

Item No. 3
Halifax Regional Council
January 14, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Regional Council

Original Signed by Director

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO

DATE: December 6, 2013

SUBJECT: **Community Grants Program 2013-14: Status of Conditional Awards**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

December 2, 2013 – The HRM Grants Committee motion to request a staff report to Regional Council to provide notice of non-compliance with respect to two (2) conditional awards approved by Council under the *Community Grants Program*.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter (2008), s. 79 respecting grants and contributions.

BACKGROUND

The *Community Grants Program* provides annual cash grants to registered non-profit organizations located in HRM in accordance with the program's funding guidelines. Conditional awards may be granted whereby the recipient must fulfill specific requirements prior to payment. A grant may be issued in full, in installments or by reimbursement. The following awards were approved with conditions that must be met before payment is issued to the recipient:

Halifax Transition House Association – Halifax – Capital Grant

The Association applied for a capital grant of \$19,012.95 to fully fund repairs to exterior shingles and an emergency exit of a registered heritage property. A capital grant in the amount of \$9,500 was approved conditional upon confirmation of cost-share and Heritage Planner approval. As of November, 2013, application had not been made to an HRM Heritage Planner to confirm the proposed work complied with heritage conservation standards.

Ink Storm Screen Printing Society – Halifax – Arts & Crafts

The Society applied for a capital grant of \$1,500 towards the purchase of equipment totaling \$2,262.50. A grant of \$1,500 was approved conditional upon confirmation of cost-share.

Written notification of the conditional award was issued June 26, 2013. In November, 2013, a final reminder notice was issued and indicated the potential for the grant to be revoked. The HRM Grants Committee was asked to approve revoking the awards at their meeting of December 2, 2013. In the alternative, the committee directed staff to issue an Information Report to Regional Council to provide advance notice of the potential to revoke an award granted June 25, 2013.

DISCUSSION

Payment has not been issued but the extensive delay and lack of acknowledgment on the part of the intended recipient calls into question whether the grant is in fact “needed”. To rescind a prior decision of Regional Council would require Council’s approval unless such authority has been delegated. The following options may be considered in resolving this matter:

- Request that Regional Council revoke a prior decision to grant a conditional award on the basis of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding. If approved, written notification would be issued to the applicant.
- Grant an extension to the 2014-15 fiscal year. The recipient would be ineligible to apply for further funding in 2014. The same conditions would apply to the award. A confirmation deadline would be advisable to prevent further delay.

On a go-forward basis the Grants Committee might consider making it a requirement of eligibility that all requests for funding towards repairs, alterations and upgrades to a registered heritage property provide written approval of a Heritage Planner with the funding submission. This is not precedence: a formal EMO agreement is required as a condition of funding for EMO comfort centres.

The review process shall obtain confirmation of cost-share prior to making a recommendation to fund. In the absence of confirmation the request should be declined and the applicant has the option to submit an appeal with the appropriate documentation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If revoked, an additional \$11,000 would be retained in account M311-8004 Community Grants Program.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

The Grants Committee will be asked to render a decision prior to fiscal year end March 31, 2014.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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.

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Report Approved by: Bruce Fisher, Manager of Financial Policy & Planning, 490-4493
