

MEMORANDUM

TO: Standing Committee Members

FROM: Andrew Whittemore, Manager Community Relations & Cultural Affairs

DATE: January 18, 2010

SUBJECT: **Proposed Civic Events Working Group**

BACKGROUND

There are more than 100 events annually delivered in HRM ranging in size, location and theme. While it is impossible for HRM to deliver all of these, HRM plays critical roles in event execution by way of grants, contributions, expert advice and logistical coordination. Below is a table that identifies and describes various event categories:

| Event Categories | Event Description |
|------------------------------------|--|
| HRM Special Events | Directly delivered existing and/or new major regional-scaled events identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and needed to address gaps. |
| Special & Major Hosting | Council endorsed Regional/National-scaled special events |
| HRM Civic Events | Council designated, citizen lead, regional celebrations identified in the Event Strategy as a priority. |
| Community Signature Events | Existing and/or new major regional scaled events identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and/or necessary to address existing gaps. |
| Emerging Community Events | Existing and/or new major scaled events identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and necessary to address gaps. |
| District Events | Existing and/or new small scaled, district oriented events |

1.2 Strategic Policies Impacting Event Delivery and Governance

Halifax Regional Council recently adopted two strategic documents that will profoundly shape the future of HRM’s governance model and event delivery. Specifically, Regional Council approved the Committee of Council Reform process to improve citizen engagement and governance as well as the first Event Strategy which outlines HRM’s vision for events over the next 10 years.

a) Committee Reform:

In October 2010, Regional Council approved a new standing committee structure as part of Council Committee Reform initiative. In accordance with the new governance structure, an Audit and Finance Standing Committee comprised solely of members of Regional Council will be established. Reporting to the Audit and Finance Standing

Committee will be two sub-committees comprised of both Councillors and citizens – including the existing Special Events Advisory Committee and the Grants Committee.

b) Event Strategy

The strategy outlines the importance of creating a renewed Special Events Advisory Committee (SEAC) to take on the primary governance role of implementing the *HRM Event Strategy*. The strategy suggests that an expanded composition with more inclusive membership is required in order to facilitate opportunities for improved dialogue and coordination among all event stakeholders. The strategy recommends the establishment of three new panels under the umbrella of SEAC: the Cultural Events Panel (CEP), the Sport Hosting Panel (SHP), and the Destination Marketing and Promotions Panel (DMPP). Other recommendations include a change to Committee Council model for governing major community and civic events, in favour of a “working group” model.

DISCUSSION

It is estimated there are thousands of HRM citizen volunteers involved in delivering events each year. The type of work that volunteers provide includes planning, organizing, fundraising, sponsorship, and on site-logistics. Without the participation of citizen volunteers many events in HRM would simply not occur.

1. A Proposed Civic Engagement Model

With Council’s endorsement of the new Event Strategy and Council Reform, the three event based Committees of Councils (ex. Natal Day, Canada Day, Bedford Days.) would no longer be repositioned. Specifically, Council recognize that citizen volunteers are a highly valued asset and an essential aspect of the event delivery model employed by HRM. Consequently, in order to maintain a positive working relationship and citizen engagement model, staff are proposing the establishment of a new “working group model” to replace the former “Committee of Council”:

a) Civic Event Working Groups:

Civic Event Working Groups (CEWG) are defined as “volunteer citizen groups that plan, coordinate, and execute HRM Civic Events, Community Signature and Emerging Community events, as generally defined in Table 1”. Civic events staff will provide varying degree of support to such Groups as noted in table 1. Such groups will not have an official reporting relationship to Regional Council, but Councillors will be kept informed of plans etc. via civic event staff.

Group Composition: The composition of the CEWG and sub groups shall represent the diversity of the citizens of the community and include a variety of interests and skill-sets applicable to events. It is recommended that the size of the group (not including sub groups) be approximately 11 members.

Recruitment: A variety of communication methods will be employed by Civic Events to promote the volunteer opportunities in support of events that staff will recruit (i.e. **HRM Special Events, Special & Major Hosting, HRM Civic Events**) Such techniques include information at the library, Good Neighbours, Great Neighbourhoods, Volunteer Services, and

Recreation Services. Staff may employ a recruitment process (i.e. application, short interview) be used to ensure diverse representation and skill sets are sought.

Governance: The governance model employed by events not directly supported by staff may vary based on what works best for the group. Staff will provide information and guidance on suggested practices for the effective operation of the group.

Table 1 - Event Working Group Categories

| Event Categories | Event Description | Staff Role | Governance Model |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| HRM Special Events | Directly delivered existing and/or new major regional-scaled events identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and needed to address gaps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete event management defined as planning, organization and delivery of all aspects of the event program including sponsorships, partnerships, logistics, program design, execution, and budget and risk management. • Event Execution Volunteers Recruitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Group • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |
| Special & Major Hosting | Council endorsed Regional/National-scaled special events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete event management as required by agreement. • Working Group Recruitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group, where required. • (maximum 11) • Chair, defined by hosting agreement • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |
| HRM Civic Events | Council designated, citizen lead, regional celebrations identified in the Event Strategy as a priority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination event facilitation and management defined as planning, organization and delivery of all aspects of the event program including sponsorships, partnerships, logistics, program design, execution, and budget and risk management. • Working Group Recruitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group (maximum 11) • Citizen Chair • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |
| Community Signature Events | Existing and/or new regional scaled events identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and/or necessary to address existing gaps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination event facilitation, event management, and community capacity building • Staff support will vary depending upon the capacity of the community • Increase/decrease of support will be gauged over time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group • Citizen Chair • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |
| Emerging Community | Existing and/or new regional scaled events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination event facilitation, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group |

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| Events | identified in the Event Strategy as a priority and necessary to address gaps. | event management, and community capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support will vary depending upon the capacity of the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Chair • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |
| Council District Events | Existing and/or new small scaled, district oriented events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Capacity building • Advice re: event management, sponsorship training, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group • Citizen Chair • Event Execution Volunteers (no cap) |

Responsibilities: The responsibilities of the members of a CEWG may include the following:

- receiving orientation/ training information
- participation in the annual volunteer conference
- developing an event work plan
- seeking funding to support the event;
- completing necessary documentation;
- promoting the event;
- volunteer recruitment
- adhering to policies and procedures, particularly with regard to financial Agreements and risk management
- report writing and communications
- ensuring that a positive team environment exists within the group
- adhering to a volunteer code of conduct
- establishing sub groups as needed to assist with event planning
- engaging other community stakeholders

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