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Halifax Regional Council
June 27, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Carol Macomber, Acting Director, Community, Culture, & Economic
Development

DATE: June 20, 2006

SUBJECT: Hakodate/HRM Twinning - 25th Anniversary Planning

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

During the March 1, 2005 Regional Council meeting, a motion was approved to refer the matter of the 25th anniversary of the twinning of Halifax and Hakodate, Japan to staff to develop recommendations/suggestions on how to to celebrate this milestone.

BACKGROUND

Over the last 23 years the HRM and the City of Hakodate have shared a number of experiences. These include educational exchanges, most prominently with Saint Mary's University; business exchanges via the Halifax Greater Partnership; and community exchanges where individuals or groups travel to/from Hakodate.

An HRM Twinning Policy outlining the criteria and protocol that surrounds twinning with other municipalities was passed by Halifax Regional Council on October 1, 2002. While this policy was approved in 2002 the actual implementation of it has been inconsistent. The Community, Culture & Economic Development Business Unit has identified this inconsistency as an area requiring further attention. Working on existing twinning relationships such as the one with Hakodate is a first step in addressing this requirement.

DISCUSSION

Meetings have been held with a group of interested and knowledgeable citizens to consider a number of programming possibilities to celebrate and leverage the 25th anniversary of the Hakodate/HRM twinning. Additionally, the Mayor's Office is also discussing plans with the Mayor's Office in Hakodate. Staff are of the opinion that a small ad-hoc committee of Councillors should be created to coordinate with this group of citizen volunteers, event staff, and Mayor Kelly to finalize plans. A Terms of Reference for the committee has been developed. Council members will be asked to indicate whether they are interested in serving on the committee. The final recommendation respecting the membership will be made by the Membership Selection Committee. A report recommending approval of the Terms of Reference and the membership of the Committee will be forwarded to Council by the Membership Selection Committee.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

An estimated programming cost of \$25,000 has been included in the 2006/07 HRM Event Reserve budget for Halifax Regional Council consideration during the budget deliberations.

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

There are no alternatives to the above planned course of action.

