

GRANTS COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

OCTOBER 11, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Russell Walker, Chair
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Vice-Chair
Councillor Brad Johns
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Andrew Higdon
Geoff Baker
David Woo

REGRETS: Deputy Mayor Smith
Darren Watts
Lori Wozney

STAFF: Denise Schofield, Manager, Community & Recreation Services
Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants and Special Projects
Andre MacNeil, Financial Consultant
Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

MOVED by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the agenda, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS, DELEGATIONS

3.1 Correspondence - NONE

3.2 Petitions - NONE

3.3 Delegations

3.3.1 Symphony Nova Scotia

The following information was before the Committee:

- July 18, 2011 staff report: HRM Community Grants Program 2011 – 2012: Appeals
- June 14, 2011 Grants Committee report to Regional Council: HRM Community Grants Program 2011 – 2012: Recommended Awards
- May 4, 2011 staff report: HRM Community Grants Program 2010-2011: Recommended Awards

Ms. Erika Beatty, CEO, and Mr. Bret Mitchell, Board Chair, Symphony Nova Scotia, were in attendance to present their appeal in regard to the Symphony Nova Scotia grant award. Ms. Beatty circulated an information package to the Committee at this time that included a copy of the following: 2010 Annual Report; Audited Financial Statements to June 2011; information pamphlets on various programs/events offered by Symphony Nova Scotia.

Ms. Beatty provided a brief biography and advised that she has worked with Symphony Nova Scotia for four years. Highlights of her presentation are as follows:

- she contacted HRM four years ago in regard to the grant application process and the category cap of \$5,000 and the fact that their application was for \$20,000; the primary focus of the appeal is based on notification to Symphony Nova Scotia in regard to HRM adhering to the policy cap of \$5,000 (see Attachment 3 of the July 18, 2011 staff report)
- the grant application submitted in March was for education and outreach activities that are non school based, an important part of Symphony Nova Scotia's programming is outreach to areas outside the downtown core of HRM
- Symphony Nova Scotia submitted an appeal based on new information received after their March submission; they were advised on April 21st of the change in

policy and that April 27th was the deadline to submit a new application under the new funding guidelines of the \$5,000 category cap; the alternative was to follow established and published process and appeal the Grants Committee's decision which is the option Symphony Nova Scotia decided to follow

- historically, there has been a "legacy" that predates amalgamation in that Symphony Nova Scotia has received more than the \$5,000 category cap; she submitted the application based on the previous pattern of previous years
- she noted that the Committee's minutes note that written notice was provided to Symphony Nova Scotia of the adherence to the category cap but no such written communication was received by Symphony Nova Scotia prior to the March submission.

Ms. Beatty responded to questions of clarification from members of the Grants Committee and staff. She explained that:

- adherence by HRM to the policy was now understood, however; Symphony Nova Scotia began planning the 2012/13 budget as they were finalizing the 2011/12 programming. She noted that she did contact HRM staff and requested assurance in regard to whether there were any changes they should know about in regard to the process/policy. There was no reason provided as to why Symphony Nova Scotia should expect any change in past practice.
- planning for future years has been affected given the uncertainty of funding. The biggest cost in regard to the loss of a \$20,000 grant would be to communities farthest from the city core as the largest cost is in transporting an orchestra to those areas.
- the only capital, assets, owned by Symphony Nova Scotia are a music library and some instruments
- the endowment fund designated to the society is turned over to the foundation for ongoing future revenue for the foundation; by 2014 that foundation will be at an amount to provide approximately \$40,000 per year as part of their sustainability program, however; private donations received for the Symphony Nova Scotia Foundation are for a specific purpose and cannot be redirected to current year operations.
- if Symphony Nova Scotia had been advised in June 2010 of HRM's intent to adhere to policy, it would have been possible for them to submit an application for a capital grant.

Mr. Bret Mitchell explained the economic spin off of Symphony Nova Scotia as a part of the cultural infrastructure such as attracting companies to an area with a diverse sustainable, vibrant arts community. Symphony Nova Scotia is recognized internationally as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. The financial impact is \$3.5 to \$3.8 million with the economic spin off many times that amount.

Councillor Walker thanked Ms. Beatty and Mr. Mitchell for their presentation.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Johns that based on the appeal process and new information presented at the October 11, 2011 special Grants Committee meeting, the Grants Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council consider an exception to the existing policy and award an additional \$15,000 for a total \$20,000 program grant for 2011-2012 to Symphony Nova Scotia. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. NEXT MEETING DATE – November 7, 2011

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS - NONE