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DECLASSIFIED
FOIPOP Review [REDACTED]
Approved to Release [REDACTED]
Date November 1, 2022

Item No. 17.3
Halifax Regional Council
April 5, 2022
In Camera (In Private)

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Host Bid: IIHF 2023 World Junior Ice Hockey Championship

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

ORIGIN

Invitation by Hockey Canada for select communities to provide a proposal to host the 2023 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World Junior Ice Hockey Championship.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter

Section 19 (2) The Council or any committee appointed by the Council may meet in closed session to discuss matters relating to

(e) contract negotiations;....

(i) any subject, the discussion of which could, in the opinion of the Council or the committee, as the case may be, violate the confidentiality of information obtained from

(i) the Government of Canada or the Government of the Province, ...

Section 79A (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Suspend the Rule of Procedure under Schedule 2, Audit and Finance Standing Committee Terms of Reference, of Administrative Order One, the Procedures of the Council Administrative Order; and
2. Approve a commitment of \$1,000,000 in financial support for the 2023 World Junior Hockey Championship bid as outlined in the financial implications section of this report.
3. It is further recommended that this report not be released to the public.

BACKGROUND

Due to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the IIHF has revoked the previous award for hosting the 2023 World Junior Ice Hockey championship from Novosibirsk, Russia. Subsequently, Hockey Canada has requested a proposal/business plan to host the event from a small group of communities. On Monday, March 25, HRM was one of the cities invited by Hockey Canada to submit a bid.

This event, planned for approximately December 15, 2022 through January 6, 2023 will include the competition of 10 federations representing their home country. Key details of the proposal/business plan were required to be submitted to Hockey Canada no later than Monday, April 4, 2022.

In response to the invitation, HRM partnered with Moncton to prepare a joint bid. The bid included a conditional funding support from HRM, contingent on Regional Council's approval.

DISCUSSION

HRM last hosted the IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships (WJHC) in 2003. Since that event, the scale of the event has increased significantly. As a result, there is a requirement for significant government funding to host WJHC in recent years as well as a requirement for large venues and audiences to cover the costs of the larger scale events.

With the short notice revocation of the 2023 event in Russia and the need for the event to rebound after 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic, the scale of the upcoming event is expected to be more modest. As a result, a bid from Halifax/Moncton is expected to be a strong contender.

Funding

The expected government funding for the 2023 WJHC is approximately \$5 Million. That government funding is proposed to be shared between ACOA, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Province of New Brunswick, the City of Moncton and HRM. The share of funding proposed from HRM was \$1 Million. This along with approximately \$2 Million from the Province (pending approval) places Halifax as the lead of the bid, which is appropriate as HRM was invited to apply by Hockey Canada and is the larger city.

Typically, for large scale events of this nature, HRM would provide funding support through a MLSER event grant. The Marketing Levy Reserve is funded through the hotel levy and with the COVID-19 impact on the tourism sector, the revenue to the reserve has been reduced significantly. Further, with the upcoming event season expected to rebound and HRM staff currently preparing a report for Regional Council's consideration of financial support for events, the MLSER funding is expected to be allocated for a number of recurring and upcoming events.

Therefore, with the short timeline for this 2023 WJHC opportunity, it is recommended that the HRM funding be allocated from the Options Reserve Q421.

Past Support

In terms of funding levels for similar sized international sporting events, the Municipality has recently provided \$800,000 in funding for the 2022 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships, \$300,000 for the 2019 Mastercard Memorial Cup. HRM has also funded \$250,000 for the 2008 IIHF World Hockey Championships and \$200,000 for the 2009 ICF World Senior Canoe Championships.

Next Steps

As noted, the process for bid submission was very short, with bids due one week after invitation. The Halifax/Moncton bid was finalized and submitted on time, with the conditional funding approvals for both HRM and City of Moncton. Hockey Canada acknowledged that the timeline was too tight to receive formal approvals prior to the bid submission and has requested confirmation as quickly as possible. [REDACTED]

Hockey Canada is expected to review the submissions over the next couple of weeks and will request any additional information as needed to determine their recommended proposal. Hockey Canada will submit their recommendation to IIHF which is expected to announce the new location of the 2023 HJHC after their board meeting on April 25/26, 2022. It is important to note that Canada has not been confirmed as the new host country, that will also form part of the IIHF announcement. So, there could be other countries being considered, however, the fact that Hockey Canada was asked to submit a recommended host is considered a good sign that Canada will be selected.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Budget Summary: Options Reserve Q421

Projected net available balances, 2022/23	\$4,987,622
Unbudgeted withdrawals as per recommendation	<u>\$1,000,000</u>
Projected available	\$3,987,622

Options Reserve Q421 (previous Contingency Reserve):

As per approved business case the purpose of Options Reserve Q421 to provide resources for changes or additions to services or for grants to outside agencies. This is an unbudgeted withdrawal from the reserve.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The risks are deemed to rate moderate to high based on the possibility of major negative impacts to the Municipality's bid to host should the commitment of funding not be awarded. As one of the cities invited to submit a proposal, not providing funding would result in significant damage to HRM's hosting reputation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose not to provide the commitment of \$1,000,000 to the 2023 IIHF bid.
2. Regional Council may choose to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide the commitment but fund it from the MLSER reserve (Q621). While there would be sufficient funding for the grant, it would impact Regional Council's ability to fund other events which have been submitted for the 2022 MLSER grant program and will be outlined in an upcoming report.

ATTACHMENTS

No attachments.

If the report is released to the public, a copy can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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