

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by 

SUBMITTED BY:

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: July 12, 2021

SUBJECT: Community Grants Program 2021: Referrals

ORIGIN

June 29, 2021 Regional Council motion (Item 11.6.6):

Moved by Councillor Deagle Gammon, seconded by Councillor Mancini

That Halifax Regional Council:

...

(2) Refer the following applications to staff for reconsideration and supplementary reports:

- 75. Peggy's Cove Preservation Society
- 76. Island View High School Enhancement Society/Royal Andeluvian Order of Buffaloes
- 87. Orenda Canoe Club
- 96. Dartmouth Amateur Radio Club
- 97. Public Good Society of Dartmouth
- 102. Seaside Broadcasting Organization
- 103. St. Luke's United Church
- 105. Wellington Fletcher's Lake Station House Society
- 109. Halifax Nordic Ski Club

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, S.N.S 2008, c.39

Section 63

- (1) The Municipality may sell or lease property at a price less than market value to a non-profit organization that Council considers to be carrying on an activity that is beneficial to the Municipality.
- (2) A resolution to sell or lease property referred to in subsection (1) at less than market value shall be passed by a two-thirds majority of the Council present and voting

RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 2

...

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.

(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.

HRM Grants Committee Terms of Reference.

4. The duties of the HRM Grants Committee are to:

- 4.1 Advise Regional Council on all matters related to the allocation of grants, as defined by Regional Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Grants Committee recommend that Regional Council

1. Approve a capital grant in the amount of \$20,000 to the Public Good Society from Operating Account M311-8004 Community Grants; and
2. Approve the Royal Canadian Legion: Eastern Marine Branch #161 request to re-assign the grant of \$2,230 previously approved for an equipment purchase towards the cost of accessibility upgrades to the Legion hall.

BACKGROUND

The 2021 Community Grants Program received a total of 111 applications of which 61 were approved by Regional Council at their meeting of June 29, 2021. The Council also referred a total of nine applications for further review.

DISCUSSION

Staff reviewed the community grants referred by Regional Council so as to reconsider the applications in light of any new information and to ensure the original recommendations were consistent with program criteria. Based on that review, there is (1) a revised recommendation for one of the nine referrals and (2) a recommendation related to an unsolicited request to amend the purpose of an award previously approved.

Recommended Award

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

1. **Public Good of Society of Dartmouth – Dartmouth – Capital Grant/Equipment**

Incorporated in 2006, the Society is a registered Canadian charity that works collaboratively with local organizations serving the Dartmouth North area notably in transportation, housing, and food security. Operations are sustained by grants and donations. The sustainability of the popular Dartmouth North Community Van has been compromised by the loss of the vehicle due to fire. The service is operated in cooperation with the Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia and enables user groups to expand their programming options at an affordable rate. A grant of \$20,000 is requested towards the purchase of a replacement vehicle costing \$37,500. Provincial funding in the amount of \$15,000 is confirmed and the Society will contribute \$5,000 to cover the balance of the purchase price, registration and insurance. The financial information omitted by the applicant in their initial application was provided which resulted in a complete submission and staff was able to revise the original recommendation. The application demonstrates collaboration in sharing resources thereby maximizing the impact of public funding in support of programs serving vulnerable residents. ***A grant of \$20,000 is recommended towards the purchase of a passenger van to provide affordable transportation for community non-profit groups and local residents.***

Recommended Amendment to an Award

LEISURE

2. **Royal Canadian Legion: Eastern Marine Branch #161 – Gaetz Brook – Capital Grant**

A grant in the amount of \$2,230 towards the purchase of a commercial grade dishwasher was approved by Regional Council at their meeting of June 29, 2021. On July 19, 2021, the Legion sent correspondence requesting that these same funds be re-directed towards the installation of accessible doors to the main entrance of the premises. The Legion had requested full funding in the amount of \$10,965 for this project from the provincial Access Ability Program and received a grant of \$8,000. A copy of the correspondence is included as Attachment 2 of this report. The re-assignment would enable completion of a project that is considered higher priority. Staff recommend the request be granted in support of inclusion. If approved, a change in funding category is not required and there are no financial implications to the Community Grants Program. ***It is recommended that re-assignment of the municipal grant in the amount of \$2,230 towards accessibility improvements be approved.***

The balance of referrals not recommended for funding in this fiscal year are detailed in Attachment 1 of this report. Notwithstanding that the balance remaining in this year's program budget is insufficient relative to both the number and value of requests referred, some applications remain ineligible for consideration under current policy whereas others have technical issues or scored lower than other applicants in a designated funding category. As applicable, some applicants will be referred to the 2022 Community Grants Program. All referrals will be provided with written feedback.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Community Grants program 2021 Budget M311-8004	\$500,000
Less Approved Awards (61)	(\$479,646)
Less Recommended Award (1)	(\$ 20,000)
Balance	\$ 354

RISK CONSIDERATION

The primary risks associated with cash grants are representational (accuracy of information), financial misappropriation or loss, and reputational risk to the Municipality.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The nine organizations referred by Regional Council were notified by email on June 30, 2021. As applicable, the submission of missing information and/or clarification was requested by July 9, 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council could amend a recommendation including the value of an award or the terms and conditions recommended for funding.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Applications Not Recommended for Funding.
2. Letter from Royal Canadian Legion: Eastern Marine Branch #161 to HRM dated July 19, 2021.

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.

Report Prepared by: Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead Grants & Contributions, Finance & Asset Management
902.490.5469; Peter Greechan, Community Developer, Grants & Contributions, Finance & Asset Management.

APPLICATIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING 2021

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Tier 1

Dartmouth Amateur Radio Club – Dartmouth

A grant of \$25,000 was requested to fully fund professional fees and the purchase and installation of a replacement radio tower located on HRM property in Dartmouth. The Club's contribution is primarily "in-kind" labour. The application was declined because the equipment represents a capital improvement to property not owned by the applicant.¹ Other concerns include the following:

- The antenna is located within a residential neighbourhood in close proximity to private homes and a community mailbox is located on site. A public consultation may be required, or preferable, and costs related to signage, direct mail, or any meeting(s) are not included within the project budget.
- The financial statement provided was for fiscal year 2019 (not 2020 as required) and shows nominal revenues. Although insurance is listed as an expenditure it is unconfirmed if this policy relates only to occupancy within HRM's Eric Spicer building, Dartmouth. Further, the current Memorandum of Understanding with the Club provides insurance coverage only in relation to the use of the Club's equipment, facilities, or volunteer personnel while deployed in municipal EMO operations.

Notwithstanding the significance of this infrastructure in HRM's emergency response capacity, further clarification is warranted with respect to ownership and risk management if this project were to be considered under the Community Grants Program: the program does not fund leasehold improvements. Other alternatives may be considered that represent lower risk to both HRM and the Club. For example, a service agreement whereby HRM would own the assets, including the transmission tower, and the Club would operate the amenities under contract to the Municipality. The latter would maintain the Commercial Exempt tax status, enable procurement, and may extend insurance coverage.

HISTORY

Tier 1

Island View High School Enhancement Society/Royal Andeluvian Order of Buffaloes –

A grant of \$5,000 was requested to fund an oral history project. The total cost is stated at \$6,000 of which \$1,000 is confirmed under the HRM District Activity Fund for unspecified costs related to "preliminary planning and story development". Although this submission was presented as a joint application/collaborative project the financial information with respect to the Royal Andeluvian Order of Buffaloes was not included. As stated, the intent of the project is youth skills development, audio production and broadcast on Seaside FM, a web-based catalogue, and the equipment is to be owned by the fraternity. A meeting in advance of next year's program intake would be an opportunity to provide clarification; the Community Grants Program does not fund school-based programs but does support

¹ If a lease or license agreement at a price less than market value is to be considered the approval of two-thirds of Regional Council is required as per Section 63 of the HRM Charter and the property would be taxed. It is also standard practice that a municipal lease or license require proof of insurance and may specify the type and value of coverage.

community-based research and its presentation to a wider audience. The applicant will be referred to the 2022 Community Grants Program.

Peggy's Cove Preservation Society – Peggy's Cove – Project Grant

The Society requested a grant of \$5,000 to fully fund hiring an historian to conduct oral history interviews and record information and images. The applicant's contribution of \$300 towards materials was confirmed. Funding was not recommended based (i) on the lack of a venue or public web site to display materials and (ii) the society's cash balance suggests an ability to self-fund. Albeit the society hopes there will be public space created as part of the Peggy's Cove Master Plan Project, an initiative of Develop Nova Scotia, the initial phase of this project focuses on infrastructure renewal to manage the high tourist volume and mitigate adverse impacts on residents. The plan does however refer to heritage conservation to be addressed in a later phase. The Society's response to questions of clarification confirmed their interest in developing their own web site (which presumably would replace the current posting on Facebook which is a subscription application) but there was no clear timeline or content outline. At present, there is no presence on the Discover St. Margaret's Bay web site although this may be an option. An application for municipal funding to establish the public online platform and present material collected to date would have been a stronger approach in placing priority on public access to their current collection of images as well as any future oral history recordings, material artefacts and memorabilia. A meeting with staff in advance of next year's program intake would be an opportunity to provide clarification; the Community Grants Program does not fund economic development but does support community-based historical research and its presentation to a wider public audience. The applicant will be referred to the 2022 Community Grants Program.

HOUSING

Tier 2

Seaside Broadcasting Organization – Eastern Passage – Capital Grant

The society requested a grant of \$20,000 to fully fund the replacement of decks and stairs at the front and rear of the premises costing \$13,730.43 plus \$7,000 for unspecified "additional costs as discussed with contractor". Application was made under the Housing category, but the application stated that the work was to ensure the safety of "listeners, volunteers, and staff". The project was deemed ineligible because there was no financial information provided and the project did not align with the Housing category's purpose in supporting affordable housing. In response to questions of clarification the applicant confirmed there is some tenancy on the premises which might explain why the property is currently assessed Residential. A referral to staff is advisable because issuance of a building permit could trigger re-assessment by Property Valuation Services Corporation. The assessment may be incorrect given that a recording studio/office and related amenities would be considered a non-residential use and taxed at the Commercial rate. The society will be provided feedback on their grant application and information on HRM's Tax Relief for Non-Profit Organizations Program.

St. Luke's United Church – Upper Tantallon – Capital Grant

A grant of \$25,000 was requested towards the replacement of exterior siding and guttering on a place of worship. The building is not a registered heritage property. As confirmed by Property Online, title to the property is held by the United Church of Canada (not the parish). The project does not align with the funding criteria and priorities of the Housing category. Funding could be considered if the property was a registered heritage building and the work approved by HRM Planning & Development.

LEISURE

Tier 2

Wellington Fletcher's Lake Station House Community Hall – Oakfield – Capital Grant

A grant of \$25,000 was requested towards the purchase and installation of a new heating system (\$26,300) and electrical upgrade (\$6,500). The applicant was in default of the program's reporting requirements for a capital grant of \$10,000 awarded in 2020 towards replacement windows. The society has received a combined total of \$20,000 over the past three years (2018, 2019 and 2020) and further funding would be strengthened by sourcing non-municipal cash contributions. The financial information lacks sufficient detail to confirm if the society could secure financing secured by the asset, but liabilities were stated as \$0.

RECREATION

Tier 2

Orenda Canoe Club – Lake Echo – Capital Grant

A grant of \$22,000 was requested to fully fund the purchase the following items to establish a commercial-grade kitchen to enhance facility rentals: kitchen range (\$5,000); freezer (\$3,000); fridge (\$2,000); dishwasher (\$4,000); range hood (\$3,000); griddle (\$2,000); toaster (\$800); and food preparation tables and carts (\$800). The combined total is \$19,600 and none of the items qualify as a capital grant – each item costs \$5,000 or less. Although revenue diversification is desirable for the non-profit sector and food safety standards are of concern, many of these items are not required to obtain a food establishment permit. The development of a restaurant or catering capacity is not a priority under the program's Recreation category which emphasizes physical activity and fitness.

Halifax Nordic Ski Club – Regional/Annapolis Valley – Capital Grant

A grant of \$8,000 was requested towards the purchase of an all-terrain vehicle and grooming attachment (\$24,000). The club's contribution of \$16,000 is confirmed but funding has not been pursued from any other source. Notwithstanding the club's presence in the sport, capital grants have been provided through the Community Grants Program (\$38,000 to date) and HRM also provides in-kind support through the Graves Oakley venue. Regular expansion or upgrades to the Club's equipment inventory exceeds the program's capacity and the club could be encouraged to pursue other government and non-government funding sources. For example, corporate sponsorship/advertising, or trail grooming at Haliburton House in Windsor and Paragon Golf & Country Club in Kingston might leverage consideration from the municipalities of Windsor or East Hants. Given the scale of participation in the Club's activities, targeted fundraising campaigns or a sliding fee scale might be options through which revenues could be generated to maintain equipment inventory and/or expansion.



THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EASTERN MARINE BRANCH NO. 161

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19 July 2021

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Community Grant Award – Royal Canadian Legion, Eastern Marine Branch 161

References:

- a. Telephone conversation Meehan/PJ Temple, Monday 19th July
- b. Email Greechan/Meehan @ 1014, 19 July 2021
- c. Telephone Conversation Meehan/Wayne Matheson, Provincial Accessibility Project, 19th July

The Eastern Marine Branch 161 of the Royal Canadian Legion is very pleased to learn of the award of \$2,230 towards the cost of a commercial dishwasher for the Comfort Centre. We fully understand the change from “Emergency Assistance and Neighbourhood Safety” category to the “Leisure” category in light of comments by HRM Fire and Emergency Service regarding the need to supply food at a Comfort Centre.

This year we made several applications for grants, all that were satisfied partially. The problem now exists, whether or not we will be able to complete the various projects with less money than was expected. The branch had applied to the Provincial Accessibility Program for a 66% grant towards the cost of fitting fully accessible doors to the main entrance of the Legion Hall. We had applied for \$10,962.27 (66%) but received only \$8,000. I had a long conversation at reference c and was advised that the province was allocated less funding this year and that there were 95 applications. They chose to (I understand) fund all applications to a

lesser amount than was requested by each organization. In our case that meant a shortage of \$2,962.27.

It is requested that we (the Legion) be allowed to re-direct the grant of \$2,230 within the "Leisure" category to offset the money shortage for the accessible doors. If approved, we will definitely be able to complete that project without having to wonder where the extra funds could come from. With the recent closures and bills still coming in, funds are extremely tight. Being lower on the branch priority list, we would not proceed with the replacement of the dishwasher in the Comfort Centre as it is now not needed.

We hope our request can be favourably considered. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,


John D Meehan
Immediate Past President

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