



**HALIFAX EXPLOSION 100th ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 17, 2015**

PRESENT: Mr. Craig Walkinton, Chair
Mr. Jeffry Haggett
Mr. David Sutherland
Ms. Marilyn Elliott
Ms. Renee Gruszecki

OTHERS PRESENT: Councillor Jennifer Watts

REGRETS: Mr. Will Robinson-Mushkat
Mr. Dwight Dorey, Vice Chair
Ms. Pat Jessup

STAFF: Ms. Elizabeth Taylor, Manager Events and Cultural Initiatives
Ms. Peta Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants and Special Projects
Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager, Real Property and Planning
Mr. Jamie MacLellan, Public Art Facilitator
Mr. Paul Forrest, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Peter Greechan, Community Developer, Grants and Contributions
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Cathy Collett, Legislative Support

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/explosion/index.php>

The meeting was called to order a 3:02 p.m. and adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 15, 2015

MOVED by Ms. Elliott, seconded by Ms. Gruszecki that the minutes of April 15, 2015 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Mr. Sutherland, seconded by Ms. Gruszecki that the agenda be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Walkington inquired whether staff were still investigating the possibility of a Halifax Explosion commemoration emblem. Ms. Elizabeth Taylor replied that a staff report is being prepared to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee. The Legislative Assistant indicated she would forward the link to the report when it became public.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence

6.1.1 Correspondence and video from Gordon Wayhay, dated May 12, 2015.

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence and video from Gordon Wayhay, dated May 12, 2015, re: Model Railroad of Halifax/Dartmouth/Bedford prior to 1917

Due to time constraints, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

6.1.2 Correspondence from Jacqueline Halsey, dated May 28, 2015

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from Jacqueline Halsey, dated May 28, 2015, re: “Explosion News” picture book.

This correspondence will be added to the list of submissions received for future consideration.

6.1.3 Correspondence from Florence Sassine, dated June 9, 2015

The following was before the Committee:

- Correspondence from Florence Sassine, dated June 9, 2015, re: offer for protocol support for commemorative event.

Ms. Sassine’s offer for protocol support was noted with thanks by the Committee.

6.2 Petitions – None

6.3 Presentations - None

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1. STAFF

7.1.1 Initial Overview of the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Proposed Designated Funding Program – Ms. PJ Temple, Tax, Grants & Special Projects

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff Information Report “Special Advisory Committee on the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion Grants and Contributions”.

Ms. Temple presented to the Committee the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion: Proposed Designated Funding Program. She began the presentation by showing examples of projects funded by the Community Grants Program as well as commemorative markers and interpretation panels funded by HRM.

Ms. Temple outlined the potential breakdown of funds for HRM’s commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion. She emphasized that one of the goals of a special grants program would be to expand opportunities for funding by broadening the scope of participation of existing grant programs. Currently, sectors such as churches and schools are ineligible for grants through the Community Grants Program, thus the scope of eligibility may need to be expanded for the potential Halifax Explosion Special Grants Program.

Ms. Temple reviewed the possible roles for Committee members in the granting process.

Mr. Haggett questioned where cultural initiatives would fit in to the grants program. Ms. Temple responded that this is a new and emerging category and Ms. Taylor added that Events and Cultural Initiatives staff would be introducing this new program to the Committee at the next meeting.

Ms. Temple concluded the presentation by reviewing the rationale for grants, the stated objectives of Council regarding the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion, and by clarifying the definition of a grants program.

Ms. Gruszecki thanked Ms. Temple for the comprehensive report and questioned how the call for commemorative projects will affect the arts community at large in terms of stimulating increased competition. She asked who would be affected by the surge of interest for existing grants and questioned whether peer juries would be expected to make decisions based on theme or merit. She emphasized that she was concerned with HRM losing valuable projects because of the increased call for competition.

Ms. Temple responded that Council has approved in principle a separate designated grants program specific to projects commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion and that Ms. Gruszecki’s concerns constitute a solid argument for why a designated program is needed. Not only would a special grants program broaden opportunities for participation, it would also serve to reduce the pressure on existing grants programs.

The Committee discussed the importance of the Halifax Explosion Grants Program not decreasing existing grants programs within HRM. Mr. Haggett commented that the goal of the program should be to stimulate projects of commemoration, not to redirect existing municipal funds, as this would disrupt the stability of existing grant programs.

Mr. Bigelow commented that there might also be other funding sources that arise for projects of commemoration through other levels of government or the private sector.

The Committee discussed the issue of “stacking” and questioned what the policy would be on applicants receiving funding from multiple funding bodies. The Committee determined that it would not be fair to preclude an applicant receiving funds from another granting body, as some projects require multiple grants in order to be viable, but that an applicant should only be allowed to receive one municipal grant for a specific project.

Councillor Watts reiterated the need for a special grants program to take the pressure off of the existing grants programs and questioned what the role of the Committee would be in the granting process.

Ms. Temple questioned if the Committee’s position was that applicants would be able to apply to more than one municipal program within the same year for the same project.

The Committee discussed the matter and provided consensus that while applicants should be allowed to apply for both operating assistance and project assistance (as is currently the case), they would not be allowed to apply for project assistance for the same project to more than one program. Thus if a special grants program is created for projects commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion, an applicant would not be allowed to apply to both the special program and the existing project assistance program for the same project. It would be the choice of the applicant on which project-assistance program to apply to, based on the scope and merit of the proposed project.

Mr. Haggett emphasized that the rule would only apply to HRM grants, and that applicants could apply to as many granting bodies as they like beyond the municipal level.

Councillor Watts clarified that the rule against “stacking” is project-based, and thus a group who currently is the recipient of an operating grant could still apply to either the general project grants program or the proposed special grants program.

The Committee reviewed the proposed funding categories. Ms. Temple explained that the proposed funding categories had been cross-referenced with the vision statement and guiding principles created by the Committee.

The Committee discussed the proposed eligibility criteria, with several members expressing concern that with the requirement for applicants to be registered as a society, charity, or non-profit, noting that this might be difficult for smaller groups to achieve. Ms. Temple replied that staff would encourage collaboration between ineligible groups and individuals and established groups, as well as helping applicants walk through the registration process. Ms. Taylor clarified that this is a requirement of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (which is provincial legislation) for the expenditure of money by Council.

The Committee discussed whether one or two application intake periods would be best and decided that two would be the most appropriate (one per year for two years).

Ms. Temple explained that the precedent for grants is that they are capped at \$5000.00. The Committee discussed what a ballpark figure would be to make the grants program successful. Ms. Temple suggested that it might be helpful to determine an amount for each of the five proposed funding categories. The Committee agreed that if ten applicants were to be successful from each category at a maximum grant of \$5000.00, then \$250,000.000 would an adequate amount.

The Committee continued to discuss the breakdown of grants and commented that if the funds received for the grants program were less that \$100,000.00, the program would not be viable.

Mr. Sutherland questioned where the possibility of partnering with Symphony Nova Scotia would fit in. Mr. Haggett questioned who is responsible for coordinating the funded projects so that there is a cohesive structure to the commemoration. Ms. Temple advised that these questions would be best addressed at the next meeting after Ms. Taylor’s presentation.

Ms. Temple questioned if the Committee is comfortable to allow the proposed designated funding program to proceed to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee, and then to Council for approval. The Committee acknowledged their agreement, with the feedback provided today.

Committee members expressed concern for their role in the overall process of the commemorative program. Ms. Taylor suggested that it might be helpful for Committee members to review the terms of reference for the Committee. The Committee emphasized the need for a timeline going forward.

7.2 COMMITTEE

7.2.1 “Just One of the Boys” (video by Eric Davidson) – Marilyn Elliott

Due to time constraints, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

8. ADDED ITEMS - None

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, July 15, 2015 – 3:00 – 5:00, Room B239, NSCC, 5685 Leeds Street, Halifax

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Cathy Collett
Legislative Support