



Report n° ADM2023-005
Date: 2023-07-19
Submitted by: Pierre Voisine, CAO
Subject: Municipal Grants Program

Nature/Goal

The nature of this report is to propose the creation of a municipal Grants program, aimed at establishing a consistent and transparent process to receive, evaluate and consider the provisions of funding and in-kind contributions to community organizations.

Directive/Previous policy

The City currently has a Cultural Financial Assistance program, a Policy outlining support for Not-for-Profit Organizations and various other means of providing funding to community-based organizations, there exists no standardized and coordinated approach to receive applications, consider their value and distribute funding in a consistent manner.

Department's recommendation

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council approves approve the new Grants and Contributions program as well as its implementation plan; and

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council repeals the Cultural Financial Assistance Program and the Non-Profit Organization (NPO) Policy for 2024; and

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council ceases the practice of using discretionary funds and the practice of receiving funding requests to Council used as donations.

QUE le comité plénier recommande au conseil d'approuver le nouveau programme de subventions et contributions ainsi que son plan de mise en œuvre.

QUE le comité plénier recommande au conseil d'abroger le Programme d'aide financière à la culture et la Politique sur les organismes à but non lucratif (OBNL) pour 2024.

QUE le comité plénier recommande au Conseil de cesser la pratique d'utiliser des fonds discrétionnaires et la pratique de recevoir des demandes de financement au Conseil utilisées comme dons.

Background

The City provides funding and in-kind contributions to all types of organizations, through a number of different avenues. The intent of this report is to outline these historically-based practices and provide a way ahead in the

management and consideration of grant and funding requests, as well as process in which the City will distribute funding.

Cultural Financial Assistance Program:

The Cultural Financial Assistance program was enacted in 2010 with a goal of stimulating, foster and promote the City's Arts and Cultural life within the community. This program allow grants of up to \$1000 aimed at arts, crafts, song, theater etc. The program included an evaluation process, and criteria and was delegated to Administration to vet and distribute the funding. The proposed Grants and Contribution program will generally continue provide the same opportunities, with the exception of some small modifications, such as funding for individuals.

Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) Policy:

This policy outlines how the City can support NPO's (including schools) from an in-kind perspective, though tangible (loan of basic equipment such as tables, chairs, and barricades) to the provision of technical support (communication and coordination services for an event) to financial support in the form of reduces rates for the rental of City facilities.

The new policy will not adversely affect the intent of this policy. While it will replace it, in-kind contributions, and preferred rates for NPO's (including schools) will be maintained, only the financial support portion will be affected.

Council discretionary budgets:

While the Mayor and Council have individual discretionary budgets, (\$5k for the Mayor and \$3k for each Councilor), there exists no policy which outlines how these funds can or cannot be spent. Currently, there are no mechanisms in place to determine how this funding should be used, which are often in place in other Municipalities¹.

Typically, discretionary budgets are made available for Councilors to use towards expenses incurred in the delivery of their duties. These are activities such as travel expenses, tickets, and registration costs to community events in order to ensure council member participation within the community.

In Clarence-Rockland, these expenses have migrated over the past 5 years to donations of funding to various groups and organizations, where a significant amount of discretionary funding is earmarked as donations.

¹ 2020-014 Being a Municipality of Russell Bylaw outlining eligible expenses charged to discretionary budgets.

Discretionary Budgets



The Grants and Contributions Program will encompass all the City's contributions to community organizations. While individual discretionary accounts will remain un-changed, considerations for donations will move to the new program.

Other legacy agreements:

The City also has a number of independent agreements with various organizations which can be considered as in kind or even monetary donations. Some of these historical agreements have been in place for many years and are often in bedded into existing budgets. This is problematic because they are not reviewed annually though the budget process, nor is there a process to confirm if the intended agreement continues to meet its intended goal. These agreements are in the form of rental agreements at preferred rates, and while these legacy agreements should transition into the Grants and Contributions program, administration will continue to create and negotiate independent agreements for Council's consideration to end current scenarios. One such example of this is an agreement where the City would pay for snow removal at the St-Trinite Church. This has since been cancelled by Council.

Discussion

Implementation

The proposed Grants and Contributions program will provide a comprehensive approach to how the City considers and distributes all funds and in-kind contributions allocated to community organizations.

The proposed policy on Grants and Contribution will have 3 program intakes;
1) Financial and in-Kind Assistance, provides eligible financial grants and in-kind contribution grants to support specific initiatives that promote inclusiveness and a broad community benefit through improving the well-being of the community and the quality of life for its residents.

2) Multi-Government Funding Support, which provides a required municipal contribution to access funding from the federal and/or provincial government(s).

3) Signature Events, which are identified by Council as separate to the evaluation process, and managed under separate agreements. One example of this is the City's Festival.

The goal of the program is to supply seed funding to encourage new initiatives of any type within the community. It is not meant for regular funding, but instead seeks to help establish new concepts, ideas and initiatives from community groups. Funding will only be available for not-for-profit groups; however in-kind assistance can be provided to publicly funded groups.

Once a budget is established during the budget process for the programs, a submission period will be advertised. Administration will review applications to ensure they meet the program criteria and provide the Grants and Contributions Committee eligible submission for their consideration. The Committee will then make appropriate selections and make their recommendations to Council for approval.

The policy outlines additional eligibility criterion such as:

- Only organizations who operate submitted programs within the municipality are eligible;
- Applicants and/ or the event must be in the City of Clarence-Rockland and promote the wellbeing of Clarence-Rockland residents;
- Organizations can only submit one application per year;
- Maximum funding amounts are identified, which include in-kind contributions;
- Controls on administrative costs of events;
- Applications include reporting requirements;
- Requirement to return any unspent funding to the municipality.

[Consultation](#)

Significant consultation was conducted with other municipalities to understand the various approaches used.

[Recommendations or comments from committee/ other departments](#)

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[Financial impact \(expenses/material/etc.\)](#)

In year 1 of the program (2024) funding established will be borne from the funding from the Cultural Financial Assistance program, the Non-for-Profit policy as well as other funding identified through the budgeting process.

[Legal implications](#)

None expected