

DATE OF MEETING | FEBRUARY 16, 2022 |

AUTHORED BY | LAARA CLARKSON, MANAGER, RECREATION SERVICES |

SUBJECT **COMMUNITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANT – NANAIMO NATURE SOCIETY**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval for a Community Program Development Grant. |

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve the request from the Nanaimo Nature Society for a Community Program Development Grant in the amount of \$2,450 to assist in funding the Buttertubs Marsh Guided Nature Tours program.

BACKGROUND

The intent of the Community Program Development Grant is to assist community groups to develop new or expanded programs that provide increased opportunities for residents to participate and connect with community, and to enhance residents' exposure to a variety of experiences.

The grant is intended as seed funding to help get new programs and events off the ground or to expand existing programs with the hope that the programs become self-sustaining. It is not intended to be long-term operational funding or funding for capital expenditures. A total budget of \$15,000 is available through this fund with applications accepted by deadlines of November 1 for spring/summer programs and May 1 for fall/winter programs, or as funds remain available. This is the first application for 2022 funds and no funds have been allocated to date. |

DISCUSSION

A total of one Community Program Development Grant application was received prior to the acceptance deadline of 2021-NOV-01 for the intake period for 2022 spring/summer programs.

Staff reviewed the application submitted by the Nanaimo Nature Society with a request for \$2,450 to assist in funding a new program of guided nature tours in Buttertubs Marsh Park (Attachment A).

The guided nature tours will be for local residents, area school children, seniors and visitors are scheduled to take place from May through August 2022. The goal of the tours is to explain the historical, ecological, and geological significance and value of the marsh, point out rare and common plants and animals in the marsh, describe research presently conducted within the

marsh (e.g., VIU bird banding project), discuss conservation issues (e.g., western painted turtle), invasive species etc. The tours would be led by Nature Nanaimo volunteers and/or students hired for the summer months. The Miner's Cottage would serve as a preparation area for interpreters, as well as a meeting place for tour participants. Bird watching kits will be provided in partnership with the Nanaimo branch of the Vancouver Island Regional Library.

The purpose of the guided nature tours aligns with the mission of Nature Nanaimo which is to foster an interest, appreciation, and enjoyment of nature, and promote the conservation of healthy, natural ecosystems in the Nanaimo region. In addition, staff from Parks, Recreation & Culture have offered to partner with the group on marketing the program this year.

Staff determined that this application successfully met all the grant criteria (Attachment B).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Each year, a total of \$15,000 is allotted for the Community Program Development Grant fund. This is the first and only application for 2022 funds thus far.

2022 Community Program Development Grant – Applications Received

ORGANIZATION	PROGRAM	REQUEST	RECOMMENDED
Nanaimo Nature Society	Buttertubs Marsh Guided Nature Tours	\$2,450	\$2,450
Total Available		\$15,000	\$12,550 remaining in grant fund

OPTIONS

- That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve the request from the Nanaimo Nature Society for a Community Program Development Grant in the amount of \$2,450 to assist in funding the Buttertubs Marsh Guided Nature Tours program.
 - The advantages of this option: Meets the goal of helping community groups introduce new programs to increase opportunities for residents to participate and connect in the community.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None identified.
 - Financial Implications: A balance of \$12,550 would remain in 2022 for any further applications.
- That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council deny the Community Program Development Grant application from Nature Nanaimo.
 - The advantages of this option: The requested grant funds of \$2,450 would remain available for a future grant application.
 - The disadvantages of this option: An application from a community group that fulfills all grant criteria would not be approved.
 - Financial Implications: The balance of \$15,000 would remain for future Community Program Development Grant application funding for the remainder of 2022.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Funding of \$15,000 is allocated yearly for Community Program Development Grants.
- The application from Nanaimo Nature Society to assist funding for a new program for guided nature tours at Buttertubs Marsh Park successfully meets the grant criteria.
- A balance of \$12,550 would remain in the 2022 Community Program Development Grant fund if the application is approved.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Application for the Community Program Development Grant from Nanaimo Nature Society

ATTACHMENT B: Community Program Development Grant Evaluation Checklist |

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