

SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

- PRESENT: Councillor Sue Uteck, Chair
Councillor Gloria McCluskey
Councillor Brad Johns
Deputy Mayor Jim Smith
Mr. Stuart Jolliffe, Destination Halifax
Mr. Jeff Ransome, Hotel Association of Nova Scotia
Ms. Dianne Kokesh, Member at Large
Mr. Colin Richardson, Member at Large
Mr. Timothy Rissesco, Member at Large
- REGRETS: Councillor Dawn Sloane
Ms. Lisa Monk, Member at Large
Mr. Jonathan Wilkie, Greater Halifax Partnership
Mr. Brian Rose, Chamber of Commerce
- STAFF: Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Relations & Cultural Affairs
Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events & Film
Mr. Andrew Cox, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Billy Comer, Coordinator, Civic Events
Mr. Paul Forrest, Coordinator, Civic Events
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. in the Media Room, 1st Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE

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

Defer: Item 5.2 O'Neil Cold Water Surf Classic deferred to the April 13th meeting

Addition: 9.1 Special Events Orientation Overview, to be dealt with prior to Item 6.3.1
9.2 Councillor McCluskey – Evaluation of Events / Funding Provided
9.3 Festival and Event Sub-Committee
9.4 Deputy Mayor Smith – Request for Information

The agenda, as amended, was approved.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Composition of the Special Events Advisory Committee
(Deferred from February 9, 2011)

Councillor Uteck noted that the Committee has held discussion in regard to adding a representative from the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia to the composition of the Special Events Advisory Committee then inquired if there were any additional suggestions in regard to the Committee's composition.

Councillor Johns suggested that due to the learning curve involved with service on the Special Events Advisory Committee, the length of term for Members at Large should be amended from two years to three or four years. He explained that by the time members have a good understanding of their role and how the process works, their terms are over.

Councillor McCluskey suggested that the length of term for Councillors serving on the Committee be reviewed for the same reasons as outlined by Councillor Johns.

Mr. Stuart Jolliffe offered to assist staff in regard to potential amendments to the Committee's composition. He suggested that staff conduct an orientation session for new members prior to attending their first meeting.

Councillor Uteck requested that staff review the issue of potential amendments to the Special Event Advisory Committee's composition and provide an update for the next meeting. She also noted that an orientation session is being planned for new members.

5.2 O'Neil Cold Water Classic Surf Event

This item was deferred to the April 13, 2011 meeting as the Presenters were not available.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence - NONE

6.2 Petitions - NONE

6.3 Presentations

The Committee agreed to deal with Item 9.1 at this time.

9.1 Orientation Overview

Prior to the Presentations being held, Mr. Mike Gillett, Senior Coordinator, Civic Events & Films, provided a brief verbal over view of the information circulated in the Orientation Package to the new members in regard to process and policy. A more detailed orientation session will be held at a later date.

In response to a request by Mr. Jolliffe for clarification in regard to the funding available from the Hotel Levy Tax and the amount budgeted from HRM's portion, Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Relations and Cultural Affairs, advised that:

- HRM receives 40% of the Hotel Levy Tax with 60% going to Destination Halifax's marketing branch
- on average over the last few years, approximately \$1.2 million has been collected from the Hotel Levy Tax; the amount collected depends on the room bookings
- the Regional Council approved Operating budget for the various community based events delivered by HRM as well as the community based granting programs is approximately \$750,000 annually
- HRM's Civic Event staff also raise approximately \$380,000 to \$400,000 through Sponsorships to supplement the Operating Budget.

In response to a question by Ms. Dianne Kokesh in regard to the request for funds versus the funds available, Mr. Whittemore advised that requests far exceed the funding available. To ensure there is some funding left by the end of the season, only 80% of the Marketing Levy funding is dispersed at the outset; any unspent funding can be carried over to the next year, however; any unspent funding from the Operating Budget is returned to a fiscal account and is not carried over.

Deputy Mayor Smith entered the meeting at 12:53 pm.

Mr. Jolliffe explained that there are two intakes of applications per year that the Special Events Advisory Committee review, staff prepare a recommendation report and then the Committee evaluates the material in one document.

Councillor Uteck advised that the Committee would be hearing presentations today with no decisions being made until all applications are in. A staff report will come forward for the May meeting, at which time the Committee will make its recommendation to Regional Council.

Councillor Brad Johns noted that a revised Granting Framework Policy and new Major Event Hosting strategy is ready for implementation next year, subject to Regional Council approval, however; all decisions for May will be based on the existing policy.

6.3.1 Nocturne at Night

Staff circulated the Civic Event Grant Application from Nocturne at Night to the Committee at this time.

Mr. Billy Comer, Coordinator, Civic Events, provided a brief overview of the Nocturne at Night event.

In response to a concern raised by Mr. Jolliffe that Question 15 of the application indicates that previous support was received from HRM, Mr. Whittemore explained that HRM has a Public Art Program funded through the Civic Event Operating Budget; from that program, staff provided the Temporary Public Art Program funding of \$30,000 to Nocturne at Night for them to deliver the HRM program, on HRM's behalf, which helped to enhance the Nocturne event. No grant was awarded. The \$30,000 from the Civic Events Operating Budget, which is completely separate and distinct from the Special Events funding, will no longer be provided to Nocturne, however; the Temporary Public Art Program will continue.

Councillor Uteck noted that if a group approaches HRM for funding they cannot also receive a grant. Mr. Whittemore clarified that the \$30,000 was not a grant, it was Civic Event Operating Budget funds offered to the Nocturne at Night for them to deliver HRM's program.

In response to a question of clarification by Mr. Jolliffe on whether or not HRM was freeing up the Public Art Funding by transferring this request to the Marketing Levy fund, Mr. Whittemore explained that there had been no transfer, only enhancement. Mr. Jolliffe noted that instead of Nocturne at Night receiving \$30,000 in funding from the Civic Events Operating Budget, the request is now for \$70,000 through the Special Events program.

In response to a question by Councillor Gloria McCluskey in regard to how much funding the event will receive in total including the Federal and Provincial government level participation, Mr. Whittemore advised that the information was unknown at this time.

Mr. Jolliffe and Councillor McCluskey questioned why the budget information was not before the Committee.

Mr. Jeff Ransome expressed concern with the lack of transparency when the Committee does not receive information on prior funding before the presentation and discussion. Considering there is a very short time frame, it is imperative for the Committee to receive the information in advance in order to review and digest the material. Receiving information in advance is also a matter of respect to the Committee.

Mr. Jolliffe expressed concern with the migration of historical HRM operating expenses into the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve fund that depletes the fund and when an event such as the FIFA World Cup event comes forward, there is no funding left in the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve. If the desire is to do more, then more has to be added to the budget rather than shifting from one area to another.

Councillor Johns commented that the question seems fuzzy and that the presentations need to be more direct with budget information provided in advance. He questioned the fact that there were five staff persons in the room yet there was a lack of information before the Committee.

Councillor Uteck expressed similar concerns as the previous speakers and noted that the information circulated needs to be organized with the name of the Event on the first page rather than three pages in; detailed budget information must be provided including what past funding was received and how it was used and how the requested funding will be used.

Councillor Johns commented that all concerns expressed have been expressed previously yet there has still not been any improvement and that needs to be addressed so the Committee can move forward.

Mr. Whittemore advised that the majority of concerns expressed will be addressed in the new Policy; there will be change.

Councillor Uteck welcomed Ms. Zack and explained the Presentation process.

The following information was circulated to the Committee at this time:

- Nocturne Art at Night "Glow in the Art" brochure dated October 16, 2010
- 2010 Annual Report
- 2011 Proposed Budget

Ms. Rose Zack, Nocturne at Night, provided a verbal overview of the 2010 noting that Nocturne at Night:

- is a non profit event in its fourth year
- has been very successful with large audiences and has continued to grow
- rather than being held in the height of tourist season and competing for attendees, Nocturne at Night is held in October and draws an audience
- the only weakness is that the event is held for one night only, however; there is a significant ROI (return on investment): the event showcases Halifax and people look at the architecture and the City in a new way as they reconsider places they see on a daily basis
- the event promotes artists at all levels of their careers; students, emerging artists and established artists
- performances were held on the Halifax/Dartmouth ferries; outreach is occurring with five zones established with the work defining distinct communities
- partnerships are being developed such as the Cycling Coalition who offered bike tours during the event
- the finale is held at midnight with a centre project/zone to have a collective experience
- Antigonish has started the AntigoNIGHT event with mentorship/feedback provided to them by Nocturne at Night organizers
- one event in the North End drew residents of North Wood Manor who would otherwise have not been exposed to the event
- media coverage has grown with online resources including social media
- this is a first time ask for HRM assistance in the amount of \$70,000.

In response to questions of clarification by Members of the Committee, Ms. Zack provided the following information:

- HRM has been a strong supporter of the event; 90% of HRM's funding will go toward artist fees
- the province of Nova Scotia is being asked to contribute \$30,000 and has contributed in the past (\$15,000 last year, \$10,000 the first year)
- measuring the number of out of town visitors/hotel rooms booked is their goal
- most people plan their trips via technology, therefore, an "AP" (application downloadable on a SMARTPHONE) is being considered for future events as the website could also work as a planning tool and would be adaptable for future use
- organizers will work with the province of Nova Scotia and Destination Halifax to distribute advertising throughout the province and marketing through the calendar of events.

Councillor Uteck thanked Ms. Zack for her presentation and advised that a decision would be available by the end of May.

Mr. Jolliffe exited the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

Mr. Ransome noted that he would like to see more events coming forward during the off season such as Nocturne at Night.

6.3.2 September Storm Classic

Mr. Paul Forrest, Coordinator, Civic Events, advised that the September Storm Classic is the largest surf event in Canada and is attempting to grow into a festival type event. One hundred participants are expected with the potential location being a beach in Eastern Passage. This is a national tournament, with an amateur and professional division, at which time the Nationals Team will be selected. This is a new and upcoming sporting activity. The event is run mostly on sponsorship with no funding from the government to date. The ask is for \$20,000.

The following information was circulated to the Committee at this time:

- Civic Event Grant Application
- September Storm Classic Committee List and 2010 Proposed Budget
- Copies of articles from various newspapers/magazines/website on the September Surf Competition
- Cityscape and information on
- Letter of support dated December 1, 2010 from Mr. Jeff Norman, Rossignol Surf Shop (White Point Beach Resort).

Mr. John Fluke, September Storm Classic, presented a history of the event which started in 2006 and has grown to the largest surf event in Canada with surfers from all over North America participating with a cap of 120 participants. He noted that:

- total attendance in 2010 was 5000 and was picked up nationally by CTV news
- Billabong is a sponsor of the event and handles the marketing
- the surfing industry in Nova Scotia is growing; surfing is the fastest growing sport
- the surf off Nova Scotia is known around the world as the best surf break in North America
- the event will help to promote the coastline of HRM and outdoor activities including surf classes for children and women
- over three dozen e-mails from surfers around the world have been received requesting deadline information for the 2011 event
- September offers the best surf conditions; the contest draws repeat visitors from areas such as California who stay for the entire month
- a variety of magazines world-wide has carried information on the September Storm Classic event.

In response to questions of clarification by members of the Committee, Mr. Fluke provided the following information:

- some participants/attendees do stay in hotels while others utilize camp grounds
- participants are capped at 120 as 150 was too big
- there are two main parking lots available at Lawrencetown Beach
- a shuttle service to assist with the parking concerns in the Cow Bay area would be considered

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- the September Storm Classic has not applied for an HRM grant prior to this application; Councillor Watts approached Mr. Fluke in regard to a surf contest to promote the coastline of Nova Scotia/HRM which led to a meeting with HRM Civic Events staff
 - seven years ago there was only one school (surf classes); there are now five and one specifically for women
 - the sport of surfing has grown with a school in the South Shore of Nova Scotia offering surfing as part of their Physical Education program
 - the rental business for surf equipment has increased and more sport stores are carrying surf supplies
 - the difference between the September Storm Classic event and the O'Neil Cold Water Classic event is that September Storm Classic is both amateur and professional while O'Neil is strictly professional
 - no vendors are used for the event as the sale of food at the beach is not being promoted, especially at Minutes Beach due to the sensitivity of the area; there is a local convenience store nearby Lawrencetown Beach and most people bring their own lunches
 - no contact has been made with Destination Halifax, to date, in regard to the September Storm Classic, however; Destination Halifax has been approached in regard to the O'Neil Cold Water Classic event
 - the water temperature in the British Columbia area averages a year round temperature of 75 while the water temperature for Nova Scotia in the winter is - 35.

Councillor Uteck thanked Mr. Fluke for his presentation and advised that a decision would be made by the end of May.

The Committee raised the following comments during the ensuing discussion:

- there are only two major sponsors; Billabong and Monster Drink, perhaps staff could help find vendors
- trying to plan for this event is difficult as the date depends on the weather/water conditions
- the "festival" could assist the struggling Fishermen's Cove area
- statistical information following the 2011 event is requested such as how many visitors came from out of town
- this is the fourth year for the event
- the "breaks" off Nova Scotia drawing people/competitors from over a thousand miles away is impressive as it has a global stage.

6.3.3 Halifax Pop Explosion

The following information was circulated to the Committee at this time:

- Program Guide to Halifax Pop Explosion from October 19-23, 2010
- 2011 Proposed Budget and 2010 Proposed and Actual Budgets

Mr. Paul Forrest, Coordinator, Civic Events, provided a brief verbal overview of the event noting that in regard to marketing, the event uses all social media and is well known. The ask is for \$10,000.

Mr. Jonny Stevens, Organizer, Halifax Pop Explosion, presented a video of the Halifax Pop Explosion event. The 2011 event is planned for October 18-22. He noted that Halifax Pop Explosion:

- is a five day festival voted best festival by The Coast, East Coast Music Awards and CBC Radio 3
- 17,000+ fans are draw to the eighteen venues
- the key goal is to showcase new and merging artists
- more venues are to be added in 2011
- it is a diverse festival including classic/folk/rock musicians
- 2010 had the highest attendance in the event's history
- New, long term major sponsorship was obtained from LIVE 105
- The title partner, Rogers, has been lost
- three full time staff have been hired
- the host hotel had rooms sold out on Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- the demographics are in the 19 to 34 age bracket split evenly between male/female
- 44% of attendees are from outside HRM; 5% from outside Canada
- A planned partnership with Events Nova Scotia for 2011 will help to capture details of the true economic impact for 2011
- Marketing includes a sixteen week international campaign
- Major corporate partnerships are with Molson Coors, Sirius XM Radio, The Coast along with massive community support
- Corporate and community partnership revenue is \$176,000, the wristbands brought in \$92,000
- a detailed post event evaluation has been done

Mr. Stevens noted that the ask for 2011 is \$90,000, a significant increase that will be used to: provide more free programming such as outdoor concerts, assist with talent costs, marketing, and increase venues to meet capacity.

Councillor Uteck noted that HRM funds cannot be used for salaries.

In response to questions of clarification by Members of the Committee, Mr. Stevens provided the following information:

- the proposed expansion and changes are not reflected in the proposed income for 2011 due to conservative budgeting as well as the loss of the Radio sponsor (\$10,000 to \$15,000)
- Citadel Halifax is the host hotel
- some funding is received from the CRTC and Canadian Heritage and FACTOR (a government funded program)
- there is a contingency built into the budget in regard to expenses

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- the \$5000 debt has been paid in full; the computer depreciation was included by the Auditor Grant Thornton, however; there are no plans to purchase a new computer
 - if the \$90,000 is not received from HRM, the event would have to be scaled back.

Deputy Mayor Smith requested that a copy of the presentation be sent electronically to the Committee.

Councillor Uteck thanked Mr. Stevens for his presentation and advised that a decision would be made by end of May.

Mr. Ransome commented that some of the events may be able to become self funded and the Committee may not be helping them achieve that goal by providing more funding for expansion. He inquired what HRM's strategy was for helping events get on their feet so that the next group of events can be assisted. In response, Mr. Whittemore advised that a Sunset Clause has been included in the new policy.

Mr. Ransome inquired how HRM was encouraging events to come in with January dates and questioned whether the Committee could suggest that date as a leverage point.

6.3.4 Mawio'mi 2011

The following information was circulated to the Committee at this time:

- Civic Event Grant Application
- Copy of the Power Point presentation entitled Mawio'mi 2011
- 2011 Proposed Budget

Mr. Billy Comer, Coordinator, Civic Events, explained that the goal is for the Mawio'mi to be an annual event in HRM as event provides exposure to new cultural experiences. \$100,000 was awarded in 2010 for the Grand Chief Membertou event on the Halifax Commons which attracted 80,000 people. A lot of infrastructure was created for the 2010 event that can re-used such as Tepees.

Mr. Jeff Ransome exited the meeting at 2:38 p.m.

Ms. Andree Gracie, assisted by Ms. Debra Ginnish and Ms. Dora Brown, presented the Mawio'mi application advising that the Mawio'mi is a new event as a result of the 2010 Grand Chief Membertou Powwow. She noted that the event would celebrate the Mi'kmaq and Aboriginal culture. The event is alcohol free and drew 80,000 people in 2010 from across the country and internationally. The 2011 event is predicted to have an economic impact to Halifax of \$2.5 million. She requested the Committee's assistance in helping them leave a legacy.

In response to questions of clarification from the Committee, Ms. Gracie advised that:

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- Tepees are the primary infrastructure used involving labour to erect them as well as the vendor tents; much of the infrastructure from 2010 can be re-used
 - the goal is to be a self sustaining annual event
 - the 2010 banners cannot be re-used as they reference Grand Chief Membertou; banners produced for 2011 can be used in future
 - the vendor booth sales were break even in 2010.

Councillor Uteck thanked Ms. Gracie for her presentation and advised that a decision would be made by the end of May.

Mr. Grant MacDonald, Director, Major Events and Community Partnerships, Trade Centre Limited, advised that TCL was working with Mawio'mi as they consider the bid for the 2014 North American Indigenous Games that would have up to 10,000 participants coming to HRM.

Ms. Gracie also noted the Truth & Reconciliation event that is also being hosted in HRM this year that ties in well with the Mawio'mi event.

Councillor Johns noted that the 2010 Grand Chief Membertou Event request was for \$250,000 and they were awarded \$100,000; this year the ask is for only \$90,000. An important note is that they run a "dry" event whereas other events rely on liquor sales for revenue. The 2010 event was so successful, they are now looking to make this an annual event.

7. REPORTS - NONE

8. MOTIONS - NONE

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Orientation Overview

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See page 4.

9.2 Councillor McCluskey – Evaluation of Events / Funding Provided

Councillor McCluskey requested that staff evaluate what other events provide to HRM, in regard to hotel rooms booked and the economic impact, and what HRM funding they receive in comparison to the SEDMHA Tournament that brought in 6000 hockey players for one week (five nights) and were only awarded \$10,000.

9.3 Festival and Events Committee

Mr. Comer noted that appointments to the Festival and Events Sub-Committee were required as the Sub-Committee would soon have to commence review of the Festival and Event applications. The composition of the Sub-Committee has traditionally been

three Councillors and one member at large appointed from the existing Special Events Advisory Committee membership.

Councillors McCluskey, Uteck and Deputy Mayor Smith volunteered to serve on this Sub-Committee.

Further discussion on this matter would be held at the next meeting.

9.4 Deputy Mayor Smith – Request for Information

Deputy Mayor Smith requested that staff provide a list of events held in the HRM that the Marketing Levy applies to as well as a list of the hotel rooms booked by area.

In response to concerns raised by Members of the Committee that they receive all pertinent information in advance of the meetings/presentations such as detailed budget information and what the HRM funding would be used for, Mr. Mike Gillett, Coordinator, Civic Events & Films, advised that staff's goal is to have the finance approved report to the Committee prior to the meeting.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 13, 2011

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Information Items - NONE