

# HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 11.1.4**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**July 21, 2020**

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

Original Signed by 

**SUBMITTED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** June 10, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **Regional Special Events Grant Report 2020**

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## **ORIGIN**

Applications received pursuant to Administrative Order Number 2014-021-GOV - Respecting Regional Special Events 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 Number 2014-021-GOV: Respecting Regional Special Events Grants*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Suspend the rules of procedure under Schedule 2, the Audit and Finance Standing Committee Terms of Reference, of Administrative Order One, the *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order*;
2. Approve 41 Event Grants for a total of \$129,650 as identified in Table 1 from the approved 2020/2021 Operating Budget - C760 Community/Civic Events;
3. Approve 14 Event Grants for a total of \$156,750 as identified in Table 1 from the approved 2020/21 Operating Budget – C764 Cultural Development funded from the 2020/2021 Culture Development Reserve Q621;
4. Pending final approval of the 2021/22 budget, approve 44 Established Community Festivals grants in the amount of \$195,725 funded from C760 Community/Civic Events budget; and 15 Cultural Events & Showcases grants in the amount of \$200,000 from C764 Cultural Development which is funded from Q621 Community and Events Reserve as identified in Table 2.

## **BACKGROUND**

On June 9, 2020 Halifax Regional Council approved the 2020/21 Budget Recast for COVID-19 impacts. This report outlines the recommended Regional Special Events grant awards for the 2020/2021 funding intake. All Regional Special Events grant recommendations are governed by Administrative Order 2014-021-GOV, Respecting Regional Special Events Grants. There is one intake per year in which staff undertakes the grant application and evaluation process as outlined in the AO. Typically, this report would be presented as a recommendation report to the Grants Committee. With the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, meetings of most of the standing committees of Council have been suspended. As a result, this report is being presented to Regional Council.

Staff recommended a budget reduction of \$100,000 for consideration in the recent 2020/2021 budget deliberations. This was tabled with the knowledge that many events were in the process of cancelling or transitioning to virtual programs and that program expenses would be justifiably reduced. On May 29, 2020 Regional Council moved unanimously to reinstate the budget for the Community Celebrations, Established Community Festivals and Significant Anniversaries programs to its annual amount of \$215,000 funded from operating budget C760. The Cultural Events & Showcases program has a budget of \$200,000 funded from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621.

### **COVID-19 Event Cancellations and Postponements and Approach to Funding**

Public health restrictions that have been put in place under COVID-19 have forced widespread cancellations and postponements across all event categories. These include many community-organized and externally-organized events as well as municipally-planned and funded civic events such as Canada Day, Natal Day, Clam Harbor Beach Sandcastle Competition, Hopscotch planned for summer 2020.

In May, in light of the current conditions, an email was sent to all Regional Special Events clients requesting a status update on event programs and if applicable a revised budget. Responses from organizations included proposed variations on programming and transitioning from live events to virtual productions as well as postponements or outright cancellations. In communications with many of the event organizers it was determined the programs and budgets were still in the early stages of redesign and should be considered accordingly.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Regional Events AO**

The AO on Regional Special Event Grants establishes consistent and equitable funding for community and cultural events and includes four funding programs:

- Community Celebrations – Provides support for small scale community events that are organized primarily for the benefit and enjoyment of residents, coincide with a community gathering or civic holiday, and are free to the public to attend.
  - Maximum grant award in this program is \$1,000.
- Established Community Festivals – Provides support for existing community events that are organized primarily for the benefit and enjoyment of residents, are accessible to the public with free or low-cost activities, have been in existence for a minimum of three consecutive years, and have a minimum budget of \$10,000.
  - Maximum grant award in this program is \$25,000.
  - Option to provide up to three years of sustainable funding.
- Significant Anniversaries – Provides support for community events organized around major quarterly significant anniversaries (25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, etc.) that celebrate HRM's heritage and community and have a minimum budget of \$7,500.

- Maximum grant award in this program is \$10,000.
- Cultural Events & Showcases – Provides support for arts and culture festivals that program strong cultural content, further the disciplines of literary, media, performing and visual arts, are accessible to the public with free or low-cost activities, have a minimum budget of \$50,000, and further the principles and objectives of the HRM Cultural Plan
  - Maximum grant award in this program is \$60,000.
  - Option to provide up to three years of sustainable funding.

### **2020/2021 Funding Approach**

Most event organizers (many who are volunteers) and cultural organizations have spent the past months revising event plans and budgets to move forward, only to have to redesign the programs as impacts from COVID-19 evolve and there continues to be many unknowns. Many organizations, especially those in the Cultural Events & Showcases program have applied for relief to Canadian Heritage, for micro-grants from Canada Council and the Province of Nova Scotia to support transitioning their events to a digital format. Many sponsors will not be able to support events at the same level for this year or at all. Many of these event and cultural organizations are reliant on municipal funding to sustain their event programs while concurrently managing operations and creating and implementing a recovery plan for future.

While staff acknowledge that the events may not require funding at the levels of the past years, the reinstatement of the program budget signals Regional Council's support for organizational sustainability and the confidence in event organizers to safely provide entertainment to communities during challenging times. Therefore, the following approach is recommended to balance financial stewardship and at the same time provide public benefit.

### Community Celebrations

Several of these events (8) have cancelled and therefore no funding is recommended. For those events that have transitioned to a virtual program or have postponed until later in the summer, fall or winter, funding is recommended at levels shown in Attachment 1. Given the community benefit of events in this program and the appreciation that organizers are creating virtual events for their community under challenging circumstances it is recommended that the proposed grant awards be released in full, instead of releasing 80% of the grant upon approval and withholding 20% post event. Should funding be awarded for an event that ultimately does not occur due to COVID-19, the funding should be applied to host a community celebration in 2021/2022 when conditions may be more conducive for public gatherings. Organizations that receive the full grant amount will still be required to report the status of the 2020 event in the final report process. Applicants that receive funding for events that do not occur in 2020/2021 would not need to apply for funding under this program in the 2021/2022 intake process but may reapply in the 2022/2023 intake.

### Established Community Festivals

These events are in year 2 of a 3 - year funding cycle. Fifteen (15) of these events have cancelled therefore no funding is recommended for this year. For events scheduled to take place, albeit with a virtual program, or through no contact conditions, it is recommended that the event be funded at the same level as the funding of the 2019/2020 Council approved amount, found in Attachment 2. For events that are postponed until the later part of the year, it is recommended these events be awarded the 2019/2020 level of funding approved by Regional Council and shown in Attachment 2. With program redesigns ongoing, staff appreciate that these events will be adapted as best as possible under the health guidelines as conditions are adjusted throughout the year. If an event that has been postponed does not occur and has received funding (80%), staff recommend the final 20% payment be retained by the municipality. In those cases when the event does not take place the 80% funding received should be applied to the event in the 2021/2022 (3<sup>rd</sup> year funding cycle). This requirement will be added to the grant agreement and the event status and budget will be reported and tracked through the final report process.

### Cultural Events & Showcases

These events are in year 2 of a 3 - year funding cycle. One event has cancelled and therefore no funding is recommended. Many of these events have transitioned to virtual programs, and some are postponed to later in the year. Events in this category receive a higher level of funding which may not be required under

the current conditions and restrictions on gatherings. For several events, there are no venue expenses, or municipal service costs and recommended funding levels have been reduced for 2020/2021 and are shown in Attachment 2. If an event that has been postponed does not occur and has received funding (80%), it is recommended the final 20% payment be retained by the municipality. In those cases when the event does not take place, the 80% funding should be applied to the event in the 2021/2022 (3<sup>rd</sup> year funding cycle). This requirement will be added to the grant agreement and the event status and budget will be reported through the final report process.

**Eligibility**

There were 21 applications in total submitted for funding to the 2020/21 grant intake process, of which 20 are recommended for funding. One application to the Community Celebrations, “Discover the Marine Railway” is deemed ineligible as the event is held over multiple weekends and contrary to section 4(a) (i) of the AO which states, *Community Celebrations: provides a maximum annual grant of \$1,000.00 to support organizations that deliver events that (i) are less than five (5) days in duration.*

**Evaluation**

As per the Regional Special Events AO, all applications are evaluated on criteria stated below, however due to COVID-19 restrictions staff note community engagement and access should be interpreted differently due to virtual programming:

- Community engagement;
- Community cultural development;
- Demonstrated financial need; and
- Demonstrated added value to the community.

**Applications Not Recommended for Funding**

Of the eligible applications, applications are recommended for funding.

**Summary of Recommended Funding**

The proposed Regional Special Events funding amounts are displayed in Table 1 for 2020/2021 and Table 2 for 2021/2022. Details on the recommendations for Community Celebrations are outlined in Attachment 1. Details on the recommendations for Established Community Festivals and Cultural Events & Showcases are outlined in Attachment 2.

<b>Table 1: 2020/2021 Proposed Regional Special Events Grant Funding</b>				
	<b># of Events (# of applications)</b>	<b>2019 Approved</b>	<b>2020/21 Requests</b>	<b>2020/21 Proposed</b>
Community Celebrations	12 (21*)	\$ 11,025	\$ 18,900	\$ 6,400
Established Community Festivals	29 (44**)	\$ 195,725	\$ 379,025	\$ 123,250
Significant Anniversaries	0	\$ 5,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total Community Events &amp; Festivals (C760)</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>\$ 211,750</b>	<b>\$ 397,925</b>	<b>\$ 129,650</b>
Cultural Events & Showcases	14 (15***)	\$ 200,000	\$ 396,978	\$ 156,750
<b>Total Community and Events Reserve (Q621)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>	<b>\$ 396,978</b>	<b>\$ 156,750</b>
<b>Total 2020/2021 Regional Events</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>\$411,750</b>	<b>\$ 794,903</b>	<b>\$286,400</b>

\*8 applicants cancelled, 1 ineligible

\*\* 15 applicants cancelled

\*\*\* 1 event cancelled

<b>Table 2: 2021/2022 Proposed Regional Events Grant Funding 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of 3 Year Funding</b>			
	<b># of Event Applicants</b>	<b>2021/22 Request</b>	<b>2021/22 Proposed</b>
Established Community Festivals	44	\$ 379,025	\$ 195,725
<b>Total C760 Community/Civic Events</b>		<b>\$ 379,025</b>	<b>\$ 195,725</b>
Cultural Events & Showcases	15	\$ 396,978	\$ 200,000
<b>Total Q621 Community and Events Reserve</b>		<b>\$ 396,978</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>
<b>Total 2021/2022 Regional Events</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>\$ 776,003</b>	<b>\$ 395,725</b>

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All Community Celebrations and Established Community Festivals recommendations can be accommodated in the approved 2020/2021 operating budget for Community/Civic Events, account C760-6933. All 2021/2022 recommendations are subject to availability of funds and final approval of the 2021/2022 budget.

#### **Budget Summary: Community and Events Reserve, Q621**

Net Reserve Balance, at April 1, 2020	\$ 1,269,647
Contribution 2020/21	\$ 449,422
Withdrawals 2020/21	\$ (1,230,000)
Total net projected balances for 2020/21	\$ 489,069

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 2020/21 approved withdrawals from reserve.**

All Cultural Events & Showcases recommendations are subject to availability of Community & Events Reserve, Q621 funds and approval of the 2021/2022 budget. These grants are processed through operating account C 764 – Cultural Development.

There are no outstanding funds owing to the municipality by any of the recommended applicants.

### **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 reputational risk.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Information regarding program eligibility, application timelines, and applicant timelines are posted on the HRM website. Communication is ongoing with event clients on the status of events.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Alternative 1. Regional Council may choose to amend the amount of any event grant in accordance with 2014-021-GOV within the budget capacity of C760 and Q621.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Summary of Funding Recommendations for Community Celebrations and Significant Anniversaries

Attachment 2: Summary of Funding Recommendations for Established Community Festivals and Cultural Events & Showcases

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Elizabeth Taylor, Manager, Culture & Events, 902.490.4387

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## Attachment 1

### Annual Funding

Summary of Funding Recommendations for Community Celebrations  
and Significant Anniversaries

Community Celebrations		2020/21 Requested	2020/21 Status	2020/21 Proposed
1	Agricola Street Holiday Market	\$1,000	as planned	\$1,000
2	Artisans of the Eastern Shore - Show & Sale	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
3	Back to School Kick-off	\$1,000	as planned	\$ 250
4	Bedford Jumping in the Ocean	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
5	Bike Again 20th Anniversary	\$1,000	as planned	\$ 500
6	Cole Harbour Fibre Frolic	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
7	Discover the Marine Railway	\$1,000	ineligible	⊖
8	Fairview Family Days	\$1,000	virtual	\$ 500
9	Family Fun Day	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
10	Family SOS Summer Party	\$1,000	as planned	\$ 500
11	Funny Pages Festival	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
12	In the Loop Summer Celebration	\$1,000	virtual	\$ 250
13	Lobster Trap Tree Lighting & Parade of Lights	\$1,000	as planned	\$ 500
14	Meagher's Grant Day	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
15	Meagher's Grant Fall Event	\$ 150	as planned	\$ 150
16	Mulgrave Park Celebration Days	\$1,000	modified	\$ 500
17	North by Night Market	\$1,000	virtual	\$1,000
18	Portland Estates and Hills Residents' Association Fun Fest	\$ 500	cancelled	⊖
19	Sackville Christmas Tree Lighting	\$1,000	as planned	\$1,000
20	Songs of the City	\$1,000	cancelled	⊖
21	Winter Fun Day	\$ 250	as planned	\$ 250
<b>Total Community Celebrations</b>		<b>\$18,900</b>		<b>\$6,400</b>

Significant Anniversary Events (25 <sup>th</sup> , 50 <sup>th</sup> , 75 <sup>th</sup> etc.)	2020/21 Requested	2020/21 Proposed	2020/21 Status
<b>Total Significant Anniversary Events</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## Attachment 2

### Multiple Year Funded Events

Summary of Funding Recommendations for Established Community Festivals  
and Cultural Showcases & Events for 2019/2020, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022

Established Community Events		2019/20 Requested	2019/20 Grant	2020/21 Status	2020/21 Proposed	2021/22 Proposed
1	Afrifest	\$8,500	\$3,500	cancelled	€	\$3,500
2	Animation Festival of Halifax	\$10,000	\$1,000	virtual	\$1,000	\$1,000
3	Atlantic Flamenco Festival	\$2,500	\$2,000	virtual	\$1,000	\$2,000
4	Bluenose Ability Arts & Film Festival	\$22,500	\$2,500	virtual	\$2,500	\$2,500
5	Canada Day in Beaverbank	\$5,000	\$4,500	cancelled	€	\$4,500
6	Caribbean Diaspora Multicultural Celebration	\$1,500	\$1,500	cancelled	€	\$1,500
7	Christkindlmarket Festival	\$1,000	\$250	as planned	\$250	\$250
8	Cole Harbour Harvest Festival	\$25,000	\$6,500	as planned	\$6,500	\$6,500
9	Diwali Carnival - Festival of Lights	\$10,000	\$2,500	as planned	\$2,500	\$2,500
10	East Coast Kite Festival	\$15,000	\$1,000	postponed	\$1,000	\$1,000
11	Eastern Passage Cow Bay Summer Carnival	\$20,000	\$6,500	virtual	\$6,500	\$6,500
12	Emerging Lens Cultural Film Festival	\$4,000	\$2,000	virtual	\$2,000	\$2,000
13	Fire and Water Festival	\$3,500	\$3,500	as planned	\$3,500	\$3,500
14	Gottingen Festival	\$10,000	\$2,000	virtual	\$2,000	\$2,000
15	Great East Dartmouth Community BBQ	\$1,000	\$1,000	TBC*	\$1,000	\$1,000
16	Halifax County Exhibition	\$25,000	\$25,000	cancelled	€	\$25,000
17	Halifax Greek Fest	\$5,000	\$5,000	postponed	\$5,000	\$5,000
18	Hydrostone Christmas Tree Lighting	\$2,500	\$1,000	as planned	\$1,000	\$1,000
19	India Fest	\$20,000	\$4,000	cancelled	€	\$4,000
20	Keloose	\$4,500	\$4,500	cancelled	€	\$4,500
21	Lake and Shore Days	\$10,000	\$4,750	cancelled	€	\$4,750
22	Lake Echo Community Boil and Blast	\$1,000	\$1,000	as planned	\$1,000	\$1,000
23	Light Up Bedford Parade	\$7,500	\$5,000	as planned	\$5,000	\$5,000
24	Mother Goose Festival	\$2,000	\$2,000	cancelled	€	\$2,000
25	Newcomers Welcome BBQ	\$25,000	\$3,500	virtual	\$3,500	\$3,500
26	North End Annual Summer BBQ	\$1,000	\$1,000	cancelled	€	\$1,000
27	Northern Lights Lantern Festival	\$5,000	\$4,000	cancelled	€	\$4,000
28	North Preston Days	\$6,000	\$6,000	virtual	\$6,000	\$6,000
29	Patriot Days	\$20,000	\$20,000	virtual	\$20,000	\$20,000
30	Quinfest: Family Fun Day	\$1,500	\$1,500	cancelled	€	\$1,500
31	Re-Jigged Festival	\$5,500	\$1,000	virtual	\$1,000	\$1,000
32	Sackville Snow Days	\$1,000	\$1,000	as planned	\$1,000	\$1,000
33	School Farm Day	\$525	\$525	cancelled	€	\$525
34	Spryfield Days Festival	\$3,500	\$750	postponed	\$750	\$750
35	Spryfield Santa Claus Parade	\$3,500	\$3,500	as planned	\$3,500	\$3,500
36	St. Patrick's Day Parade	\$1,000	\$750	as planned	\$750	\$750
37	Switch Open Street Sundays	\$25,000	\$12,000	postponed	12,000	\$12,000
38	Tallahassee Days	\$6,500	\$6,500	virtual	\$6,500	\$6,500
39	Taste of East Preston	\$4,000	\$1,000	cancelled	€	\$1,000
40	The Chronicle Herald Holiday Parade of Lights	\$25,000	\$25,000	TBC*	\$25,000	\$25,000
41	Trunk 7 Music Festival	\$14,500	\$3,200	N/A	€	\$3,200
42	Ward 5 Summer Party	\$1,500	\$1,500	as planned	\$1,500	\$1,500
43	Waverley Gold Rush Days	\$4,000	\$4,000	cancelled	€	\$4,000
44	Word on the Street Halifax	\$8,000	\$6,500	cancelled	€	\$6,500
<b>Total Established Community Events</b>		<b>\$379,025</b>	<b>\$195,725</b>		<b>\$123,250</b>	<b>\$195,725</b>

\*Several organizers had no information to report at this time and staff have noted the status as TBC



Cultural Showcases & Events		2019/20 Requested	2019/20 Grant	2020/21 Status	2020/21 Proposed	2021/22 Proposed
<b>Tier 1</b>						
1	AfterWords Literary Festival	\$18,000	\$3,000	virtual	\$3,000	\$3,000
2	Atlantic Jewish Film Festival	\$24,978	\$3,000	virtual	\$3,000	\$3,000
3	FrancoFest	\$15,000	\$4,000	modified	\$4,000	\$4,000
4	Halifax Independent Filmmakers Festival	\$20,000	\$3,000	postponed	\$3,000	\$3,000
5	Peggy's Cove Area Festival of the Arts	\$5,000	\$3,500	cancelled	⊖	\$3,500
6	Mayworks Halifax Festival	\$8,000	\$3,000	virtual	\$3,000	\$3,000
7	Stages Theatre Festival	\$10,000	\$3,500	virtual	\$1,250	\$3,500
<b>Tier 2</b>						
8	Halifax Fringe Festival	\$22,000	\$17,000	virtual	\$17,000	\$17,000
9	Halifax Pride Festival	\$34,000	\$34,000	virtual	\$34,000	\$34,000
10	Mosaic Festival of Arts & Culture	\$55,000	\$10,000	virtual	\$5,000	\$10,000
11	Nocturne: Art at Festival	\$50,000	\$45,000	modified	\$45,000	\$45,000
12	Nova Multifest	\$60,000	\$10,000	virtual	\$5,000	\$10,000
13	OBEY Convention	\$15,000	\$6,000	postponed	\$6,000	\$6,000
14	Prismatic Arts Festival	\$30,000	\$30,000	virtual	\$15,000	\$30,000
15	Scotia Festival of Music	\$30,000	\$25,000	virtual	\$12,500	\$25,000
<b>Total Cultural Showcases &amp; Events Funding</b>		<b>\$396,978</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>		<b>\$156,750</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>