

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes**

February 10, 2010

- PRESENT:** Deputy Mayor Brad Johns, Chair
Mr. Douglas MacDonald, Member at Large & Vice-Chair
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll
Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, Destination Halifax
Mr. Jeff Ransome, Hotel Association of Nova Scotia
Ms. Sally Camus, Member at Large
Mr. Timothy Rissesco, Member at Large
- REGRETS:** Mr. Bill Mont, Member at Large
Mr. Brian Rose, Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- STAFF** Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Development
Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Andrew Cox, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Billy Comer, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Paul Forrest, Cultural Researcher, Community Development
Mr. Grant MacDonald, Director, Major Events and Community
Partnerships, Trade Centre Limited
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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14. ADJOURNMENT 16

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - November 18, 2009

MOVED BY Councillor Dawn Sloane, seconded by Mr. Stuart Jolliffe that the minutes of November 18, 2009, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: 11.1 Approval of the minutes of October 14, 2009
 11.2 HRM Hallmark Events Grant Renewals Report
 11.3 Appointments to Sub-Committees - Deputy Mayor Johns
 11.4 Update on Major Events Hosting Strategy - Mr. Stuart Jolliffe

Move: Item 7.1 to be dealt with immediately following Item 9.1.

The Committee agreed to the agenda as amended.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION - NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECISSION - NONE

7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

7.1 Rainmen - Councillor Sloane

This matter was dealt with later in the meeting. See page 15.

8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

8.1 Correspondence - NONE

8.2 Petitions - NONE

8.3 Delegations

8.3.1 Hallmark Event Presentations

The Committee agreed to deal with Added Item 11.2 HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals at this time.

11.2 HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals

- C A staff report dated February 3, 2010 was circulated to the Committee at this time.

Deputy Mayor Johns noted that the HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals report provided the history of the events under consideration including information on their past year's activity.

Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Development, advised that staff had inquired if the event organizers would be requesting an increase over last year's funding and determined that all but one group would be requesting an increase. The amount of increase would be provided as part of each group's presentation.

Deputy Mayor Johns explained that staff were preparing a table for the March meeting outlining the organizations and previous funding they had received. He noted that the most important reference point for the Committee was whether or not the event was successful and whether the event should continue as a Hallmark Event.

Mr. Whittemore requested that the Committee review the report in more detail for the March 10, 2010 meeting as a decision would be required once the Committee had heard all presentations.

Deputy Mayor Johns explained the process for presentations to the Special Events Advisory Committee and called for the first presenters to come forward.

(i) Atlantic Film Festival

Deputy Mayor Johns welcomed Mr. Gregor Ash, organizer of the Atlantic Film Festival. Details of the 2009 event were noted in the HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals staff report dated February 3, 2010.

Mr. Ash provided the following information during his presentation:

- C the biggest challenge in 2009 was the reduction in advertising and generating revenue by 60% due to the downturn in the economy resulting in less corporate support. Revenues lost were directly associated with the

- C Hallmark Event. The expected Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) revenue was re-directed to other parts of the organization.
- C Corporate sponsors who were not able to provide financial support provided In-Kind support.
- C the reduction in advertising/revenue necessitated, for the first time, the selling of the program guide.
- C due to the financial constraints, the event was reduced in scope with smaller, fewer events.
- C there was an increase in written media coverage with over 191 articles written about the events. A record number of 134 accredited media covered the event.
- C 676 hotel rooms were booked at the Delta Hotel and another 150 hotel rooms booked through direct bookings.
- C There is a potential for 159 future projects for a value of just over \$270 million of which \$30 million would be for Nova Scotia events.
- C the successful opening night event was held indoors at the Metro Centre.
- C 2010 will be the (thirtieth) 30th anniversary of the event.
- C the Atlantic Film Festival is an Atlantic Canada film festival that will be proudly Halifax. The focus will be on growing the event and adding more activities at capacity.
- C HRM's support is needed to continue.

Mr. Ash provided the following additional information in response to questions/concerns raised by members of the committee:

- C due to planning for the upcoming 30th anniversary year, the request has been increased by \$25,000 from \$40,000 for a total of \$65,000.
- C currently there is a small deficit of \$12,000 - \$20,000
- C partnerships have been extended to include the Canadian Armed Forces.
- C the Granville Mall area was the original desired location for the opening night event and ongoing discussions will be held in regard to utilizing that location in future.
- C efforts to grow the event include showing films in the park, on a 30' screen, rather than always in the dark (at night). Focus will be on the local community and bringing the event back to the public venue while also making it more accessible.
- C the AI Fresco film event and the Viewfinder Program will be celebrating their 10th anniversary in 2010.
- C the Viewfinder Program, a film/media program that shows the work of young people and gives them a voice, has been the top 2 or 3 in Canadian festivals and will soon be the top in the world. Submissions have been received from youth as young as six (6) years of age with the average age being between twelve (12) and thirteen (13).

Councillor Sloane noted that the Navy would be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2010 and the Atlantic Film Festival should consider partnering with some of their activities.

Mr. Jolliffe emphasised the importance of media tracking as it provided powerful numbers and encouraged the event organizers to create that benchmark as technology has reduced the costs in regard to obtaining the data required for a good baseline measurement. Mr. Jolliffe commented that the film festival was more about the exposure it brought to Halifax as a destination than about the tourist traffic it attracted.

Mr. Grant MacDonald, Director, Major Events and Community Partnerships, Trade Centre Limited, explained that one of the core services offered by Events Nova Scotia would be a media evaluation service. Events such as the Atlantic Film Festival could access that service to better quantify their media reach.

Mr. Ash noted that support from HRM was more than just the cash amount. The non-tangible assistance such as support provided through the Civic Events team and Councillors attendance at the events has been very much appreciated.

Deputy Mayor Johns thanked Mr. Ash for his presentation and advised that he would be notified of the Committee's decision following the March 10th meeting.

(ii) Atlantic Jazz Festival

Deputy Mayor Johns welcomed Ms. Sarah Watling, Executive Director of the Atlantic Jazz Festival, and explained the process for presentations.

Ms. Watling offered the following information during her presentation:

- C although the opening event featured a fantastic line-up of performers, attendance dropped by about 10,000 and the street parade experienced a drop in attendance of 5,000, both due in part to the weather and the economic downturn.
- C \$15,000 was lost in sponsorships due to the economic downturn; the Province did not provide an increase, however, HRM did provide an increase which was greatly appreciated.
- C the year ended with a loss of \$70,000; there was a cash loss due to the inability to bank the planned \$40,000 toward capacity building for the upcoming 25th anniversary.
- C the festival was successful in its outreach and community partnerships that included working with the Pride Festival, Black Freedom 55 as well

- as youth oriented events to solidify reaching the 15-25 year old demographic.
- C green efforts included the elimination of single serve water bottles and reduction in paper; bike racks were also available on site.
- C the upcoming year includes plans to transition to a new outdoor location, organizing the 25th anniversary and new branding to “Halifax International Jazz Festival”.
- C urban music is meant to be in the city and the Atlantic Jazz Festival wants to be known internationally for being in the centre.
- C the Toronto Dominion Bank has confirmed title sponsorship until 2015.
- C fundraising will commence with the grassroots membership - the goal is to raise \$125,000 this year and the following year.
- C consideration is being give to the Grand Parade and/or Queens Landing as event locations.
- C there will be a marketing push for the LAST WALTZ during the final weekend of the event.
- C major events, such as the opening night, will be held during the week so as not to risk a loss to the opening weekend.
- C the requested increase is not in regard to core funding but in regard to HRM being a promotional as well as a financial partner for the upcoming and subsequent years.
- C plans are underway to bring a major artist to either the Alderney Landing or Grand Parade location in June 2010.
- C there is a need to bolster funding for the upcoming 25th anniversary year.
- C in future, a budget will be submitted with costs and market research.

In response to comments/concerns raised by the Committee members, Ms. Watling provided the following additional information:

- C partnering with the Black Freedom 55 event included providing a stage and artist with a gospel show in conjunction with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic’s Amistad program.
- C strategic planning is underway to increase funding such as plans to ask for a minimum donation of \$5 rather than the \$1 usually given; more targeted communications and mailouts requesting money; silent auction.
- C there is a need for increased support from all partners as sponsorship has fallen off annually since 2003 with the loss of the DuMaurier and airline sponsors.
- C an agency will be hired to secure sponsorship.
- C it is hoped that HRM would support, through a public relations strategy, a major concert to tie in the newly branded “Halifax International Jazz Festival” in its new location in June.

Councillor Sloane noted that the Atlantic Jazz Festival had to relocate due to the proposed new library to be built at the existing event location as it was uncertain what capacity would be available for the event in future. She expressed concern that HRM was losing event space.

- C local media coverage has been great but there has not been the return on investment for outside coverage, however; some coverage was provided by Global and CBC TV as well as radio. Print coverage was daily during the event through The Coast and the Chronicle-Herald. Media partners are dwindling.
- C the Spoken Word event incorporates Hip Hop artists with Jazz and Folk artists who are given one week to collaborate and then present at the Company House, a location frequented by that demographic. Ticket prices were non-inhibitive at \$10. The event was very well received and drew a great crowd.

Mr. Jolliffe expressed concern with the plans to host a big show to pay off debt as the show could result in a loss and incur further debt. Ms. Watling acknowledged that there could be a risk, however; a series of aggressive fundraising events was required.

Mr. Timothy Rissesco commented that the problem seems to centre around the need for an Events Plaza in downtown Halifax.

Deputy Mayor Johns thanked Ms. Watling for her presentation and advised that she would be notified of the Committee's decision following the March 10th meeting.

Councillor Sloane suggested that HRM donate the Alderney Landing location for the June show to help mitigate the financial risk to the organization.

The meeting recessed at 1:44 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:51 p.m.

(iii) Bluenose Marathon

Deputy Mayor Johns welcomed Mr. Rod McCulloch, Co-Chair Steering Committee, and Mr. Chris Larsen, General Manager, ScotiaBank Blue Nose Marathon, then explained the process for presentations.

Mr. McCulloch circulated a copy of his presentation to the Committee at this time. He provided the following information:

- C the Bluenose Marathon was established in 2004 and is registered as a not-for-profit society.
- C the event is held on the Victoria Day long weekend in May and stimulates an early season for tourism/visitation and is the largest marathon weekend east of Ottawa.
- C the event has award-winning Marketing and PR campaigns.
- C goals include promoting a healthy, active lifestyle through walking/running and to showcase Halifax's beauty, attractions and sense of community.
- C the majority of participants in 2009 (54%) were first timers.
- C plans for 2010 include expansion of the ScotiaBank Group Charity, part of Scotia Bank's non-cash participation, to include over 30 charities; maintain key route improvements from 2008; increased community engagement on race route and the introduction of FaceBook and Mobile Marketing tools.
- C there is an expected increase of 11% in participation (9,000 participants).
- C four communities have been chosen for community engagement: Maynard Street, Young Avenue and Agricola Street in north-end Halifax and Slayter Street in Dartmouth.
- C the majority of participants compete in the ½ marathon and 10k run.
- C The request for 2010 is an increase of \$20,000 for a total of \$60,000 to cover city services which totalled \$58,000 in 2009.

In response to comments/concerns raised by members of the Committee, Mr. McCulloch offered the following additional information:

- C the current debt is just under \$100,000 and is owed to HRM. A payment plan has been worked out where the group will pay \$25,000 per year toward that outstanding debt. All suppliers are paid by the end of March.
- C Doctors Nova Scotia engage with the schools in regard to the Youth Run which commences as a virtual run in January with the last 10% of the run being completed on Youth Run Day in May.
- C HRM is the second largest cash sponsor.

Mr. Jolliffe commented that the Blue Nose Marathon event has grown and should be one of the models for anyone wanting to do something similar.

Deputy Mayor Johns noted that the Committee has discussed the use of the HRM Logo by event organizers to recognize HRM's sponsorship and support of an event when HRM grants have been provided.

Deputy Mayor Johns thanked Mr. McCulloch and Mr. Larsen for their presentation and advised that they would be notified of the Committee's decision following the March 10th meeting.

(iv) Halifax International Busker Festival

Deputy Mayor Johns welcomed Mr. John Cavill, President, Halifax International Busker Festival, and explained the presentation process.

Mr. Cavill provided the following information during his presentation:

- C the Busker Society is a non-profit group who has engaged Event Services Productions (ESP) to run the event.
- C the event is an eleven (11) day free, cultural and tourism event set in August with something for everyone with vendors/entertainers from all over.
- C the goal of the Busker Society is to be a world class leader for Buskers.
- C the event has a strong multi-cultural volunteer base of approximately 150 persons including university students. Volunteers are being turned away as there are not enough jobs for them.
- C the Hotel Association of Nova Scotia has provided approximately \$70,000 worth of hotel rooms for Buskers during the peak tourist season.
- C there were forty-four (44) artists from six (6) countries providing an experience of many cultures through dance/music/art.
- C December 31, 2009 was the fiscal year end and the financial information will be provided.
- C a report was submitted to HRM from the Busker Society as well as one from ESP.
- C the event was insolvent in 2009 by \$30,000 owed to HRM for policing services. Revenue was down due to a reduction in funding from the three government bodies; the loss of the cash sponsor Aliant, as well as the loss of a cash venture with HENRY's Cameras.
- C the ask for 2010 is for \$100,000 to maintain the magnitude of the event and to move forward in planning the 20th anniversary year in 2011. The event will get better not bigger.

Councillor Sloane suggested a partnership with HRM's Waste Management department as there had been several complaints in regard to garbage following the Busker event.

Mr. Cavill provided the following additional information in response to comments / concerns raised by the Committee:

- C the Busker Society has \$9 - \$10,000 remaining that will cover the part-time assistant and small management fee to ESP until July.
- C in regard to fundraising, the intent is to seek out more, but smaller sponsorships, i.e: 10 sponsors at \$10,000 rather than a few at a higher amount.

- C the Busker Society approaches the government levels for funding while ESP seeks out private and in-kind/cash contributions.
- C ESP's lawyer has drafted a new contract that will be discussed at a Busker Society Board meeting to be held later that evening. ESP will run the Busker Event, including the financial management, and the Busker Society will manage policy, work in conjunction with government, and be a watch dog over ESP.

Mr. Jolliffe encouraged the Busker Society to take back control of the Busker Event as many applications have been turned down due to being a more "for profit" model. The Busker Event is now a strange hybrid of "not for profit" and "for profit". The closer the event is to a true unencumbered "not for profit" the better. He expressed concern that, in accordance with the structure being provided, the Busker Event was moving further away from the "not for profit" model.

Deputy Mayor Johns thanked Mr. Cavill for his presentation and advised that he would be notified of the Committee's decision following the March 10th meeting.

Mr. Jolliffe requested that staff look into the organizational structure of the Busker Society and ESP as the structure was not clear. He expressed concern with a possible future lawsuit if the Committee was found to be funding this type of model as it appears as if ESP will receive 100% of the funding/revenue.

Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events, explained that staff had already spoken with Legal Services in regard to this matter and were advised that if the Society was applying to HRM as a "not for profit" then staff had to treat the application as a "not for profit". He offered to follow-up with Legal Services on this issue. He further clarified that ESP was a for profit company owned by a person with a long time involvement with the Busker Festival. ESP owns the rights to the "Busker Festival" name and their strategy seems to be that they create a "charity" to access government funding.

Deputy Mayor Johns left the chair at 2:52 pm.

Mr. Doug MacDonald, Vice-Chair, assumed the Chair at 2:52 p.m.

(v) Halifax Pop Explosion

Mr. MacDonald welcomed Mr. Wayne Mason, Executive Director, Halifax Pop Explosion then explained the presentation process.

Mr. Mason circulated copies of his presentation and provided the following information:

- C Halifax POP commenced in 2001 as a not-for-profit event.
- C HRM has been a supporter for the past three (3) years.

- C the event has been imitated by other Canadian cities.
- C in 2009 there were mostly gated shows in fifteen (15) venues including an expansion into the Dartmouth area.
- C the event partners with Symphony Nova Scotia.
- C 2009 was the best year for national/international media coverage.
- C sponsorship was up in 2009 despite the economic downturn due in part to the Radio Star Maker program.
- C attendance was better than anticipated in 2009.
- C hotel bookings were down but not bad.
- C the event won The COAST readers' poll for Best Music Festival for the 9th consecutive year.
- C 2009 permission based data indicated 109 customers registered with 42% living outside HRM.
- C the overall budget for 2009 was \$275,000.
- C there are 3000 fans of the event on FaceBook.
- C 121 delegates and conference passes were sold; 17 VIP passes sold; 55 delegate and conference passes were provided free of charge to participants; 725 band passes issued.
- C the event draws between 600-1200 out of town guests with an economic activity estimated at \$1.5 to \$2.5 million.
- C consideration is being given to partnering with students in regard to obtaining the business data.
- C a new Executive Director will be hired on April 1, 2010.
- C the Company Room had a sold out show with 25 people lined up outside.
- C the ask for 2010 is \$10,000, the same as previous year as there was not time to prepare for a higher request. It is anticipated that the province will provide more funding.
- C there is a small debt of \$4,000.

Mr. MacDonald thanked Mr. Mason for his presentation and explained that he would be advised of the Committee's decision following the March 10th meeting.

Councillor Nicoll retired from the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Johns resumed the Chair at 3:13 p.m.

9. REPORTS

9.1 Deputy Mayor Johns - 2010 Tim Horton's Brier - Request for Funding

Upon the request of Deputy Mayor Johns, Mr. Whittemore explained that staff had been approached last year in regard to the upcoming 2010 Brier and had provided the event

organizers with an application and information involving the process, including time lines, for funding requests. Unfortunately, the organizers missed the deadline for funding applications. The budget has now been depleted and the \$100,000 request for funding cannot, at this time, be fulfilled.

Mr. Whittemore explained that the current balance in the Special Event Reserve Fund was only \$30,000, however; the fund is maintained by monthly deposits from the tax collected and will be replenished. The organizers have approached the Trade Centre Limited and Halifax Regional Council in regard to funding. Halifax Regional Council has requested that the matter be referred to the Special Events Advisory Committee for consideration.

During the ensuing discussion, members of the Special Events Advisory committee raised the following comments/concerns:

- C the Brier is a significant, major event with an enormous economic impact equal to that of the Tall Ships; no other event comes close in regard to the economic benefits.
- C the \$30,000 remaining in the budget could be offered with a request that staff find alternative funding options.
- C an in-kind contribution could be offered such as use of the Metro Centre for two days.

Mr. Whittemore noted that the Brier organizers were in need of confirmation that Regional Council would consider providing a certain amount of funding.

Mr. Grant MacDonald, Director, Major Events, Community Partnerships, Trade Centre Limited, commented that this type of discussion should be brought to the Special Events Advisory Committee prior to any discussion with event organizers. He noted that the Trade Centre Limited enters into discussion with HRM and other stakeholders prior to speaking with the organizers to determine the direction the stakeholders want TCL to take.

Mr. Whittemore commented that a completed Major Events Strategy would ensure that HRM could be more responsive to major events without the current bureaucracy and process that must be adhered to.

Mr. Jolliffe added that to be an event friendly city, a strategy that would recognize there was an organization to plan for these types of events was required.

Ms. Sally Camus commented that setting a reserve for such situations was a great idea.

Mr. Doug MacDonald noted that awarding funding to a late applicant under these circumstances would be precedent setting.

Councillor Sloane suggested that the Committee be apprised of all contact/engagement conversations held or ongoing in regard to upcoming major events so that the Committee would be able to devise a mechanism to fund such events through other avenues if need be.

Mr. Grant MacDonald advised that he has been working with HRM staff in regard to closing the knowledge gap and in future his role would be to provide the Committee with advance notice of upcoming events. He noted that the next Brier would be in Halifax in the year 2013; consideration should be given toward funding that event.

MOVED BY Councillor Dawn Sloane, seconded by Mr. Jeff Ransome that the Special Events Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve a grant of \$50,000 to the 2010 Tim Horton's Brier and request staff to investigate funding options. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

In response to questions as to why the setting of a reserve fund to accommodate such situations in future was not discussed further, Mr. Whittemore explained that the Special Event Reserve was in and of itself a reserve, replenished on a monthly basis, with the expectation that 20% would remain in the fund to ensure there would always be a little cash available. HRM is considering using the reserve to support economic development with the goal to having cash available when needed to support ongoing events.

7.1 Rainmen - Councillor Sloane

C An Information Report dated January 19, 2009 was before the Committee.

MOVED BY Councillor Dawn Sloane, seconded by Ms. Sally Camus that the Special Events Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council request a staff report on the Holiday Classics Rainmen Event becoming a Hallmark Event. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Sloane advised that the Rainmen were also looking for support in regard to the May 1, 2010 All Star weekend. Mr. Whittemore advised that the Rainmen application would be part of the March 10, 2010 agenda as the application had just been received and was currently being evaluated by staff. He noted that any group requesting \$25,000 or more would be granted an opportunity to present to the Committee.

Mr. Jolliffe requested clarification from staff, for the March meeting, on awarding funding to for profit events and the issue of not-for-profit groups representing professional sporting events.

10. MOTIONS - NONE

11. ADDED ITEMS

11.1 Approval of Minutes for October 14, 2009

MOVED BY Councillor Dawn Sloane, seconded by Mr. Stuart Jolliffe that the minutes of October 14, 2009, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

11.2 HRM Hallmark Event Grant Renewals

This matter was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See page 5.

11.3 Appointments to Summer Fest and Festivals and Events Sub-Committees

The Committee agreed to the following membership on the Summer Fest Sub-Committee: Councillors Dawn Sloane, Lorelei Nicoll, Deputy Mayor Johns and one additional Councillor, to be determined, representing a former county area.

The Committee agreed to the following membership on the Festivals and Events Sub-Committee: Councillors Dawn Sloane, Lorelei Nicoll, Ms. Sally Camus and Mr. Brian Rose.

11.4 Update on Major Events Hosting Strategy

Mr. Whittemore advised that the Major Events Hosting Strategy document received general endorsement from the Special Events Advisory Committee following the November workshop. The document has been edited and will be going forward to Regional Council along with additional information requested by Council in regard to investigating opportunities with Events Nova Scotia. The policy has a governance portion and an execution/implementation portion. Staff have recommended further dialogue in regard to the implementation of the policy.

In response to a request from the Committee, Mr. Whittemore agreed to electronically circulate the Major Events Hosting Strategy document to members of the Committee.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Wednesday, March 10, 2010.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant