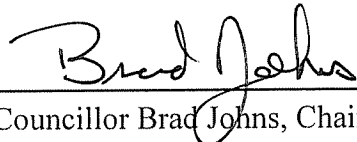


TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Councillor Brad Johns, Chair, Special Events Advisory Committee

DATE: May 20, 2009

SUBJECT: Proposed HRM Hallmark Events and Funding Recommendations

ORIGIN

Special Events Advisory Committee meeting of May 13, 2009.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council:

1. Amend the Civic Event Policy and Granting Framework to include the Halifax Pride Festival as a Hallmark Event.
2. Award the Halifax Pride 2009 event a \$25,000 grant through the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve (Q315) with \$5,000 to be held for debt repayment to HRM and that the award be contingent upon the submission of a balanced Operating Budget to staff and the Special Events Advisory Committee.
3. Not approve the SEDMHA International Minor Hockey Tournament as a Hallmark Event as they have withdrawn their application for this year.
4. Consider establishing a new Amateur Sporting Event Program of \$25,000.00 during the 2009/10 budget deliberations, and; consider an award to the SEDMHA International Minor Hockey Tournament, subsequent to an evaluation, under the new program.
5. Approve the Halifax Greek Fest as an Annual Event and award the event a \$3,500.00 grant through the Annual Event Grant Program (C760), subject to approval of Recommendation 1. (Approval of the Halifax Pride Event as a Hallmark Event would free \$3,500.00 from the Annual Event Grant Program that could then be awarded to the Halifax Greek Fest).

BACKGROUND

At the May 13, 2009 meeting of the Special Events Advisory Committee, several events were considered for Hallmark status. Pursuant to approved Special Events Advisory Committee Operating Procedures, an event may only be considered for Hallmark status through a motion of Regional Council or the Special Events Advisory Committee. Event organizers would then be invited to submit an application and to formally present to the Special Events Advisory Committee.

See also the staff report dated April 23, 2009 attached as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

The Special Events Advisory Committee reviewed the Proposed HRM Hallmark Events and Funding Recommendations and approve the staff recommendations as outlined in the report dated April 23, 2009.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

See staff report dated April 23, 2009 attached as Attachment 1.

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

1. Council may choose not to approve the Proposed HRM Hallmark Events and Funding Recommendations as presented. This is not the recommended option.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Staff report dated April 23, 2009.

A copy of this report may be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant, 490-6732



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Special Events Advisory Committee
May 13, 2009

TO: Special Events Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Dunphy", written over a horizontal line.

Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

DATE: April 23, 2009

SUBJECT: Proposed Hallmark Events and Funding Recommendations

ORIGIN

July 8, 2008 Regional Council meeting (item 11.3.1):

MOVED BY Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Walker that Halifax Regional Council include the Greek Fest as an annual event and provide funding from the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

February 25, 2009 Special Events Advisory Committee:

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Mr. Brian Rose that the Special Events Advisory Committee request a staff report on including the Halifax Pride event as a Hallmark Event for 2009 and continuing years forward. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

March 3, 2009 Regional Council meeting (item 11.2.1):

MOVED BY Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Hum that Regional Council request the Special Events Advisory Committee to include the SEDMHA International Hockey Tournament for consideration as a Hallmark event. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Special Events Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

- a) Amend the Civic Event Policy and Granting Framework to include the Halifax Pride Festival as a Hallmark Event, and award the event a \$25,000 grant through MLSER (Q315);
- b) not approve SEDMHA International Minor Hockey Tournament as a Hallmark Event;
- c) consider establishing a new Amateur Sporting Event Program of \$25,000 during the 09/10 budget deliberations, and award SEDMHA funding subsequent to an evaluation;
- d) approve the Halifax Greek Festival as an Annual Event and award the event a \$3,500 grant through the Annual Event Grant Program (C760), subject to approval of point (a).

BACKGROUND

Over the course of the last several months as the Special Events Advisory Committee and Regional Council have heard and discussed event grant applications. Three events have been identified during this process as unique, and deserving to be considered through alternative grant funding programs.

1. The Proposed Hallmarks

The Halifax Pride Festival and SEDMHA Hockey Tournament, respectively, have been proposed for consideration as Hallmark Events. This would require that the Civic Events Policy be amended to include these events. The events are described below:

a) Halifax Pride Festival

The Halifax Pride Festival is a week long celebration of the culture and heritage of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer (LGBTQ) Community of Nova Scotia. It is programmed for the enjoyment of all. The event includes a diverse week of theatre, music, film, family events, lectures and parties. The festival culminates with the Halifax Pride Parade. The parade is followed by a free concert and community fair.

Halifax Pride began holding events in 1988 with 75 people participating in a march. In 2008, an estimated 75,000 people attended the Halifax Pride Parade and other Festival programs. Halifax Pride is the 4th largest Pride Festival in Canada.

In 2008, the Halifax Pride Festival received a \$3,500 grant through the annual event grant program.

b) SEDMHA International Hockey Tournament

The SEDMHA tournament is a local hockey event scheduled throughout HRM. Since its inception, the Tournament has continued to grow. What began as an eight-team tournament in 1978, has grown to include 280 teams, 600 games, held throughout HRM in 18 arenas, over a four-day period. The mix of team participants has evolved, as well, with 90% Atlantic Canadian and 10% from Quebec, Ontario, US States, as well as the occasional European team.

HRM has not previously provided a grant to the SEDMHA International Hockey Tournament.

2. Proposed Annual Event

Council has requested that the Halifax Greek Festival be considered for sustainable grant funding from the Annual Event Grant Program. This program provides approximately \$158,500 to support annual events conducted by external event organizers such as: Word On The Street, Multicultural Festival, Atlantic Fringe Festival, Sackville Patriot Days, Kaloose Days, Eastern Passage Cow Bay Summer Carnival, Waverly Gold Rush Days, Clam Harbour Sand Castle Competition, Dartmouth Tree Lighting, Book Awards, Spryfield Santa Claus Parade, and Bedford Days.

a) Halifax Greek Festival

The Halifax Greek Festival is a regional event that showcases culture, dance, history and food. With more than 20,000 on average attending over the course of three days, the Halifax Greek Festival has become the largest Greek festival in Atlantic Canada, and the largest east of Montreal. Through this family event, the organizers hope to educate people about Greek Culture (dance, language, history) as well as provide a 'taste' of authentic Greek cuisine. The local target market for this event includes radio, newspaper, and website.

HRM has not previously provided a grant to the Halifax Greek Festival.

DISCUSSION

This discussion is intended to assist SEAC in its deliberations respecting the following:

1. the proposed additions to the Hallmark Event category,
2. the proposed additions to the Annual Event Program

1. Proposed Hallmark Events

The Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve (Q315) is an operating reserve funded through the hotel marketing levy (HRM receives 40% of the total revenue generated from the hotel levy) which funds HRM's Hallmark Event program. A "Hallmark Event" is defined as one that "possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, image, or publicity that it provides the host community with a competitive advantage. These events are associated with HRM's identity, help raise its profile globally, and position it as a place to invest. Over time, the event and destination can become inseparable in terms of their image."

In consideration of Halifax Pride Festival and SEDMHA Hockey Tournament, the Committee must assess each event and determine whether or not they satisfy the definition. The following provides staff's assessment of each event.

a) Halifax Pride Festival

The Halifax Pride Festival is currently identified as an annual event through HRM Annual Event Program and receives annually \$3,500 from operating.

It is staff's opinion that the Festival possesses such significance in terms attractiveness, image, and publicity that it gives HRM a competitive advantage. In fact, it is estimated that this Festival will generate \$2,000,000 in economic benefits to HRM and will attract an estimated 75,000 attendees. Of the 75,000 in attendance, organizers estimate that 20% originate outside HRM. Further, it is estimated that 15% stay in hotels or motels. It is also important to note that market research consistently shows that 25% of the LGBTQ travellers will build a vacation around attending a Pride event.

The Festival is expanding its national marketing in key Canadian LGBTQ markets (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, etc) through print ads, the Internet and outreach to other Pride organizations. All of these steps will contribute to raising HRM's profile globally, and position it as an open and welcoming.

The Halifax Pride Festival application scored 62 out of 100 points on the MLSER Scoring sheet.

b) SEDMHA Hockey Tournament

The SEDMHA hockey tournament is an annual event and, therefore, cannot be considered for funding through the MLSER, nor does it qualify for funding through the Festival & Event Grant Program as it does not support sport event programs. Should the event be deemed a Hallmark Event, it could qualify for annual funding.

It is staff's opinion that while the SEDMHA event generates economic activity, and generates hotel room stays, staff do not believe the SEDMHA tournament satisfies the description of a Hallmark Event. Specifically, it is staff's understanding that SEDMHA is not a National qualifier or an International competition. Moreover, the tournament does not involve championship winners from each province or state (i.e. Memorial Cup) which typically would speak to the tournament's "significance".

Without question, the SEDMHA tournament is an excellent tournament for young aspiring athletes, but it does not satisfy the standard of the Hallmark Event category the Civic Events Policy and Granting Framework is aspiring to achieve. Specifically, when it comes to sporting events, the Policy places emphasis on events that include athletes of elite calibre, and that would attract visitors from across the country and/or the world.

While this event does not qualify as a Hallmark Event, staff recognize the important contribution of such events to the local economy and to amateur sport. At present, HRM does not have a program that supports annual local amateur sporting events. Therefore, it is recommended that if Council wishes to support such events, that consideration be provided to the establishment of a new grant program for amateur sport. This would be consistent with the draft event strategy which emphasizes incubating local events in hopes that they can grow and develop into larger events.

2. Proposed Annual Event

HRM's Civic Events' operating budget includes an Annual Event Grant Program. The budget for the Annual Event Grant Program is currently at capacity. As such, no new events have been added, and could only be considered when an existing event is removed, or the budget is increased. The program's emphasis is on festivals, celebrations and civic events that facilitate community development as a key outcome. Events must "help improve and develop a sense of well-being within the diverse communities of HRM, reduce inequalities and feelings of

disadvantage, increase residents feelings that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously; and to help residents feel good about, and have pride in where they live." The following discussion provides an assessment of the Greek Festival in the context of the intent of the Annual Event program.

a) Halifax Greek Festival

Upon review of the Halifax Greek Festival application, it is staff's opinion that the event satisfies the intention of the Annual Event Grant Program. The event is well known, and attracts a significant number of attendees during its weekend celebration. The festival clearly helps improve and develop a sense of well-being within the diverse communities of HRM, and increases residents feelings that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously and have pride in where they live.

The festival has become inseparable in terms of image with the Greek Community and Purcell's Cove Community. In staff's opinion the festival is an important community builder and has become synonymous with the launch of HRM's event and festival summer season.

However, at present, the budget for this program is at capacity. Should Council approve the Halifax Pride Festival as a Hallmark Event and fund the event through the MLSER, an opportunity to reassign the \$3,500 associated with the Pride Festival exists. It is staff's recommendation that the \$3,500 in capacity be reassigned to the Halifax Greek Festival and that the Festival be earmarked as an annual event.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve (Q315) budget for 2009/10 is approximately \$1,656,500. This is based on a confirmed projection by Finance. Assuming the Reserve remains consistent, the Reserve can accommodate the proposed additional grant of \$25,000 noted in the recommendations. Budget availability has been confirmed by Financial Services.

Budget Summary Q315, Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve

Cumulative Unspent Budget	\$92,560
Less: Proposed grant	<u>\$25,000</u>
Balance:	\$67,560

The Annual Event Grant Program Budget is held within the C760 operating budget. Should Council approve the Halifax Pride Festival reassignment to Q315 budget, \$3,500 in capacity will be created in C760. This \$3,500 will be reassigned to the Halifax Greek Festival.

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

Alternative 1: SEAC could choose not to amend the civic event policy to include the Halifax Pride Festival as a Hallmark Event and not support the event through the MLSER. This is not recommended by staff. By not choosing to recognize the event, the Pride Festival would be significantly disadvantaged. Moreover, the capacity to support the Halifax Greek Festival would be eliminated.

Alternative 2: SEAC could recommend amending the festival and Event grant program to include sporting events. This is not recommended by staff. The sheer number of sporting events would drastically reduce Council's ability to respond to local community events and festivals, which already is challenged by a high demand and limited budget.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Halifax Pride Festival Score Sheet

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by : Mike Gillett, Civic Events Coordinator, 490-4740

Report Approved by: A. Whittemore
Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Relations & Cultural Affairs, 490-1585

*Attachment 1
HRM Special Events Reserve Criteria / Scoring Sheet*

Criteria	Score	Values
National or International	10/15	National Events = 10 International Events = 15
Free or low cost Gated vs. Non-Gated	15/15	Free = 15 Combination = 10 Low Cost = 5
Attendance (Event Size)	12/15	< 10,000 = 3 10,000 to 25,000 = 6 25,000 to 50,000 = 9 50,000 to 250,000 = 12 > 250,000 = 15
% Non-resident participants / spectators	6/12	> 75% = 12 > 50 % - 75% = 9 < 50% = 6 < 25 % = 3
Tourism Period (Seasonality)	3/10	Off Season (Jan. to Mar.) = 10 Shoulder Season (Apr. to June & Oct. to Dec.) = 6 Prime Season (July to Sept.) = 3
Geographic Distribution	3 /10	Urban = 3 Mixed = 6 Rural = 10
Financial Support	3.75/5	Provincial Government = 1.25 Federal Government = 1.25 Corporate = 1.25 Community = 1.25
Other Factors - Legacy - Event and HRM have become inseparable in terms of image - Frequency of event - Provides HRM a competitive advantage	3/6	Tradition, attractiveness, image, or publicity = 1.5 Recurring = 1.5 Associated with HRM's identity = 1.5 Raises HRM's profile globally = 1.5

Criteria	Score	Values
Business Case - Economic Impact - Budget Breakdown - Pre & Post Benefits ROI information - Ratio of return to HRM and/or the Province in terms of local investment and HST spin-off	6/12	\$2,000,000 in economic generation \$137,000 budget
Final Total	61.75/100	Request \$50,000 Staff recommendation \$25,000