



STAFF REPORT

Title: Policy No. 097-RC-07 - Community, Recreation, Art, Culture and Heritage Investment Grant Policy Amendments

Meeting Date: March 11, 2025

Executive Summary:

Due to further frustration and concerns raised by His Worship Mayor Copeland, several proposed changes are being brought forward to Policy No. 097-RC-07- Community, Recreation, Art Culture and Heritage Investment Policy. This concerns stem from recent applications by community groups that deserve access to the financial assisting however are being screened out due to timelines not being achieved by the organization making submissions.

At Council's last meeting, held on February 2025, council approved a number of changes to the policy. The majority of these changes came as a part of a request from the Community Grant Advisory Committee (CGAC) itself. These changes were meant to clear up some awkward phrasing and incorrect grammar discovered by the committee members, as well as to align the policy with existing practices and past funding decisions made by the Community Grant Advisory Committee and Council.

In its discussions surrounding the CGAC's requests, administration queried council as to whether any additional changes to the policy were warranted, given a recent prevalence of Notices of Motion brought forward to deal with grant funding concerns in the community. The Corporate Priorities Committee of Council recommended, and Council Subsequently passed, the following changes:

- The Community Grant Advisory Committee will hold monthly (rather than bi-monthly) meetings to consider any eligible grant applications submitted.
- The requirement to have grant applications submitted 60 days prior to the event (or the date which funds are required) was reduced to 30 days.
- Delegations for applications to the Community Grant Advisory Committee are recommended (and not mandatory).

These recently approved changes have been maintained in the attached policy in red for Council's information.

His Worship requested that Council consider the following additional changes to the policy, highlighted in yellow in the attached draft for council's consideration. These changes:



- Remove Section 4.2.3.1, requiring administration to “[c]omplete a thorough pre-screening of all applications prior to presenting to the Committee and reject applications that do not meet the timing requirements.”

The purpose of the amendment is having all applications go the committee for consideration regardless of being, in the opinion of administration, being late. Furthermore, even if the application has issues and/or doesn't comply with elements of the policy, this is not for the administration to decide; the committee my provided their recommendation, and council may consider funding regardless of the policy.

- Adds “...to be considered at their next meeting...” to Section 4.7.1

The purpose of the amendment is to have any late application that come in after the 30 days, will be considered by the committee (by recommendation) and/or council to have final say.

- Makes the requirement to submit applications 30 days prior to an event a recommendation rather than a requirement. (Section 4.7.2)

The purpose of the amendment is to articulate that there is no fix deadline for organizations seeking financial assistance. We want as many organizations making application as possible and specifying framework to say “no”. These decisions have consequences to the City of Cold Lake as well as the local and regional organizations.

- With the application deadline being a recommendation rather than a requirement, administration included an additional statement in 4.7.2 whereby, applications will be considered anytime after the event up to the first Thursday of November following the event.

Administration has included this amendment to complement the first three (3) bullets. This enables a fixed cutoff date (which is highly recommended) and still allow for decisions to be made and include the impacts in the year-end (of December 31) and audited financial statements thereafter.

It is understood that His Worship Mayor Copeland voiced his concerns during last round of changes however Council did not consider his requested amendments. Given that the last round of changes to this policy was made at Council's February, 2025 meeting after a discussion by the Corporate Priorities Committee, Administration is looking for direction from Council as to any further changes that Council wishes to see.



Administration apologizes for the frustrations it is creating in the application and implementation of the policy.

Based on the meeting, it was understood that further concerns are still being raised by Council regarding the policy.

Background:

At its February 18, 2025, Corporate Priorities Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

CRM20250218.1003

That the Corporate Priorities Committee of Council direct Administration to present amendments to Policy No. 097-RC-07, being the Community Recreation, Art, Culture and Heritage Investment Grant Policy, at the February 25, 2025, regular meeting of Council, for Council's consideration.

Carried Unanimously

This recommendation was subsequently adopted by a resolution of Council during Council's February 25, 2025 Regular Council meeting.

Since the creation of the Community Recreation, Art, Culture and Heritage Investment Grant Policy on September 22, 2007, the policy has seen various structural amendments. Prior to the amendments passed by Council at the February 25, 2025 meeting, additional amendments were adopted in May and November of 2023.

Administration continues to monitor and track the types of grant requests being received by the City, as well as the decisions of Council respecting these grant requests.

Alternatives:

- Council may pass or defeat a motion accepting the proposed changes to Policy No. 097-RC-07 - Community, Recreation, Art Culture and Heritage Investment Policy as presented.
- Council may pass or defeat a motion accepting the proposed changes to Policy No. 097-RC-07 - Community, Recreation, Art Culture and Heritage Investment Policy as amended.
- Council may defer this matter to a Corporate Priorities Committee Meeting for further discussion.
- Council may accept this report as information.

Recommended Action:

Administration is looking for direction from Council as to whether any additional changes should be made to Policy No. 097-RC-07 - Community, Recreation, Art Culture and Heritage Investment Policy.



Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer