

HALIFAX

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Item No. 15.1.2
Halifax Regional Council
August 9, 2022

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: August 3, 2022

SUBJECT: **Community Grants Program 2022: Referrals**

ORIGIN

June 14, 2022 – Item 15.3.3. MOVED by Councillor Deagle Gammon, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve fifty-nine (59) awards as detailed in Attachment 1 of the staff report dated May 2, 2022, and Attachment 2 of the staff report dated May 22, 2022, amended to exclude Item 25 Cathedral of All Saints and Item 38 Adsum for Women and Children, for a combined total of \$452,714 from Operating Account M311- 8004; and
2. Refer the following applications to the Administration for reconsideration:
 - a. Waverley Amateur Athletic Association
 - b. Middle Musquodoboit Agricultural Society
 - c. Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce
 - d. Abenaki Aquatic Club
 - e. Rockingham Heritage Society
 - f. Terence Bay Community Hall Association

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, S.N.S, 2008, c.38

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;

...

Section 79C

(1) The Council shall adopt a policy that requires the Municipality to disclose to the public the recipients of grants made by the municipality and the amount of those grants.

RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 2

- (2) A policy adopted under subsection (1) must include the
- (a) frequency and timing of disclosure;
 - (b) content to be included in a disclosure; and
 - (c) form in which the disclosure must be made.

(3) A policy adopted under subsection (1) may include any other matter that the Council considers necessary or reasonable to carry out effectively the intent and purpose of this policy.

- *Administrative Order 2019-007-ADM Respecting Public Disclosure of Municipal Grants.*

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve five grants as detailed in the discussion section of this report for a combined total of \$47,000 from Operating Account M311-8004.

BACKGROUND

The 2022 Community Grants Program received a total of 106 applications of which 59 were approved by Regional Council at their meeting of June 14, 2022. Regional Council also referred a total of six applications for further review. As applicable, some applicants were asked to provide additional information to confirm the status of their proposed project. The review of referrals takes into consideration the balance remaining in the program's 2022 budget allocation which was \$47,286 as of June 30, 2022.

DISCUSSION

The six applications referred have been reviewed in relation to any new information received and the balance remaining in the 2022 Community Grants Program budget.

HISTORY

Tier 1

1. Rockingham Heritage Society – Halifax – Project Grant/Marketing

Established in 1990, the society is entirely volunteer and sustained by memberships (\$5.00/person) and fundraising. The group has established a small archival collection of photographs, documents, maps, and recordings to preserve the history of the Rockingham area. A grant of \$5,000 is requested to fully fund development of a web site to increase awareness and recruit members.

- The application was declined as incomplete – the financial statement was missing. On June 10, 2022, a financial statement was received by email.

Funding is recommended to support a small, volunteer group in their efforts to attract members and their work in preserving local community history. ***A project grant in the amount of \$5,000 is recommended to create a web site.***

LEISURE

Tier 2

2. Middle Musquodoboit Agricultural Society – Middle Musquodoboit – Project Grant/Minor Facility Upgrades

Established in 1909 under an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature the Society promotes the agricultural heritage of the area. The property is not assessed under the Assessment Act. Revenues are primarily events-related, facility rentals, and project-specific grants. Membership dues are nominal (\$5 for youth/\$25 adults). The Society receives a municipal event grant in support of the annual *Halifax County Exhibition* under HRM's Regional Special Events Grants Program. In 2020, the Society received a capital grant of \$25,000 towards construction of a replacement out-building and a project grant of \$5,000 was awarded in 2021 towards repairs to their outdoor riding arena used for instruction, horse shows, and events. In 2022, the Society requested a grant of \$5,000 towards five distinct projects¹ that total an estimated \$27,000.

- The application was declined because the Society was in default of reporting. Documentation was received by Finance in June.
- The Society was asked to prioritize their list and have selected assorted minor building repairs and upgrades.

Funding is recommended based on the Society's niche programming and affordability (free or low admission fees for the public and subsidized facility rental rates for non-profits) and the applicant's \$11,100 financial commitment. Funding in the amount of \$11,000 from the Exhibition Association of Nova Scotia will also be used towards completing the work. ***A project grant in the amount of \$5,000 is recommended for minor repairs and upgrades to the Middle Musquodoboit Exhibition Grounds.***

3. Terence Bay Community Hall Association – Terence Bay – Capital Grant

Incorporated in 2013, the Association's volunteers sought to re-gain community ownership of the decommissioned Terence Bay Fire Station. In 2018 Regional Council approved the donation of the surplus property and a one-time capital in the amount of \$75,000 towards upgrades to the septic system, roof repairs, and replacement exterior windows and doors. To date, operations are sustained by bar, bingo, event, and canteen revenues. The Municipality provides annual tax relief. In 2022, the society requested a grant of \$25,000 towards re-modelling the kitchen and bar area, including the purchase of appliances and equipment at a total estimated cost of \$143,856.72. As of the date of application ~\$45,000 in funding was confirmed – including a \$10,000 grant under the District Capital Fund - and a \$50,000 request to Nova Scotia Department of Community, Culture & Heritage: Community Facilities Improvement Fund was unconfirmed. The purpose of the project is to increase earned revenues through facility rentals and events hosting, community meals, and food-related programming by meeting food safety standards and to qualify for a food establishment permit.

- The application included only one quote which does not include itemized costs.
- The financial information included in the application suggests that although provincial funding was unconfirmed the project could be phased as funds permit.

Funding is recommended to support the society's efforts to increase earned revenues and develop food-based programs or services. However, it is recommended that municipal funding target a specific element that enhances fire safety. ***A capital grant in the amount of \$15,000 is recommended towards the purchase and installation of a kitchen range hood and fire suppression system.***

¹ The work includes the following: (1) electrical hook-up and drainage for outdoor entertainment stage, (2) completion of riding ring, (3) interior finishing for food vendor building, (4) minor repairs and maintenance to assorted buildings: stain, light fixtures, steps and exterior door, and (5) upgrades to a "speaker's booth".

RECREATION

Tier 2

4. Abenaki Aquatic Club – Dartmouth – Capital Grant

The Club provides recreational and competitive paddling and swimming programs for its membership². Revenues are primarily from membership fees, competitive and instructional paddling programs. The operating viability of the Club relies on a less than market value land lease with HRM and annual tax relief. In 2021 the Club received a capital grant of \$15,500 towards the construction of a replacement floating docks which enclose a swimming area/beach for club members. HRM's grant was conditional upon execution of a signed municipal land lease agreement. In 2022, the Club has applied for capital grant of \$25,000 towards the construction of a new boathouse which is estimated to cost \$415,800. As of the date of this report ~85% of funding has been confirmed.

- The application was declined because the project requires the approval of HRM Parks & Recreation as per the land lease agreement dated 2021³. Clause 11 of the contract prohibits any additions, replacement, or substantive alterations to existing infrastructure without first obtaining HRM's approval and applicable permits. This requirement was also communicated to the Club in a letter dated February 22, 2022, which indicated that if funding was received under the ACOA Communities and Inclusive Growth Grant Program the municipality would review any plans and the determine the approvals that may be required.
- The Club was asked to provide confirmation of HRM's approval for the construction project.

Despite limited public access to the site, funding is recommended to reflect the Club's commitment of \$84,800 and their funding efforts from non-municipal sources. It should also be noted that a capital project of this scale may increase the cost of municipal tax relief which is an annually recurring operating expense. ***A capital grant of \$10,000 is recommended towards the construction of a replacement clubhouse for the Abenaki Aquatic Club. Funding will be released upon confirmation of HRM's approval of the project.***

5. Waverley Amateur Athletic Association – Waverley – Capital Grant/Equipment

The society comprises volunteers who provide stewardship for an area of provincially owned land known as *McDonald Sports Park*. Revenues are modest and rely on unspecified "other" sources which may indicate a reliance on non-recurring grants. To date, the property has not been assessed as taxable. In 2021 the Association received a grant of \$5,000 towards the purchase of adaptive outdoor furnishings. In 2022, the Association has requested a capital grant of \$12,000 towards the purchase of two replacement shipping containers used for storage which may be modified to include the addition of a fixed roof and deck (total cost \$18,420).

- The application was declined because there is no land lease agreement in effect between the Society and the property owner.

The Society has leased a significant portion of land owned by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources within which are located a municipal ballfield and parking lot. HRM wishes to install lighting for the ballfield which requires the municipality to have its own lease agreement. Hence, HRM has negotiated with both the provincial government and the Society to remove the ballfield and parking lot from the Society's lease, this area is to be surveyed by HRM to identify the new lease boundaries for both parties. The ability to exercise the new lease has been hindered by two issues: (1) the province will entertain only the execution of both leases at the same time, and (2) Nova Scotia Power must complete an engineering review to determine the placement of the powerline for the ballfield lighting which will require CN Rail's

² As stated on the Club's web site (abenakiaquaticclub.com), access to the site and programs is only available to registered members and their guests. Prices range by age and program.

³ The lease is for a term of 20 years at a rent of \$1.00 per annum.

approval to install a fixture on their land. Consequently, the timing of the new leases is not entirely within HRM's control.

In addition, the initial review of this application identified a concern with respect to amending the moveable shipping containers to create a 'fixed' asset with the addition of a roof and deck to accommodate uses other than equipment storage. This issue was addressed in a subsequent email from the applicant dated May 5, 2022, which confirmed that application had been made to the provincial government for \$63,000 for an outdoor pavilion. If the pavilion project is funded, the "temporary roof" on the containers would be removed and used to upgrade a trail gazebo. Funding is recommended based on public access to the park area for a variety of free or low-cost activities inclusive of a range of ages and abilities. ***A capital grant of \$12,000 is recommended towards the purchase of two portable storage containers. If approved, funds will be held back pending written confirmation of by-law compliance and applicable permits to be submitted by the Association.***

RECOMMEND DECLINE

ENVIRONMENT

6. Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce – Sheet Harbour

A grant of \$24,882.75 was requested to fully fund professional fees for a (1) bathymetric survey (2) a web site, (3) a logo for the Sheet Harbour Marina Association, and (4) the purchase of signage. In 2021 the Chamber received a \$5,000 grant under the Community Grants Program for an underwater survey of the wharf and \$10,000 from the District Capital Fund towards a bathymetric survey estimated to cost \$18,000.

- The application was declined because none of the items qualified as a capital grant and the Chamber of Commerce is not the project lead as indicated by a funding request to the Municipality in January 2022 from the Sheet Harbour Marina Association.
- The Sheet Harbour Marina Association did not incorporate as a separate legal entity until January of 2022 and as such was ineligible to make application unless party to a joint application with an eligible nonprofit or charity. Consequently, the Chamber's request is essentially a flow-through.

Following the Community Grants Program report dated May 2, 2022, the request from the Sheet Harbour Marina Association for funding in the amount of \$1.1 million dollars was addressed in a recommendation report to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee. The report was considered at the committee's meeting of June 22, 2022,⁴ and will be forwarded to Regional Council for consideration. The report recommends funding to retain qualified professional services to assist the Association develop a Marina Spatial Plan. As proposed, the plan would include a bathymetric survey and an assessment of waterfront access and wind exposure to confirm the suitability of the site⁵. Also, in 2022 the Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce received \$10,000 under the District Capital Fund for an environmental assessment and land survey.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Community Grants program 2021 Budget M311-8004	\$500,000
Less Approved Awards (59)	(\$452,714)
Less Recommended Awards (5)	<u>(\$ 47,000)</u>
Balance	\$ 286

⁴ Recommendation report to the June 22, 2022, meeting of the Finance & Audit Standing Committee, Sheet Harbour Marina Association Funding Request, dated May 18, 2022 [Item 12.2.2]. A decision of Regional Council is pending.

⁵ The survey is study of ocean depth and typography to confirm the type and number of boats that could be accommodated and placement of underwater fixtures.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Those organizations referred by motion of the Council were contacted for additional information or clarification as applicable on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council could decline to approve a recommended grant or amend the value of the award or the terms and conditions recommended for funding.

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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