



**GRANTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 8, 2014**

PRESENT: Councillor Russell Walker, Chair
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Vice Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Whitman
Mr. Donald Dodge
Ms. Kate Watson
Mr. Francis Glover
Mr. Darren Watts

ABSENT: Mr. Jason Cooke

STAFF: Ms. Peta-Jane Temple, Team Leader, Tax, Grants & Special Projects
Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager, Financial Policy and Planning
Mr. Peter Greechan, Community Developer
Mr. Andre MacNeil, Sr. Financial Consultant
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Grants Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/bccgrants/140721grantsagenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m., and adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 9th and July 21, 2014 (special)

MOVED by Councillor Whitman, seconded by Mr. Watts that the minutes of June 9, 2014 and special meeting minutes of July 21, 2014 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Mr. Watts, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Order of Business be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1 STAFF

7.1.1 BID Contributions Fund: 2014-2015 Recommended Awards

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated August 1, 2014

Ms. Peta-Jane Temple, Team Leader, Tax, Grants & Special Projects provided a brief overview of the eight (8) recommended awards outlined in the August 1, 2014 staff report.

MOVED by Whitman, seconded by Dodge that the Grants Committee recommend that Regional Council approve the eight (8) awards detailed in Attachment 2 of the staff report dated August 1, 2014 for a combined total of \$107,000 from operating account C771-6919. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Walker stepped down as chair at this time and Councillor Whitman assumed the Chair

7.1.2 Community Grants Program 2014: Appeals

The following was before the Committee:

- A supplementary recommendation report dated July 30, 2014

Councillor Walker advised the Committee that the Fairview United Family Resource Centre had secured a building and mortgage and were seeking a capital grant in the amount of \$25,000 to assist with building an addition to the facility to accommodate programming, in particular a Boys and Girls Club and after school program.

Councillor Hendsbee entered the meeting at 1:07 p.m.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Mr. Watts that the Grants Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that the Fairview United Family Resource Centre be awarded \$25,000 to be used toward the addition to the building.

Councillor Dalrymple entered the meeting at 1:09 p.m. and assumed the chair from Councillor Whitman. Councillor Whitman took his seat.

During the discussion, Councillor Walker providing additional clarification around the purpose of the \$25,000 grant to the Centre. It was noted that the total cost of the expansion is \$200,000 and it was suggested by staff that the Committee consider holding back the funds pending confirmation of the balance of \$175,000 being raised by the Centre, to which the Committee agreed.

The motion before the Committee now read:

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Mr. Watts that the Grants Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council the Fairview United Family Resource Centre be awarded \$25,000 to be used toward the addition onto the building with a holdback pending confirmation of the balance of \$175,000 being raised by the Centre.

It was noted that a progress report/final report is to be submitted to the Grants Committee by the Centre by March 31, 2015.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Walker resumed the Chair and Councillor Dalrymple took his seat.

Ms. Temple advised that during the summer break the Hammonds Plains Fire Hall & Community Centre requested an amendment to the terms of their grant, which staff approved by way of email to enable them to proceed with a grant request under the provincial *Access Ability Program*. She noted that the initial request was for construction of an access ramp; however, the group requested that the funds be put towards replacement stairs so as to not conflict with their provincial grant.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Whitman that the Grants Committee approve an amendment to the terms and conditions of funding for the Hammonds Plains Fire Hall & Community Centre. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Ms. Temple advised the Committee that the Lake Charlotte & Area Heritage Society had received, to date, an additional \$19,000 through the Councillor's Capital Discretionary Capital Fund for a total of \$25,000 and recommended that the proposed \$9,000 award be reduced to \$5,000 for a total of \$40,000 from HRM sources.

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple that the Lake Charlotte & Area Heritage Society's conditional grant be reduced from \$9,000 to \$5,000 with funds being allocated from operating account M311-8004 Community Grants Program.

A brief discussion was held.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Ms. Temple clarified that the balance outlined in financial implications section of the July 30, 2014 staff report would need to be amended when the Committee's report goes to Council to reflect the Committee's recommendations; being \$4,775.00.

MOVED by Councillor Whitman, seconded by Ms. Watson that the Grants Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council approve:

- 1. A capital grant in the amount of \$20,000 to the Lawrencetown Community Centre, \$12,000 to the Freedom Foundation, Dartmouth, and \$25,000 to the Fairview United Family Resource Centre for a combined total of \$57,000 from operating account M311-8004 Community Grants Program;**
- 2. A conditional grant in the amount of \$5,000 to the Lake Charlotte & Area Heritage Society from operating account M311-8004 Community Grants Program;**
- 3. A change in the terms and conditions of funding to the Deanery Project Cooperative Limited, Ship Harbour, and the Hammonds Plains Fire Hall & Community Centre; and**
- 4. The decline of three (3) appeals as amended by the Grants Committee and detailed in Attachment 3 of the supplementary staff report dated July 30, 2014.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1.3 Tax Relief: Proposed Program Redesign – staff presentation – Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager, Financial Policy & Planning

The following was before the Committee:

- A copy of the staff presentation
- A spreadsheet entitled: Non-Profit Tax Rate, Option 3 Details by Category & Organization (revised September 8, 2014)

Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager, Financial Policy and Planning presented on the Non-Profit Tax Relief proposed program re-design, in regard to the draft tax rates for the Housing, Homelessness and Community Non-Profit sectors and sector-level impacts. Mr. Fisher further reviewed the spreadsheets circulated to the Committee during the meeting.

The Committee entered into discussion with staff responding to questions.

In response to questions raised, Mr. Fisher advised that the categories within the sectors had not been plotted geographically by region but could be reviewed and provided to the Committee in a map or table for information.

Mr. Fisher provided further information on the Committee's earlier discussions around having a four year phased in approach and the options for rolling out the program. It was noted that staff would provide options for the Committee's review and consideration.

In response to questions raised, Mr. Fisher provided an overview of the rates and average tax bill for the arts, culture and heritage category, as outlined in the presentation.

In response to comments made around communication/consultation with non-profit groups on the revised program, staff advised that staff would meet with the different groups to discuss how they would be taxed under the new program, once approved by Regional Council. Staff will also be working out the details around the timing of the release of information and working with Corporate Communication in this regard.

The Committee discussed the spreadsheet circulated by staff at the meeting regarding the 167 organizations, listed by number not name, which outlined the current taxes under the Charter before the exemption, current taxes under Administrative Order 59 after the exemption and taxes under the revised proposal of Option 3. In response to a request that the Committee be provided a list of the organizations by way of name prior to making a recommendation to Council, Mr. Fisher did not recommend identifying the organizations by name and making this information public as a decision had not been made/approved by Regional Council around the revised proposal. Mr. Fisher further indicated that in his discussions with Legal Services there was no basis (i.e. an in camera category) to address this matter in camera. Councillor Walker advised he would discuss this matter with Legal Services.

During review of the spreadsheet Councillor Hendsbee suggested the non-profit organization be grouped together by their category to allow for easier comparison (i.e. list all the organizations under arts, culture & heritage then recreation & leisure, etc.).

In response to a suggestion made on having a comparison of other Canadian municipalities and cities in regards to tax relief for non-profits when communicating to the public, Mr. Andre MacNeil, Sr. Financial Consultant indicated that he had done some benchmarking and could provide this information to the Committee. Ms. Temple further spoke to using various methods to communicate the revised program, once approved, with non-profit groups

8. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, October 6, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Media Room, City Hall

Due to a scheduling conflict the Committee agreed to reschedule their meeting start time to 2:00 p.m., to be confirmed by the Clerk's Office via email as the meeting date approaches.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Krista Vining
Legislative Assistant