



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: June 10, 2015

SUBJECT: 2015 Funding for Kindred Spirits Orchestra & Markham Arts Council
PREPARED BY: Moe Hosseini-Ara – Director of Culture (Ext. 3596)

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) THAT the report dated June 10, 2015 entitled “2015 Funding for Kindred Spirits Orchestra & Markham Arts Council” be received; and
- 2) THAT the City of Markham not provide any further funding to Markham Arts Council (MAC) in 2015 beyond the third quarterly payment of \$15,000 and that MAC be directed to apply for funding in 2016 under the new Celebrate Markham Grant Program;
- 3) THAT the City of Markham not provide any further funding to Kindred Spirits Orchestra (KSO) in 2015 beyond the third quarterly payment of \$15,000 and that KSO be directed to apply for funding in 2016 under the new Celebrate Markham Grant Program;
- 4) THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to respond to the Council resolution directing staff to report back to Council with respect to the \$15,000 quarterly funding allocated by Council to both Kindred Spirits Orchestra (KSO) and Markham Arts Council (MAC) for 2015.

BACKGROUND:

On September 23, 2014, KSO presented a deputation to Council requesting operating funding in the amount of \$0.20 cents per capita. In response to the KSO request, Council passed the following resolutions:

- a) THAT the City of Markham support the financial request by Kindred Spirits Orchestra Markham in the amount of \$23,000 to the end of 2014; and,
- b) THAT the City of Markham support \$15,000 quarterly to Kindred Spirits Orchestra beginning in 2015 until staff report back;

At that same meeting a staff report titled “Markham Arts Council Request for Financial Assistance” was presented to Council in response to financial assistance request from MAC. The report recommended against providing any further financial assistance to MAC until such time that MAC undergo a strategic planning exercise to develop clear strategic imperatives and outcomes for the next 3-5 years. The report recommended that Council consider deferring MAC’s 2014 loan repayment in the amount of \$6,600 until

November 2015, with the remainder to be repaid in equal installments of \$6,600 annually until paid in full. The report also suggested that no further funding be provided until the Celebrate Markham Program is reviewed and revised by staff. In response to the staff report, Council passed the following resolutions:

- a) THAT staff do not recommend approval of the requested \$150,000 per year grant for the years 2015-2018; and,
- b) THAT MAC be requested to complete a strategic plan outlining clear strategic imperatives and outcomes for the next 3-5 years and report back the results to Council in Q1 2015; and,
- c) THAT Council defer the 2014 loan repayment in the amount of \$6,600 to November 2015 with the remainder to be repaid in equal installments of \$6,600 annually until paid in full; and,
- d) THAT the City of Markham support the financial request by MAC in the amount of \$23,000 for 2014; and,
- e) THAT the City of Markham support up to \$15,000 per quarter to MAC beginning in 2015 until staff report back; and further,

Staff have since completed the review of the Celebrate Markham Program, and will be presenting the results in a staff report to General Committee at its June 15 meeting.

As such, this report addresses and makes recommendations as to how 2015 funding for KSO and MAC should be managed for the balance of the year.

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

The City recognizes the efforts of both the KSO and MAC and their positive contributions to the community. However, continued funding of these two groups would not be consistent with the principles, goals and outcomes as proposed in the revised Celebrate Markham Program, some of which include:

- Reducing the dependency of community groups on annual Celebrate Markham grants as an ongoing and sole funding source;
- Increasing opportunities for new groups to access funding;
- Improving program transparency and program structure with clearer goals, eligibility criteria and processes;
- Improving oversight and monitoring of the Program;
- Not providing core operational funding to groups.

The decision to fund these groups was made based on a deputation outside of the Celebrate Markham application review process and without consideration for other funding requests. There are numerous other groups with similar financial challenges and funding requests that are seeking funding from the City. Under the new Celebrate Markham Program all applications would be reviewed and evaluated together using established criteria and a standardized evaluation process. Furthermore, the 2015 funding

was awarded in the absence of policy direction and cannot be continued due to the inability of the City to maintain this level of funding. Council has before it a new policy which will assist with reviewing funding decisions and will be used to determine future funding for these and other groups.

Council directed staff to report back on the quarterly funding for KSO and MAC once the Celebrate Markham Program has been revised. Since the revised Program is being presented to Council staff recommend that KSO and MAC receive one last \$15,000 payment for the third quarter after which the payments would cease. This will allow sufficient notice for both of these organizations to address their financial situations. Going forward, KSO would be directed to submit an application under the revised Celebrate Markham Program in 2016 and MACs funding will be determined following presentation of their Strategic Plan to General Committee on June 22, 2015.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Should Council determine that the 2015 quarterly funding for KSO and MAC be discontinued in the third quarter, this would leave \$30,000 in the 2015 Celebrate Markham budget. Staff recommend that this amount not be reallocated, but rather be used to offset any negative variance in the 2015 budget.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

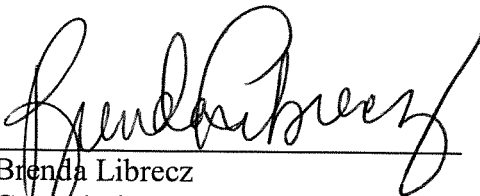
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

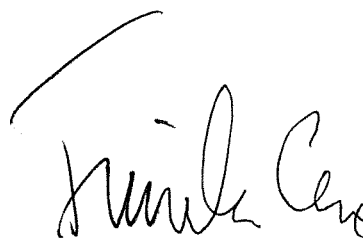
Not applicable.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDED BY:


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Commissioner,
Community & Fire Services


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