

**NETPUNE PRESENTATION TO THE COMMUNITY PLANNING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, APRIL 10th 2014**

Neptune is here today at a key turning point for our region. As HRM looks toward strengthening the regional core – and as new cultural policy recommendations and funding mechanisms are brought forward -- we congratulate the Committee for its foresight.

You are helping to create bright future for professional arts organizations in HRM.

The recommendations of the *Special Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee (SACAC)* that were endorsed by the *Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED)* before being brought to Council as a Whole, are a major step forward.

As an anchor professional arts organization in the region, Neptune wholeheartedly endorses the recommendation that a long-awaited professional arts organization grant program be created.

We encourage council members to give HRM staff the resources they need to examine the full slate of recommendations made by the Advisory Committee, so that these recommendations can be harmonized with other HRM corporate initiatives.

Within the context of these proposals, Neptune supports the recommendation that existing tax exemption for non-profit organization arts facilities be brought under the umbrella of an Arts HRM organization.

Neptune is a partner in achieving the goals of our region – from attracting jobs and new businesses to HRM – to making the city a more liveable and diverse place to live and invest in.

But just for a moment, we want to you to imagine the unimaginable – a world without Neptune. Without us – more than \$ 9 million in regional economic activity, hundreds of jobs in the cultural sector and beyond, and vital outreach programs and community infrastructure, would simply not exist.

With Neptune, a cornerstone of economic development and innovation is sustained. Our reach is deep – not only in terms of the investment we bring to the region, but in terms of the role we play in supporting the entire community.

Businesses large and small rely on the Neptune for support. We are the beating heart of culture activity in the downtown core – and our year-round activities create jobs and prosperity for the restaurants and retailers that surround us.

Neptune also purchases more than \$1 million in goods and services from local businesses – from high tech equipment from Tour Tech in Dartmouth, to the catering services of local restaurants.

Performing arts organizations and community groups throughout HRM rely on our performance and rehearsal spaces – and the expertise of Neptune staff. The \$900,000 in support that we leverage annually from other levels of government and from the corporate sector benefits local artists and community members alike.

In summary, we are partners in everything that HRM does – from attracting jobs and new businesses to HRM – to making the city a more attractive place to live and invest in.

We're committed to bringing HRM a high rate of return for its investment. We've demonstrated fiscal responsibility in the face of significant economic challenges – and we've forged ahead year after year, to create a nationally acclaimed season of plays that is the pride of our patrons and community supporters. At the same time, our annual school tour and the Neptune Theatre School touch the lives of thousands of HRM families and students.

We need your support so that we can continue to be a great partner. Thank you for today's opportunity to speak with you.