92 which introduced amendments to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter including a directive that municipalities develop a policy in respect to the disclosure of grant recipients². Prior to this amendment, the HRM Charter required Halifax Regional Municipality to publicize a list of all grant recipients in a newspaper in circulation throughout the region.³ Pending the development of the policy, a central online access to grant program information will enable business units responsible for the delivery of a grant program to post any mandatory grant information required for compliance to the *HRM Charter* on their web page with a link to the central on-line access point.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

¹ The Provincial Government’s Heritage Advisory Act allows HRM to provide financial incentives to private owners of registered heritage properties. Non-profit and charities that own heritage registered properties can apply to HRM’s Community Grants Program for heritage restoration/preservation.

² *HRM Charter* 79C (1) The Council shall adopt a policy that requires the Municipality to disclose to the public a list of recipients of grants made by the Municipality and the amounts of those grants.

³ *HRM Charter* (2008) s.79(2) a grant issued pursuant to s.71(1) shall be publicized in a newspaper in circulation throughout the region.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Grants Committee is comprised of a voting membership of one elected member of Regional Council from each Community Council, the Chair appointed from the membership of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee (also an elected member of Regional Council), and six (6) citizens-at-large. Grant Committee meetings are open to the public unless otherwise indicated. Agendas, minutes and reports are available on the Halifax Regional Municipality's website

ATTACHMENTS

1. Item No. 9.1.1 Staff Memorandum to HRM Grants Committee, Opportunities for Coordination of Municipal Grants Programs, December 10, 2018.
2. "Snap shot" of the <http://halifax.ca/grants>

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Peter Greechan, Community Developer, Grants & Contributions, Finance & Asset Management. 902.490,7310



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MEMORANDUM

TO: HRM Grants Committee/ Liam McSween; Erica Fleck; Elizabeth Taylor; Scott Sheffield; Aaron Mernaghan; Erin Blay, Cathie Barrington

CC: Bruce Fisher/Jean Myatt, Finance & Asset Management

FROM: Peta-Jane Temple, Finance & Asset Management

DATE: November 3, 2018

SUBJECT: **Opportunities for Coordination of Municipal Grant Programs**

The scheduling of Grants Committee meetings has been challenging in the last year or two, primarily due to (i) the proliferation of formal municipal grant programs, and (ii) the introduction of report centre and mandatory approvals. The matter has been raised with the Grants Committee and they are agreeable to reviewing how meetings can be scheduled to address time-sensitive requests and the timely payment to non-profit groups (e.g. events, capital projects).

Also, Grants & Contributions is evidently not alone in trying to administer grant payments in a timely manner, collect data regarding past awards or current requests applying to more than one municipal source, and “one-off unsolicited requests”. There may be opportunities for staff to collaborate and improve access to information – both internally and to the public.

The Grants Committee have expressed an interest in hearing from staff and may have input and ideas to share. Therefore, the **December 10, 2018**, meeting of the committee will be devoted to this topic. **The meeting will be held in the Harbour East Community Council Room, Main Floor, Alderney Gate (opposite the Dartmouth Library), 1:00pm to 3pm.**

This memo is an invitation to meet and discuss issues of mutual concern and brainstorm possible solutions. Attendance is voluntary. Delegation is an option. Individuals unable to attend can send written comments to Peter Greechan for inclusion in our discussion/recommendations. Email: greechp@halifax.ca or call 902.490.7310. Feel free to share this memo and gather input from your colleagues.

1. HRM Web Site – Access Page for Grants

- *Is there support for requesting Corporate Communications add a page to the web site (and link to search for “grants”) that lists all HRM grant programs with a link to a*

Finance & Asset Management

Tel: 902.490.5469
Email: templep@halifax.ca halifax.ca

department's page with applicable policy, application timelines, application forms, contact information etc.?

The aim would be to establish a "single-point-of-entry" and then link to each program's policy and procedures. This might reduce misdirected applications, increase awareness, and/or help potential applicants self-manage.

2. Schedule of Grants Committee Meetings

There has been an increase in the number of municipal grant programs and the time required for report approvals has lengthened. This combination appears to put pressure on the timing of Grants Committee meetings. For example, the number of meetings cancelled due to a lack of agenda items and requests to add additional or "special" meetings to accommodate the timing of a staff report.

Is it possible for staff to collaborate on the timing of grant recommendation reports, possibly amending a program's application deadline, to schedule reports and Grants Committee meetings?

Options include:

- Quarterly Grants Committee meetings of longer duration;
- Dropping a meeting in one or more months with two meetings in a month of high volume (e.g. June);
- Current monthly schedule but with better communication to the Grants Committee/Clerk to avoid last-minute cancellations or a lack of quorum;
- Other?

The ability of the Clerks office to support, volunteers and councillors to accommodate will be part of the discussion.

Report Centre has recently added more time for Legal review (10 days) which will add to the time it takes for an approval.

- *Is it possible to map out the applicable program application deadlines and projected report to Grants Committee date over a 12-month period?*
- *Can some programs be modified to include a multi-year element/category?*

For example, multi-year grants are included for some larger, recurring events; the interim community museums operating grants are multi-year (with annual project grants).

3. Compliance with Section 79(2) of HRM Charter

Legislation requires that grants and contributions issued under the authority of Section 79(1) of the HRM Charter are to be advertised in a newspaper circulating throughout the region. With the

exception of Transit, I don't think we're complying this this obligation especially in relation to "one-off" awards issued outside of an established grant program (ie. under a Contribution Agreement).

- *Can we collaborate on one advert placed early in the following fiscal year that would direct the public to either (i) the shared web site page and/or (ii) the applicable web page for each program?*
- *Is an annual compilation of any merit?*

4. Requests for Data

There is no central repository of information for awards issued in prior years (precedence) or in the current year. Because the delivery of grant programs is fragmented across the organization with no central data repository or reporting assembling multi-year data by sector is grossly inefficient. Also, there are no standards for reporting (type/degree of detail).

- *How might the issue of data collection be addressed to improve efficiency?*
- *Should in-kind assistance be quantified and included? For example, less than market value rent, less than market value property sales, in-kind donations of goods and services, discretionary awards under District Activity/Capital Fund.*

5. Added Items

If time permits, we can add items of mutual interest and if necessary schedule a follow-up meeting.

Please can you send confirmation to Peter Greechan via email so that we can prepare should handouts be included etc.

Thank you for your consideration.

Community / Non-Profit Resources

The following list contains links to various resources primarily in the form of grants available mainly to non-profit and charities located within Halifax Regional Municipality. If any of the links are not functioning properly you may e-mail nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca to report the problem.

- [Community Interest Property Sales](#): Less than market value property sales; non-profits & charities only.
- [Community Grants Program](#): Annual project and capital grant opportunities for eligible non-profits & charities.
- [Tax Relief for Non-Profit Organizations Program](#): Non-profit organization may reduce their property tax payments through the Tax Relief for Non-Profit Organizations Program.
- [Interim Community Museums Grant Program](#): Operating & project grant opportunities for eligible Community Museums.
- [Professional Arts Grant Program](#): Operating and project grant opportunities for eligible not-for-profit professional arts organizations.

In Doing business with Halifax

Procurement



Community Interest Surplus Properties
Disposal

Community Museums Grant Program

Marketing Levy

Reducing Red Tape

Why do business in Halifax?

Get business permits & licences online

Community Grants



Community / Non-Profit Resources

Tax relief for non-profit organizations

- [Event Grants](#): Various types of event grant opportunities.
- [Rural Transit Grant Program](#): Funding opportunities for not for profit groups providing transit services in Halifax Regional Municipalities rural communities.
- [Host A Bike Week Event - Grants available!](#) Enables community organizations, non-profits, and charitable organizations to host events across Halifax to celebrate cycling and the benefits it brings to our communities in the first week of June.
- [Heritage Incentives Program](#): Provides cost-shared grants to help property owners undertake exterior conservation and maintenance work on their registered heritage properties.
- [Neighbourhood Placemaking](#). The Program provides guidance and support to community members interested in hosting a project in their neighbourhood.
- [Community Arts](#): Support for members of the public to think creatively about how they can connect with their communities and neighbourhoods through collaborative arts projects.
- [Business Improvement District Contribution Fund](#): Annual matching grants available to those Business Improvement District recognized under Halifax Regional Municipality's Administrative Order 47 Respecting the Creation of the Business Improvement Districts.