

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 25, 2009

PRESENT:

Councillor Brad Johns, Chair
Mr. Douglas MacDonald, Vice-Chair
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Mr. Bill Mont, Citizen Representative
Mr. Brad Smith, Greater Halifax Partnership
Ms. Sally Camus, Cultural Advisory Committee
Mr. Brian Rose, Halifax Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, Destination Halifax
Mr. Joe Gillivan, Hotel Association of Nova Scotia

REGRETS:

STAFF

Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Development
Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events & Festivals
Mr. Andrew Cox, Civic Events Coordinator
Mr. Billy Comer, Civic Events Coordinator
Mr. Grant MacDonald, Events Halifax
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor City Hall, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 28, 2009 and February 25, 2009

MOVED By Councillor Sloane, seconded by Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, that the minutes of January 28, 2009, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Approval of the February 25, 2009 minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

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

The Committee approved the agenda as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION - NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECISSION - NONE

7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE

8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

8.1 Correspondence - NONE

8.2 Petitions - NONE

8.3 Delegations

8.3.1 2009 ICF World Canoe Championships

Item deferred to the April 8, 2009 meeting.

8.3.2 2009 Canadian Senior Baseball Championship

- A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed to the Committee at this time. Mr. Paul Arsenault, Chair, 2009 Senior Baseball Championship, presented. He noted that:
- The host team will be the Dartmouth Moosehead Dry Baseball Club with ten provinces competing in the 26 game event for the National Championship title. Event scheduled to run from August 20-23, 2009.
- Expected attendance is 30,000 overall; 20% of that number would be travelling from destinations outside HRM.
- Baseball has seen a 14% increase in growth since 2006.
- Over 150 volunteers; 250 players, coaches, team officials also participating.
- The venues to be utilized include Beazley Field in Dartmouth and Mainland Commons in Clayton Park West. Planned seating capacity improvements at these venues are 2000 and 1000 respectively.
- Budgeted expenses for the event total \$139,500; total budgeted revenue is \$140,000. A detailed breakdown of expenses and revenue was provided.
- Marketing for the event includes a website; links to provincial associations throughout Canada as well as the Baseball Canada site; \$40,000 media advertising campaign; and TV exposure through Eastlink.
- The objective of the event is to determine the best senior team in Canada; expose Atlantic Canadians to the highest amateur baseball in Canada; provide a family experience and to showcase the development of minor baseball within Nova Scotia.

The benefits to HRM from this event would be:

- Projected economic spinoff of \$1.1 million.
- Strengthened position as a preferred National Championship site.
- Support for future baseball championship bids including international events.
- Justify future infrastructure development.

The 2009 Senior Baseball Championship group is requesting a \$30,000 grant from the Special Events Advisory Committee to assist with infrastructure needs. Other sources of revenue would be through sponsorships, concessions/admissions and 50/50 ticket sales.

Mr. Arsenault responded to concerns/comments of the Special Events Advisory Committee as follows:

- Future infrastructure needs would be to address deficiencies with: public washroom facilities; change rooms; seating; fields and other long term infrastructure considerations such as a turf field. Concern has been expressed in regard to whether or not Beazley Field should be a future venue site as it does not meet Baseball Canada measurement standards.
- The sport of baseball has grown by 8-10% over the last three years.
- The licensed viewing area would be strategically located to ensure the event

- remains family friendly.
- \$10,000 has been allocated in the budget for security (mix of private security and Halifax Regional Police).
- The \$20,000 allocated for accommodations would be for the players; some will be housed at Mount Saint Vincent University and others at local hotels.
- 12-14% of attendees will require hotel accommodations and will be travelling from areas across Canada. Approximately 600-900 hotel rooms would be required.
- Halifax Common was not considered as a venue due to the field size and that the facility is more for softball and under high demand. The other baseball field option was Weir Field in Sackville.
- Information packages about Halifax and area will be distributed to the visitors; work is underway with bus companies in regard to local tours etc. The event is about showcasing Halifax, not just baseball.
- The Rentals budget item includes “port-a-potties” and beer tent.
- Grants from the Provincial and Federal governments have been requested and \$5,000 has been received from the Province. A search is ongoing for further funding opportunities and sponsorships.
- A media game is being considered to draw attention and excitement to the event.
- The additional seating would be temporary seating.
- Baseball Nova Scotia began receiving calls for tickets to the event in October.
- Promotion will be through sponsors such as Subway; a provincial competition will be held for the 12 to 14 age group. It is hoped that the Regional Trials will be held in Halifax. The Chronicle-Herald newspaper has been assisting with promotion as has Metro (Transatlantic News); Stuart Harris on the Sunday show; Q104 radio and Rogers Communications. Each provincial body has a website and a tour site is referenced to the event site.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr. Arsenault for his presentation.

8.3.3 Freedom 175 Celebration

- A draft schedule of events was circulated to the Committee at this time.

Mr. John Hennigar-Shuh, Manager, Development and Partnership, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, presented. He noted that:

- 2009 is the 175th anniversary of the abolition of slavery by the British Parliament on August 1, 1834.
- The event will run in conjunction with the arrival of the Freedom Schooner *Amistad* and Tall Ships 2009.

- Emphasis placed on youth involvement; video conferencing with students in New York as well as local school children being invited onboard the *Amistad* and to workshops that would help to build bridges across the racial and ethical divide.
- The Jamaican High Commissioner will be assisting with the drum performance by Maroon descendants.
- The Africville annual reunion event has been rescheduled to be part of this event.

Mr. Mike Gillet, Coordinator, Special Events, advised the Committee that the financial information had been received with the application but was not forwarded to the Committee in advance. He will ensure that the Committee members receive this information for the April 8th meeting.

Mr. Hennigar-Shuh, responded to comments/concerns of the Committee as follows:

- The event organizers are requesting \$20,000 from HRM.
- The total estimated budget for the event is just short of \$100,000.
- Two Federal Government grants from Canadian Heritage and Young Canada Works have been obtained.
- The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic has contributed extensive staff resources.
- The Provincial Departments of Education and African Nova Scotian Affairs are also contributing.
- Eastlink Television will be the Corporate sponsor; others are being approached.
- The community of Preston will be involved with performances held in the area.
- There is no budget capacity for major international marketing, however; contact has been made with a museum in Liverpool, England; a major black tourism group in Georgia, USA and a bus tour is expected from California, USA.
- The student video exchange resulted in a suggestion for an exchange between Nova Scotia and New York as they are so close geographically. The Nova Scotia black community is the largest free black community in the world outside Africa and most people are not aware of the long black history in Nova Scotia.
- Discussions were held with organizers of the Natal Day event.
- Most attendees will come from within a 100 mile radius of Halifax. This event is not yet a destination event, however; there is potential for it to be a market ready event due to the growing interest in Black cultural history.
- *On the Road North*, an exhibit about the freedom immigration from the United States to Canada, is currently being shown at the Halifax North Library and will also be shown at the Maritime Museum during the event. The exhibit has been contributed by the Department of Multiculturalism who has also contributed \$3,000 toward the event.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr. Hennigar-Shuh for his presentation.

8.3.4 Symphony Nova Scotia 25th Anniversary Concert

- Two brochures were distributed to the Committee at this time: the 2009/10 Symphony Nova Scotia program and the September 25 - October 24, 2008 program.

Ms. Erica Beatty and Ms. Christina Murray, Symphony Nova Scotia, presented. They noted that:

- 2009 would be the 25th anniversary of Symphony Nova Scotia.
- More community outreach will be done such as Music Mondays and Symphony Week with smaller ensembles travelling throughout HRM performing 25 free concerts at various locations.
- Average attendance at the Symphony is 50,000 per year; 15,000 being under the age of 18. Attendance has increased by almost 10% from previous year.
- Symphony Nova Scotia was the most recorded and broadcast orchestra on CBC last year.
- More engagement with HRM and the downtown tourism sector is being actively pursued so that performances are not limited to one facility/location.
- Partnerships with Phoenix House and the Isaac Walton Killiam Hospital (IWK) are some of the diverse connections being made.
- Hopeful that the concert series will become an annual event.
- Funding for this isolated project would be from a diverse revenue stream: 30% from ticket sales; 30% from private sector donations and 30% from government support (HRM has been the first approached in regard to support for this event).

The Committee members commended Ms. Beatty and Ms. Murray for Symphony Nova Scotia's initiative in community outreach by taking the symphony to the communities for those who may not otherwise be able to participate, and; for their emphasis on more mainstream and current connections with young performers.

Ms. Beatty and Ms. Murray responded to comments/concerns of the Committee as follows:

- 25% of subscribers are within a 100 km radius outside HRM and areas such as New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.
- Single ticket purchases are from as far away as Houston, Texas.
- Marketing will be through the Symphony Nova Scotia's existing databank and former performers who often return for benchmark events in support of the orchestra.
- The cost for the event is estimated at \$31,000 with incremental costs such as

- staging/chairs and overhead cost built into the budget.
- The event will be timed with the Atlantic Film Festival (AFF) and be cross-marketed with that event. The Atlantic Film Festival will also cost share for the staging.
- The submitted application includes detailed information on the budget.
- The lead marketing event will take place in May with a talent competition for young performers (the venue rental and prize money for the competition event totals approximately \$3,000). Salary for extra musicians is budgeted at \$3,000. There would also be cardage/tent/staging fees that would bring the total budget for the week up to \$20,000 including \$7,000 for marketing.
- CBC will carry the event nationally with Symphony Nova Scotia being the only orchestra participating. There is also a website, a Facebook and MySpace pages; an e-mail letter will be sent to all those in the current database.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Ms. Beatty and Ms. Murray for their presentation.

8.3.5 DND Citadel Hill Support The Troops Rock Concert

Item deferred to the April 8, 2009 meeting.

8.3.6 Maritime Fiddle Festival 60th Anniversary

- A brochure of the 2008 59th Annual Maritime Fiddle Festival was circulated to the Committee at this time.

Councillor Andrew Younger introduced the following members of the Maritime Fiddle Festival Committee: Mr. Anthony Rissesco, Mr. Kevin Connors, Mr. Doug Morash, Mr. Eric Jagger and Dr. Sarah Hardy. He noted that letters of support from local hotels were included in the information submitted by the Festival organizers in regard to the major returns from this event. He advised that the Maritime Fiddle Festival had grown to an important national and international event that draws performers and spectators from all parts of HRM, the province of Nova Scotia and beyond. He explained that the Festival organizers were actively working to attract more bus tours in cooperation with the Nova Scotia International Tattoo event organizers.

Mr. Kevin Connors, Rotary Club of Dartmouth East, advised that:

- A four-year growth plan was developed in 2006 when the Rotary Club took an active role in organizing the annual Festival. Part of the growth plan included an expansion of the festival from a one site contest/jamboree to a more city-wide,

multiple location event. The objective has been to make Halifax/Dartmouth the destination for world class fiddle music in Canada.

- A fact sheet submitted with the application shows significant growth of the event since 2006. In 2005 there were 70 contestants which is projected to be 135 for 2009 with an increase in paid attendance to approximately 6000 spectators.
- Free events will also be offered at approximately six (6) citizen centres throughout HRM commencing with a lunch series in May.
- 2009 marks the 60th anniversary of the festival and many events have been planned to celebrate this benchmark. Former contestants from around the world will be returning to Halifax for the 60th anniversary celebrations.

Councillor Younger noted that tickets for the event went on sale March 24th through Ticket Centre Atlantic.

In response to Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, Mr. Connor and Councillor Younger noted that the incremental costs for the 2009 event for entertainment and facilities were \$20,000 and \$7,000 respectively.

- Entertainment costs increased due to the earlier start time which resulted in the need for more performers.
- The facility increase was due to moving from a one location event to multiple/outdoor stages.
- The total amount requested was \$40,000.
- Alexander Keith has volunteered to be a sponsor.
- Grants have been confirmed from the Federal Department of Heritage and the Provincial Department of Tourism, however; the amount of those grants has not been announced as they would be dependent on HRM's contribution.
- The additional funding of \$13,000 to make up the \$40,000 would go toward marketing and advertising; website and marketing outside HRM to bus tours in Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island as well as to the 2500 data bank members from previous festivals.

In response to Councillor Johns and Mr. Doug MacDonald, Mr. Connors advised that the Rotary Club would only receive revenue from the RV park, canteen, and 50/50 ticket sales. The Rotary Club invested seed money into the festival and added a \$500 donation for 2009 plus the major contribution being in volunteer hours. Other sponsors include Holiday Inn; Super8 Hotels and other small businesses/individuals. Mr. Connors noted that all awards were sponsored by individuals or businesses in Dartmouth.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the presenters for their comments.

The meeting recessed at 2:57 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:01 p.m.

Councillor Nicoll left the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

In response to concerns from Committee members that they had not received the pertinent financial data required for them to formulate questions, Mr. Mike Gillett advised that he would ensure the pertinent data was included in the agenda packages for the April 8th meeting.

8.3.7 Multicultural Festival 25th Anniversary

Mr. Ifty Ilyas, Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia, presented. He noted that:

- 2009 would be the 25th anniversary of the event.
- An expansion to include pre-festival events at two Halifax locations: the Bella Rose Theatre, Halifax West High School (morning instrumental program for school children to open their minds to new instruments and differences in the world and an evening dance program for the public including dance groups from Armenia, Greece, Ontario etc.) was planned. Schools throughout HRM will be contacted and invited to attend the morning event which has a seating capacity of 600. There will also be a film screening of a multicultural topic at the Oxford Theatre in Halifax with a small musical ensemble to play prior to the film.
- A Visitor / Demographic survey was done and a copy submitted with the application. The survey results showed that 90% of attendees were area residents: 57% of visitors were from HRM with 34% from the Dartmouth area and 9% from outside HRM and the province.
- A rock concert is planned for Friday evening; musical acts are being finalized.
- A Singer/songwriter contest is planned with the winner performing two of their songs on stage.
- Royal Bank will be the corporate sponsor, therefore; the event will be known as the Royal Bank Multicultural Festival in return for a five year commitment of support from Royal Bank.
- Additional major corporate sponsors are also being sought as more funding is required for the event to remain in Dartmouth. Event organizers have not been able to increase attendance at this site even with increased promotion. It is hoped that the two new pre-festival events planned for Halifax will help increase attendance at the main festival.

Mr. Ilyas responded to comments/concerns of the Committee as follows:

- In regard to marketing, local newspapers such as community papers and the Chronicle-Herald are assisting. The Chronicle-Herald will assist with their electronic news website. CBC support has been lost due to cutbacks at their level. CTV has offered a 50/50 partnership but the cost is high. C100 radio and CBC radio have dropped out and due to media exclusivity organizers cannot approach other radio stations except for community radio stations (Seaside FM). Paid ads were placed on Metro Transit buses last year as well as “rip card” information sheets that people could tear off and take with them. The event organizers have approached the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) for this year and CAA will assist by advertising in their monthly magazine which has 32,000 Atlantic members. There will also be a variety of posters in various locations. Every other means possible to market and promote this event will be done, however; finances are a factor.
- The focus is not on attracting immigrants to the festival nor in compiling statistics on how many immigrants attend the event but rather to encourage everyone from all communities to participate in the family event. Everyone is wanted and welcomed.
- A \$100,000 increase to the budget is expected this year due to the addition of the two pre-festival events and the Friday evening rock concert (with a cost of \$50,000 to \$60,000). The intent is to attract people to the events plaza on the Friday evening in hopes that they will participate in other events at that venue over the weekend. A maximum of 4000 to 5000 people could be welcomed at this site.
- \$40,000 is being requested from the Special Events Advisory Committee.

The Committee noted that increasing the gate at the Dartmouth location may be due to the limitations in available parking.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr. Illyas for his presentation.

8.3.8 CTV Olympic Celebration

Ms. Leanne Bernardo, Project Manager, Canada’s Olympic Broadcast Media Consortium, presented. She noted that CTV was requesting \$175,000 for the event that has a total budget of \$450,000 for Halifax. The funds would provide the following to HRM:

- An opportunity for HRM (secondary) branding as approximately 32,911,389 people will view the Olympic events on CTV television. Other members of the media consortium include 11 official television stations, 37 promotional partners, 45 radio stations, 2 websites, Blackberry/cellphone access and print media (Globe and Mail) as well as three alternative media groups.
- Halifax is one of the cities being considered for the twelve (12) Canadian Cities

- visited in seventeen (17) days.
- There would be extensive promotion of this event across Canada with \$200,000 spent in Halifax alone on promotions (local stories, filings/broadcasts).
- The expected injection into the tourism market would be \$725,000 based on the number of people coming from outside HRM requiring hotels, food and beverages.
- The estimated overall economic benefit would be \$1,075,000.
- There would be a weblink to Halifax and a media booth onsite for the once in a lifetime opportunity to officially link Halifax with Canada's largest sporting event.

Ms. Bernardo responded to comments/concerns of the Committee as follows:

- The application submitted did not specify an amount. It was hoped that the entire venue cost would be covered as well as in kind costs to decrease expenses. She offered to submit further detail on how she reached the \$175,000 sum.
- Provincial and Federal assistance will also be requested.
- This would be a one day event hosted by CTV.
- In response to concerns with attracting the number of people projected for the event from outside HRM due to the Valentine Day date and the date being a Sunday (a school night), Ms. Bernardo advised that 85% of attendees would be local residents and 15% would be from out of town. Advertising would be focussed outside the Halifax region.
- No acts have been booked at this time. Bands under consideration include Simple Plan and Nellie Furtado.
- There would be an expected 400,000 viewing the event live onscreen at the Metro Centre.
- CTV is a for profit company but will not take away any revenue from this event.
- The Olympic Committee has approved of this strategy.
- The time for the event is proposed to be from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. but anytime suggested by the City would be considered.
- The Metro Centre will donate \$50,000.

Councillor Sloane suggested that, although the Metro Centre was a good choice for most of the event due to the unpredictable weather in February, an outdoor event should also be considered for the Grand Parade.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Ms. Bernardo for her presentation.

8.3.9 Events Halifax Strategy

- A copy of the presentation was circulated to the Committee at this time.

Mr. Grant MacDonald, Events Halifax, presented. He acknowledged Mr. Scott Ferguson, Acting General Manager of the Trade Centre Limited, who was also in attendance.

Mr. MacDonald requested that the Special Events Advisory Committee review the proposed strategy for major event hosting and provide comment within thirty days. He noted that the proposed strategy was an opportunity for HRM to become an equal share partner in a major initiative for Nova Scotia. A report completed by Cameron Hawkins and Associates indicated a desire to see HRM strengthen its model with new government leadership and funding model by actively engaging all three levels of government to obtain sustained funding for ongoing operations. The proposed governance model is currently under review by the Provincial government and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). Halifax and HRM would reap the lion's share of return on investment which would commence with the 2009/10 fiscal year upon approval of the Province of Nova Scotia and ACOA.

MOVED BY Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, seconded by Mr. Brad Smith that the Special Events Advisory Committee hold a special meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2009 specifically to discuss the proposed strategy and proposal brought forward by Events Halifax. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Sloane requested that staff provide clarification/comment on the following for the April 9, 2009 special meeting:

- Service Implications: how does the proposed strategy relate to other service providers.
- Financial Implications: how would this program/service be funded and what would the impact be on those currently served.
- Accountability: how would the impact be measured; what would be the reporting mechanism.
- Governance: would the proposed strategy ensure fairness and equity.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr. MacDonald for his presentation.

9. REPORTS

9.1 Special Events Grant Funding Requests

Deferred to the April 8, 2009 meeting.

9.2 HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals

Deferred to the April 8, 2009 meeting.

9.3 Revised 2009 Meeting Schedule

The revised 2009 meeting schedule was before the Committee for consideration. The proposed date was for the second Wednesday of the month from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. rather than the third Wednesday.

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Ms. Sally Camus that the Special Events Advisory Committee meeting schedule be revised to the second Wednesday of the month from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. MOTIONS - NONE

11. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

12. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, April 8, 2009, Media Room, 1st Floor City Hall, Halifax. Meeting to be extended by one hour on this date to accommodate the proposed agenda.

Special meeting called for Thursday, April 9, 2009, Media Room, 1st Floor City Hall from 1-4:00 pm.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant

