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Item No. 10.1.1

Halifax Regional Council
April 15, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English".

SUBMITTED BY:

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

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Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: March 28, 2008

SUBJECT: Award - RFP # 07-454, Youth Advocate Program Evaluation 2007

ORIGIN

This report originates from staff as a requirement of the Youth Advocate Program contract which requires an evaluator be retained to monitor the project over the length of its span.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council award RFP # 07-454, Youth Advocate Program Evaluation 2007 to the highest scoring proponent, Dalhousie University Department of Social Work for a total cost of \$186,172.20 including net HST over 4 years as detailed in the Budget Implications section of this report.

BACKGROUND

On January 9, 2008, the Minister of Public Safety, Stockwell Day, announced 1.9 million dollars in funding to HRM over a 4 year period for a new Youth Advocate Program. One of the conditions of the funding is to carry out an independent evaluation process.

The Youth Advocate Program Evaluation will (a) describe and assess program implementation, identifying any challenges and issues to be addressed in order to increase the likelihood of achieving the anticipated outcomes; and (b) assess the effectiveness of the Project in achieving the expected outcomes. It is anticipated that the results of the evaluation will be used not just by the Project but also by crime prevention practitioners and policy makers who are interested in preventing and reducing youth gangs and gang-related crime across Canada.

DISCUSSION

Request for Proposals# **07-454, Youth Advocate Program Evaluation 2007** closed on January 10, 2008 . Proposals were received from the following firms:

1. Dalhousie University School of Social Work
2. Horizons Community Development Associates Inc.

HRM and Province of Nova Scotia staff reviewed and evaluated each proposal. The proposals were evaluated using the criteria listed in Appendix A. Staff's assessment of each focussed on their level of expertise, methodology, approach and overall quality of the submission.

The final scoring of the proponent is as follows:

Company Name	Total Score
Dalhousie University School of Social Work	88
Horizons Community Development Associates Inc	62

Dalhousie's Primary Consultant for this project is Dr. Michael Ungar, a well known author, Director of the International Resilience Centre at Dalhousie University and an internationally recognized researcher of at-risk youth.

The Dalhousie University School of Social Work group will begin work upon Council's approval of the award. As a first step the team will develop an evaluation design framework by the end of May. The focus of this framework will be to assess the overall degree to which the project achieves the outcomes and components of the youth advocate program including:

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- C Reduction in the number of youth and/or family experiencing isolation, stresses and negative rushes with potential risk of engaging in gang activity
 - C Youth and their families demonstrating positive changes in behaviours and attitudes.
 - C An increase in protective factors of self reliance, resiliency, life and pro-social skills to address risk factors of isolation, stresses and negative rushes.
 - C Youth and their families build protective factors which helps youth cope and reduce their specific risk factors.
 - C Increased commitment of youth and family to change negative behaviours that have put the youth at risk of engaging in gang activity.
 - C Increase and share knowledge of intervention to prevent youth at risk of engaging in gang activities.
 - C Thoroughly document project implementation in order to contribute to the knowledge of what types of projects and project components work best to prevent or reduce gang involvement.
 - C Collect information from or regarding participants, which will allow for a determination of their level of risk of becoming involved in a gang.
 - C Collect baseline and follow up information at several intervals, which will indicate if there has been a change over time in their level of risk.
 - C Measure those particular risk and protective factors, which the Project is expecting to address through its activities.
 - C Use a variety of data collection sources and methods, both quantitative and qualitative: e.g. surveys, interviews, official records, and observations.
 - C Employ a variety of data collection and analytical techniques to rule out alternative explanations of results and enhance the generalizability of the results (i.e. address concerns related to internal and external validity).
 - C Track the costs of implementing the project.

The evaluator will provide an annual report at the end of each year of program. The annual report will be used by staff to help guide improvements to the program and contribute to the long term sustainability of the program. The Federal Government will use this information to assess the programs success and determination for future programs.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The total amount of the contract is \$186,172.20 including net HST over 4 years. In the 08/09 fiscal year, approximately \$65,000 will be paid through cost centre C762-6399 (Youth Advocate Program) and is funded by a 1.9 million dollar federal grant. The evaluation process is a condition of the Contribution Agreement. In the event of default, the Minister may suspend or terminate the Agreement and require HRM to repay all or part of the Contribution.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no recommended alternatives. The evaluation process is a condition of the Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada.


ATTACHMENTS


Attachment 1- Evaluation Criteria

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Sharon Martin, Program Manager, Youth Advocate Program 490-4567

Report Approved by: 
Andrew Whittemore, A/Manager, Community Relations and Cultural Affairs , 490-1585

Financial Approval by: 
for Catherine Sanderson, Senior Manager, Financial Services, 490-1562

Report Approved by: 
Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

ATTACHMENT ONE
 RFP NUMBER 07-454
 Youth Advocate Program Evaluation 2007
 PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Max. Score	Dalhousie School of Social Work	Horizons Community Development Assoc. Inc.
1. Expertise of Firm, Project Team, Organization and Personnel Recent experience of firm and personnel with projects of a similar nature Skill mix of firm and personnel, including relevant experience, research/data collection and analysis, report writing and presentation Depth of team References	25	24	12
2. Proposed Methodology: Detailed methodology to meet objectives of the study and desired outcomes Quality and comprehensiveness of approach Consideration of options and solutions to meet objectives Demonstrate a realistic schedule with a work plan that identifies critical milestones and includes a critical path	35	30	20
3. Understanding the Approach Demonstrate a solid understanding of the subject matter and study requirements Comprehension of associated issues Ability to convey ideas and concepts through oral presentations and written reports Recognition of unique and innovative opportunities suited to our situation	15	12	12
4. Submission Quality Completeness Clarity & Conciseness	5	2	5
5. Fee Proposal	20	20	13
Total	100	88 (\$186,172.20)	62 (\$309,925.00)

		(net HST incl.)	(net HST incl.)
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