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Item No. 10

Halifax Regional Council
May 13, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bond
Sharon Bond, Acting Director of Community Development

DATE: April 24, 2008

SUBJECT: Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods Media Launch

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

- The report originates from staff as a follow up to a Councillor information session that was held on November 13, 2007.

BACKGROUND

In 2007/08, Council approved the Community Development Business Plan. A strategic goal of the Plan is to build strong communities and foster a greater sense of community well being. In order to achieve this, Council approved the establishment of a social marketing plan.

“Social marketing is the application of marketing concepts and techniques to the marketing of socially beneficial ideas, causes or behaviours.” (O’Connor & Parker, 1995). Specifically, the Plan was meant to facilitate active participation in government and community and also strives to ensure communities are equipped with sound information to make positive choices.

A Social Marketing Plan was developed by staff and an Inter Departmental Steering Committee was established to guide its implementation. The plan was launched with Council at an open house on November 13, 2007. Included as a component of the Strategy was a new brand and slogan. The brand is “Good Neighbours, Great Neighbourhoods” and the slogan is “Great neighbourhoods don't just happen . . . they happen one good neighbour at a time.” The slogan is intended to inspire residents to positive action.

In January, 2008 the steering committee began with an internal awareness campaign through the establishment of an intranet site. Opportunities and processes that could be linked to the brand were also identified.

DISCUSSION

Council has recognized that community building is an important focus for HRM. A meaningful brand can become a valuable asset to local government by speaking to the importance of community building. A brand is more than a label of services or products. It can engage people, define collective goals and promote positive action as well as bring to mind distinct images, associations, and experiences.

On May 14, 2008, HRM will publicly launch the Good Neighbour brand and social marketing strategy. The brand seeks to promote voluntary participation. The concept is based on a philosophy of community building which recognizes that it takes the efforts of individual citizens and organizations to participate, work together, and contribute to make their neighbourhoods great places to live.

As a component of the Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods social marketing strategy, existing programs, new tools and resources will be available to the public so that it is easier to take positive action. The strategy will recognize and celebrate both individual and group contributions and successes. Finally, it will aim to create greater awareness of the many community building initiatives that are available across the organization.

The Good Neighbours brand will be rolled out during the coming year. Through the year, a variety of marketing, promotions, education, recognition, events, and partnerships will be implemented. This will include a new interactive website, a neighbourhood tool kit with resource information, public recognition, and volunteer opportunities with HRM. The focus of the strategy for the coming year will be in the following areas:

- Increasing neighbourhood cleanliness/ reducing litter/ reducing graffiti
- Reducing pollution
- Promoting voluntarism and participation
- Increasing civic pride
- Acceptance of newcomers
- Youth engagement
- Promoting community leadership
- Building trust in local government
- Promoting safety through education

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Individual business units will be responsible for the funding of their respective projects and communications. It is difficult to estimate specific costs at this time but the marketing and promotions of the brand will be funded through Corporate Communications operating budget E112-6919.

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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