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Item No. 9.1.1
Special Events Advisory Committee
January 20, 2020

TO: Chair and Members of Special Events Advisory Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Denise Schofield, Director, Parks & Recreation

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 19, 2019

SUBJECT: Significant Anniversary Funding Request Halifax ComedyFest

ORIGIN

Applications received pursuant to Administrative Order Number 2014-020-GOV - Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Grants.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter 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;

Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV – Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants.

Administrative Order 2014-015 ADM - Respecting Reserve Funding Strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Special Events Advisory Committee (SEAC) recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve funding in the amount of \$2,300 to the Halifax Comedy Festival Society for the 25th Anniversary of the Halifax Comedy Fest from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621.

BACKGROUND

The Halifax ComedyFest festival was established in 1995 and currently remains one of the longest running comedy festivals in the region. The festival hosts 16 shows over 4 days on various stages throughout the municipality. The event showcases over 30 comedians broadcasted nationally on CBC TV.

On June 4, 2019 Regional Council approved 3-year funding for the Halifax ComedyFest in the amount \$25,000 per year pending budget approval for 2019/20; 2020/21; 2021/22 through the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve (MLSER) Signature Events program.

DISCUSSION

In April 2020, the Halifax Comedy Festival will celebrate its 25th Anniversary. An application to the significant anniversary program was received which requested \$15,000 to fund additional milestone performances and a video montage of the years to play during the festival. The application has been reviewed by staff. Section 4(a)(iv) Administrative Order Number 2014-020-GOV¹ allows for additional funding up to a maximum of 10% of the previous year's total grant amount to support additional programming for a quarter century anniversary of an event. Where the event will take place prior to April and within the 2019/20 fiscal year, 2018/19 would be considered the previous year under the Administrative Order. In 2018 the Halifax Comedy Festival Society was awarded \$23,000 through the MLSER Signature Events program, therefore as per the Administrative Order the Halifax Comedy Festival Society qualifies for funding in the amount of \$2,300 to enhance its anniversary programming. This grant is in addition to the 2020 funding for the event in the amount of \$25,000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Reserve budget, the funding is available in the Community and Events Reserve (Q621) with no additional increased withdrawal required. No applicants have any outstanding monies owed to the Municipality.

Net Reserve Balance, at March 31, 2019	\$ 1,485,800
Budget Allocation 2019/20	\$ 1,760,938
Total budgeted withdrawals for 2019/20	<u>\$(2,261,800)</u>
Reserve projected net available balance, March 31/20	\$ 984,938

*Recommended 2019/20 grant awards as per this report of \$2,300 are included in the total withdrawals for 2019/20. Subsequent reports will award the remaining funds.

Community and Event Reserve, Q621 is used to provide funding to attract and host exceptional large – scale sporting and tourism events that create significant economic impacts, promote Halifax as a multi – experiential event destination and attract tourists to HRM for multiple day visits. Reserve is also to provide funding to community non–profit and public institutions in support of major capital initiatives by facilitating the development of significant community infrastructure in order to realize tangible cultural, sectorial and economic impacts. Funding to the reserve is 40% of Marketing Levy from Hotel Sales, and transfers from operating budget. Withdrawals are for supporting events that support tourism and economic development, cultural / heritage projects, significant community infrastructure and public art. The recommended allocation of grants does not have a negative impact on the reserve as this allocation is within the 2019/20 approved withdrawals from reserve.

¹ <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/2014-020-GOV.pdf>

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report. The risks considered rate Low. To determine this, consideration was given to financial and reputation risks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SEAC includes members of the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

ALTERNATIVES

1. SEAC may choose to recommend that Regional Council amend the grant amount.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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.

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