

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING February 17, 2021

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SUBJECT OTHER GRANT – ALANO CLUB OF NANAIMO SOCIETY

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide background information and obtain the Finance and Audit Committee's recommendation to Council regarding funding a Social Response Grant application from the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council deny the allocation of \$7,000 from the Other Grant funding to the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society.

BACKGROUND

At its 2021-FEB-01 meeting, Council approved a recommendation from the Finance and Audit Committee to allocate a total of \$115,000 of Social Grant funding to seven separate community organizations (see Attachment A). A total of \$25,000 was available for Community Vitality Grants, with the remaining \$90,000 available for Social Response Grants.

An application for a \$15,000 Social Response Grant from the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society, initially considered ineligible due to an administration error, is now being considered for funding based on updated information showing that it was received by the grant application deadline.

DISCUSSION

Although all of the funding for the 2021 Social Planning Grants program has been allocated by Council, Staff have identified funding in the Other Grants funding stream that could be considered for allocation to the Alano Club.

The Other Grants funding stream is available to local, registered non-profit societies with large numbers of volunteers and a demonstrated financial need. Typically, the Other Grants program is used to provide the following funding types:

1. Educational funding;
2. Emergency funding;
3. Capital grants on a matching basis up to a maximum of \$5,000; and,
4. In-kind funding for facility rental.

There is currently \$7,000 available for Other Grants for 2021.

Staff have reviewed the Alano Club's application based on the Social Response Grant criteria given that it was submitted under that stream. Social Response Grants are available to local non-profits, neighbourhood associations and religious groups in order to respond to one or of the following strategic priorities:

- Social Equity (e.g. projects addressing issues related to poverty or social inclusion)
- Community Diversity (e.g. projects that support an inclusive and equitable community)
- Community Wellness (e.g. projects addressing the social determinants of health)
- Vibrant Neighbourhoods (e.g. projects that build community by enhancing social connectivity)

Funding cannot be used for ongoing operational expenses incurred during the normal course of business; projects occurring outside the City of Nanaimo; or, payment of pre-existing debts.

Alano Club Application

The Alano Club is seeking a \$15,000 Social Response Grant in order to “provide a family friendly meeting space that is a safe accepting place for those affected by addictions and harmful behaviour.” Of the requested funding, \$13,800 is to support funding for meeting space rental. This space would be used to support Nanaimo residents in recovery or otherwise affected by drug and alcohol dependency.

The Social Response Grant funds were heavily oversubscribed for 2021 with requested funding by applicants totaling \$514,838 for the available \$90,000 in grant funding. Of 14 Social Response Grant applications received, only 3 were awarded funding with 2 of these receiving less funding than requested. It is worth noting that the Alano Club's application was reviewed by the same staff team evaluating applications in the first review, and was scored lower than several other stronger applications from the original review that did not receive any funding.

The available \$7,000 in funding represents 47% of the applicant's grant request and 51% of the club's proposed rental budget. Providing partial funding is consistent with funding for other Social Response grant applications that were awarded only part of their original grant request.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council not allocate a total of \$7,000 from the Other Grant funding to the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society.
 - The advantages of this option: As the funding request is to help the Alano Club rent meeting space, the request may be considered operational funding and therefore not eligible for Social Response Grant funding.
 - The disadvantages of this option: As the application was not originally considered due to an administration error, not awarding any funding may seem unfair to the applicant despite the application scoring lower than others in the original review.
 - Financial Implications: Funds in the Other Grant program would remain available for further requests in 2021.

2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council allocate a total of \$7,000 from Other Grant funding to the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society.
 - The advantages of this option: Providing the funding would allow the Alano Club to be considered for funding and rectify an internal error that excluded the application from the original review. The requested funding would allow the Alano Club to continue to support Nanaimo residents in recovery or otherwise affected by drug and alcohol dependency. Supporting recovery programs is consistent with the goals of the City's draft Health and Housing Action Plan.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Of fourteen 2021 Social Response Grant applications received, only three were awarded funding (one received full and the latter two received partial funding). Awarding grant funding to the Alano Club despite the fact that they scored lower than other Social Grant applications who received no funding may be perceived as unfair.
 - Financial Implications: There is currently \$7,000 available in the Other Grant funding stream. If the full amount is allocated to the Alano Club then no other funds would be available for funding requests from this stream in 2021.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternative direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- At its 2021-JAN-21 meeting, the Finance and Audit Committee received a staff report entitled "2021 Social Planning Grant Recommendations" and recommended that \$115,000 be allocated to eight applicants, of which \$90,000 was allocated for three Social Response grant applications.
- An application from the Alano Club of Nanaimo Society requesting \$15,000 for space rental was not considered in the original review of 2021 Social Response Grants due to an administration error relating to the date of receipt of the application.
- Staff have now reviewed the Alano Club application and scored it using the same criteria as the other applications. The application scored lower than other applications, which did not receive funding.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ATTACHMENT A: 2021-JAN-20 Finance and Audit Report entitled, "2021 Social Planning Grant Recommendations"
- ATTACHMENT B: Social Response Grant Application Form (2021)

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