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Halifax Regional Council
June 10, 2003

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

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George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Dan English", written over a horizontal line.

Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 27, 2003

SUBJECT: Special Events Reserve - Application Guidelines

ORIGIN

Staff

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that :

1. Council approve Special Events Reserve Application Guidelines as outlined in Attachment #1, to be used for determining funding support from the HRM Special Events Reserve.

BACKGROUND

In 2002, Council approved the levying of a tax on occupied hotel rooms. One third of the resulting revenue was assigned to the HRM Special Events Reserve (Attachment #2.) This revenue source produces approximately \$600,000 per annum. The purpose of the reserve, as stated in the Council approved business case, is to pay HRM costs associated with hosting of special events.

In this case, special events were determined to be those which do not occur annually and are considered to be national or international in scope.

DISCUSSION

Staff have been dealing with funding requests based on the direction provided by the business case previously approved by Council. Events which had been approved and planned in previous years and meet the requirements of the business case, are funded through this reserve.

Recent requests have indicated the need for guidelines to enable staff to better assess the appropriateness of requests for support, and to prompt appropriate lead times for staff to gather quality information, and for Council to have the opportunity to hear presentations and consider recommendations.

It is not the intention that funding from the Special Events Reserve be used to support "for profit" commercial activities. It has been the experience that no two special events are alike in their requirement for funding. Some are not-for-profit and have broad community appeal; some are strongly revenue focussed to produce legacy funding for their professional discipline such as amateur athletic purposes, cultural scholarships etc.

Given the diversity of potential requests, the attached guidelines have been kept broad enough so as to not unduly restrict support, and specific enough to guide staff in determining a funding recommendation.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

These guidelines will be used by staff in determining and recommending future funding for special events. There is no impact on current reserve, operating or capital budgets. Funding will be subject to standard HRM budget and business planning processes.

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

To continue with the present practice of using only the Business Case to assess funding requests. This is not the recommended course of action.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Special Events Reserve - Application Guidelines
2. Special Events Reserve - Council Approved Business Case

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Lewis M. Rogers, Director, Recreation, Tourism & Culture 490-5978

Report Approved by: _____
Lewis M. Rogers, Director, Recreation, Tourism & Culture

ATTACHMENT # 1

HRM Recreation, Tourism & Culture

Special Events Reserve

Application Guidelines

Introduction:

A Special Events Reserve and business case was recommended by staff and approved by Council as part of the 2002/03 budget. The purpose of the Special Events Reserve is to provide for costs associated with hosting non annual special events (primarily police and Public Works and Transportation services) as well as to provide and maintain the infrastructure for special events.

Special Events Reserve Goals:

- 1) Variety - The Special Events Reserve may be used to support a broad variety of events for the enjoyment of citizens and visitors. The Special Events Reserve seeks to provide resources for HRM to attract, support and provide hosting resources for events in the cultural, sports, and heritage sectors.
- 2) Accessibility - The Special Events Reserve will give priority to supporting the 'free to the public' elements of events and activities as compared to those elements that are resourced through an admission fee or other revenue sources.
- 3) Community - The Special Events Reserve will support initiatives such as Twinning, Memorials, Commemorations, Anniversaries, Receptions, and other special functions.

Eligible Expenses:

- 1) HRM Expenses relating to making a Bid.
- 2) HRM Service Costs related to hosting an event.
- 3) HRM Capital Costs - Event Related Infrastructure and/or Improvement of HRM Owned Event Properties and venues
- 4) Program Costs

Application for Funding - Required Notice:

Notice of funding request must be made at least 12 months before the event date(s), or 6 months prior to a proposed bid submission. Requests not meeting this time line will be considered where special circumstances warrant.

Approval/Disapproval of Funding

Decisions on applications for funding will be made by a review committee consisting of the CAO, Deputy CAO, and the Director of Recreation, Tourism & Culture. Per the Multi Year Financial Strategy, the Director, Financial Services, will provide confirmation as to availability of funds and compliance with the Reserve Business Case prior to this review. Approved amounts will be subject to Council approval during the annual HRM business planning and budget process.

Funding Limitations:

- HRM may pay up to 1/3 of the municipal service costs associated with the event. Contributions from other levels of government will be considered in HRM's deliberations.
- HRM may pay up to 1/3 of the program costs associated with the event. Contributions from other levels of government will be considered in HRM's deliberations.
- Special consideration will be given to those events that occur in the November 1st to April 30th time period.
- Events which have broad appeal and community interest will be given priority. It should be noted, events that are completely gated and raise revenues from that gate must clearly indicate a reason for HRM to provide a grant.

Not Considered for Funding:

- Banquets/Dinners associated with events.
- Events which seek to enhance the image of an illegal activity
- Events which are designed to promote a specific political or social perspective or agenda.

Funding Requirements:

- Event must meet the requirements of the HRM Special Events Reserve Business Case.
- Event organizers must provide a full detailed program and a detailed budget before HRM funding commitment is determined.

Exceptional Circumstances:

In exceptional circumstances, i.e. when requests for funding from the Special Events Reserve fall outside the above guidelines, a report may be created for Council consideration.