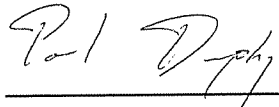




PO Box 1749
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Halifax Regional Council
July 31, 2007

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 

Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

DATE: June 6, 2007

SUBJECT: Film Incentives

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

April 3, 2007 motion (item #9.3.1) that a report on film incentives be offered to entice film productions.

BACKGROUND

Approximately 97% of film production spending in Nova Scotia is generated in HRM. In fact, HRM has been an excellent location for several film projects; both big and small. In 2007, one local feature film has been shot, but since 2003 much film activity has occurred:

Film Projects in 2003 in HRM:

Movies of the Week (MoW): 8
Features: 1
Commercials: 11
Shorts: 4
Documentaries: 3
Music videos: 2
Photo shoots: 1
TV series: 11

Total: 41 projects

Film Projects in 2004 in HRM:

Movies of the Week (MoW): 6
Features: 1
Commercials: 14
Shorts: 3
Documentaries: 5
Music videos: 0
Photo shoots: 1
TV series: 6

Total: 36 projects

Film Projects in 2005 in HRM:

Movies of the Week (MoW): 9
Features: 3
Commercials: 17
Shorts: 7
Documentaries: 5
Music videos: 2
Photo shoots: 3
TV series: 9

Total: 55 projects

Film Projects in 2006 in HRM:

Movies of the Week (MoW): 7
Features: 5
Commercials: 25
Shorts: 8
Documentaries: 6
Music videos: 3
Photo shoots: 7
TV series: 8

Total: 69 projects

DISCUSSION

On April 3, 2007, Ann MacKenzie, CEO of the Nova Scotia Film Development Corporation, (NSFDC) made a presentation to Council regarding the state of the film industry following the ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists) strike. ACTRA's strike did not last long but the effects of instability were felt before the strike actually happened, during and afterwards. Labour instability has turned productions away from Nova Scotia and Canada as the strike was across the country except for British Columbia.

Additionally, HRM is in a position where it is aggressively competing against other cities in Canada for a market share of film development.

In recognition of these challenges, Ms. MacKenzie suggested that HRM increase its support to local film industry. In particular, she emphasized the need for greater incentives for filming. At present, HRM dedicates staff resources to support the local film industry. Staff's primary role is to:

- coordinate and facilitate film requests and on-site shooting logistics within the Municipality;
- ensure the comfort and safety of residents;
- communicate with business units throughout HRM, business associations, residents, Council;
- record all film activity in HRM;
- market HRM as a destination that is film friendly;
- resolve film related issues;
- participate on provincial film committee.

In consideration of Ann MacKenzie and the issue raised, staff have initiated a process to review industry needs. Specifically, in addition to meeting with Ms. MacKenzie, staff have also met with other industry professionals and associations. Through these discussions it is clear that there is a desire for greater support. However, the matter of incentives is not necessarily as clear cut as initially understood. Rather, members of the film community have suggested more emphasis is required on fostering opportunities for developing local film industry. Moreover, industry has suggested that a clearly defined role and mandate as it relates to film is required, and that a long term strategy is needed.

Consequently, before Council's motion can be adequately addressed, staff will endeavour to meet with additional industry professionals over the next several months to begin to collaboratively explore opportunities for the future. A staff report will be tabled in the future outlining the results of this dialogue.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget implications as a result of the material in this report.

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.

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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