

# HALIFAX

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**Item No. 11.1.11**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**August 18, 2020**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed by   
Dave Reage, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** July 8, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **Volunteer Search & Rescue Grants Program: Recommended Awards**  
**Fiscal Year 2020**

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## **ORIGIN**

March 31, 2020 – Application deadline for grants under Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM Respecting Grants to Volunteer Search and Rescue Organizations.

May 12, 2020 – Regional Council approved Administrative Order 2020-009-ADM Respecting Recommendations for the Allocation of Grants and Withdrawals from Reserves During COVID-19. The purpose of this interim policy is to expedite the approval process by temporarily suspending the need for Council to receive recommendations from a Standing Committee or an Advisory Committee of the Council before granting an award.

May 26, 2020 – Regional Council approved amendments to Administrative Order 2020-009-ADM, the *Covid-19 Administrative Order*, allowing Regional Council to allocate or award grants without a recommendation from the HRM Grants Committee.

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* (“HRM Charter”) S.N.S. 2008, c.39

**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 2014-018-ADM, Respecting Grants to Volunteer Search and Rescue/EMO Organizations.*

*Administrative Order 2020-009-ADM, Covid – 19 Administrative Order.*

**RECOMMENDATIONS ON PAGE 2**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve four (4) Operating Grants as described in the Discussion section of this report for a combined total of \$133,508 from Operating Account C801-8004;
2. Approve a Capital Grant in the amount of \$7,792 to the Sheet Harbour and Area Ground Search and Rescue from Operating Account C801-8004; and
3. In accordance with the *Covid-19 Administrative Order*, award the grants without a recommendation from the Grants Committee.

## **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. Through Administrative Order 2014-018-ADM, HRM provides operating and capital grants to support such organizations.

To address the COVID-19 pandemic the application for the 2020 Grants to Volunteer Search and Rescue/EMO Organizations Program was extended to May 15, 2020. As of the deadline a total of four (4) applications were received for Operating Grants and two (2) for Capital Grants.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **I. Proposed Awards**

#### **(i) Operating Grants**

Operating Grants are based on an average of three years of core recurring operating expenses and exclude search call-out claims that are reimbursed by the agent of jurisdiction. The value of operating grant is based on the average of the preceding three (3) year actuals as itemized in the applicant's financial reporting, excluding any expenditures deemed ineligible under Section 5 of the policy.

<b>Table 1. Proposed Operating Grants – Fiscal Year 2020/21</b>		
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Proposed Award</b>	<b>Status</b>
Eastern Shore Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$31,627	Registered charity. Property owner.
Halifax Regional Search & Rescue Team	\$57,644	Registered charity. Property owner.
Musquodoboit Valley Ground Search & Rescue Team	\$16,567	Registered society. Occupant of HRM-Owned Property.
Sheet Harbour & Area Ground Search & Rescue	\$27,670	Registered society. Property owner
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$133,508</b>	

(ii) **Project-Specific Grants**

In 2020, two (2) Capital Grant applications were received for a combined total of \$22,737.47 in requests<sup>1</sup>: this value exceeds the balance of \$7,792 remaining in this year's budget.

**Sheet Harbour & Area Ground Search and Rescue – Capital Grant/Facility Capital Improvement**

In 2017, the team acquired land in Sheet Harbour and commenced construction of a storage facility. To date, site preparation has been completed, including an enlarged parking area for SHAGSAR vehicles and volunteers, and the structure is watertight. The Interior fit-up requires completion and will be phased as funds permit. A Capital Grant of \$15,000 is requested towards the purchase and installation of a heating system costing \$14,943. As proposed a grant in the amount of \$7,792 represents approximately 50% of costs, excluding any energy rebate or partial HST recovery.

***A Capital Grant in the amount of \$7,792 to Sheet Harbour & Area Ground Search and Rescue is recommended towards the purchase and installation of heating system for the society's new facility.***

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

C801-8004 Emergency Measures: Grants 2020 Budget	<b>\$141,300</b>
Less Proposed Operating Grants (4)	(\$133,508)
Less Proposed Capital Grant (1)	(\$7,792)
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**RISK CONSIDERATION**

Low. Financial reports are submitted annually to Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

In 2020, meetings of the HRM Grants Committee have been temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Regional Council could decline to approve a grant, or approve a grant in a different amount, or with different terms and conditions of funding.

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<sup>1</sup> A Capital Grant of \$7,737.47 was requested by the Halifax Regional Ground Search and Rescue Team to fully fund the purchase and installation of a replacement furnace and ductwork. The financial information provided indicates an ability to self-fund using unrestricted cash reserves or investments

**ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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

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