

## **District Activity and District Capital Funding – Community Money**

As an HRM Councillor I often receive requests for money from local community non-profit and volunteer groups and I welcome the chance to help – and have the means to do so. The great work of community organizations is known by many, but this source of funds may not be known to the groups that could use them. The Councillor has sole discretion for distributing these funds, so long as the policies are followed.

Flexibility is required to address such local requests, which is why a specified amount is allocated to each councillor for their use in their district. Some examples of donations made to groups are to cover such things as supplies for a local fundraising campaign, amateur sports team or competition, charitable and non-profit initiatives, community outreach initiatives, and so on.

Guidelines and Policy are in place to assist me and staff in the appropriate expenditure, record keeping and recording of expenses. Funds are not available for individuals or for profit businesses or groups.

Each year, Councillors receive an amount of money for two separate funds with their own policy. The District Activity Fund, currently set at \$4,312.50, is designed to fund smaller-scale community events and activities. The aim of this fund is to provide a simple, effective method of providing small grants to community groups and special events. Recipients of District Activity funds must be a charity or local non-profit community group.

The District Capital Fund, currently set at \$94,000 per district, is used to fund larger-scale capital development projects and infrastructure enhancements that are deemed to benefit the entire community.

The capital fund has two primary goals: 1) complete small scale HRM projects not included in the HRM departmental operating and capital budget process. 2) provide a simple and responsive method of providing modest donations and grants in support of local neighbourhood volunteer initiatives.

With this fund, Councillors are able to expend funds on HRM owned assets or on non-HRM owned assets through donations or grants to not-for-profit community groups provided the projects fall within the municipalities mandate under section 65 of the MGA, the public has reasonable access to the facility, service or program, and that they operate within the geographic boundary of HRM. Examples of capital projects eligible to receive funding include park and community facility upgrades, or maintenance projects to improve common areas.

Community groups requesting funding must operate as a society or in the same manner as a society. Requests from community groups must be in writing and accompany the application form completed by the Councillors office.

In an election year, like this one, the amount available in both funds is only 60% of the fiscal allocation, since during the election period which officially starts around September; the Councillors have no access to these accounts. These funds become open for distribution again with the elected councillor immediately after an election.

To view the records of expenditures for district activity and district capital funding, or to view the complete fund policies, or to print a district capital application form please visit <http://www.halifax.ca/councillors/councillor-funds.php>