

TO: General Committee

FROM: Brenda Librecz, Commissioner, Community & Fire Services

DATE: April 13, 2015

SUBJECT: Committee Agenda Item – “MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 24, 2014 AND JANUARY 26, 2015 FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD”

Recommendation

Staff recommend that Council consider approval of a one-time withdrawal of \$75,000 from the Theatre Endowment Fund to be used to undertake the Theatre’s 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and brand review, and that surplus funds from the theatre’s operating budget not be returned to the Endowment Fund as this is not aligned with the City’s financial management practices.

Background

As per minutes of the January 26, 2015, Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board meeting, the Board made the following recommendation:

Motion of the January 26th meeting of the Advisory Board:

Moved by Ron Minken Seconded by Eric Fagen Carried

“THAT Council approve the use of up to \$75,000 from the theatre Endowment Fund for the hiring of a consultant to assist with the preparation of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, along with a brand review, which sum would be reimbursed through any positive variance to theatre revenue/expenditures throughout 2016 to 2020.”

Discussion

The Flato Markham Theatre is in its final year of its first strategic plan which was launched in 2011. During the past five years and inspired by a new vision “Live Arts Matter to All”, the Theatre’s programs, services and operations have evolved dramatically from local community Theatre to leading performing arts venue in York Region. In 2014, the Theatre team managed and/or presented 375 events with 328 performances, a vibrant program of international stature reaching out to Markham’s diverse community, touching the lives of over 159,000 residents. The Theatre has built positive brand equity recognized by patrons, stakeholders and peers from the performing arts sector.

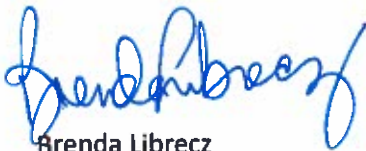
The next strategic plan will be instrumental and critically important in consolidating the acquired equity, in sustaining the current scope/level of programs and services, and in defining strategic priorities leading to future cultural and business growth. With the goal of bringing live performing arts in Markham to a

new level, many considerations will be addressed including strategic position, resources, infrastructure, business development, funding and brand.

This ambitious task will required an extensive research and discovery process with quantitative and qualitative data gathering through surveys, an environmental scan, stakeholder engagement as well as a brand review.

Conclusion

Based on current market rates, \$75,000 would allow for both the development of the strategic plan and an integrated brand review process. Staff recommend that the monies be withdrawn from the Theatre Endowment Fund for this purpose. Furthermore, staff do not recommend that future surplus from the theatre's operating budget be reimbursed to the endowment fund as this practice is not aligned with the City's financial management processes.



Brenda Librecz

Commissioner, Community & Fire Services