



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From: Maralee Drake

Position: Deputy Clerk

Title / Subject: Support for Community Organizations Policy

Date of Report: July 15, 2024

Date of Meeting: September 9, 2024

Report No: 2024-GG-017

1.0 Issue / Origin

Support from the municipality is vital to the success of our community organizations and non-profit groups. It allows them to provide services and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors in addition to services offered by the municipality.

The Support for Community Organizations Policy (attachment 1), formerly named the Free Use (Fee Exemption) Policy, aims to create a thorough and consistent policy to ensure equal opportunity is provided in supporting community and non-profit groups in our municipality.

The policy takes current practices across many departments and centralizes them in one document for clarity.

2.0 Background

In the 2021 report to Council by the Non-Profit Sector Advisory Committee (NPSAC, formerly known as the Non-Profit Sector Review Committee), recommendations were made with respect to updating municipal policies to support the work of non-profit organizations and ensuring each group is treated equally.

The current Free Use (Fee Exemption) Policy is specific to free use of the community centres (arenas) and indicates that funds raised must go to a municipal capital project. The policy has been enforced inconsistently and free use/reduced rates have been granted across all municipal facilities through varying processes.

The current Community Grant Policy was identified by the NPSAC as a policy for review as it has historically not been funded through the budget. The current 2024 budget includes a line item titled “Grants to Organizations”. The funds in this line item were to be utilized for Council approved free use (as per previous Council resolution).

3.0 Analysis

The NPSAC reviewed policies from other municipalities and provided feedback to staff with information to be included in a policy specific to Brock that would be most beneficial to local community organizations.

Staff from the Treasury, Clerks, Public Works, Parks and Recreation and CAO’s departments worked collaboratively to consider the feedback and develop a policy that encompasses the multiple ways the municipality can support the valuable work from local organizations.

This policy takes into consideration internal operational procedures for facility bookings, payments and refunds, written requests to council, and marketing and communications.

The policy highlights the various avenues available for municipal support which include:

- Physical Support
 - o Facility Rental
 - o Equipment Lending
- Promotional Support
- Financial Support
 - o Partial Refunds of cost to rent municipal facilities
 - o Application for proceedings from the Annual Township Charity Golf Tournament

The policy outlines processes for requesting support from the municipality. Attachment 2 – Special Event Application will be made available online for Community Organizations and Non-Profit Groups to assist with their event planning and to streamline requests coming to the municipality.

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

This policy will repeal F3 – Free Use Policy and F4 Community Grant policy

Report: 2024-FI-019, Exemptions to the Fees and Charges By-law (Committee of the Whole, June 24, 2024)

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

The policy outlines the process for approvals of requests for free or reduced rates on a quarterly basis. The annual approved budgeted amount shall be divided equally into 4, for each quarterly intake.

Staff will recommend a budget in 2025 of \$75,000 or \$18,750.00 per quarter. This will be reflected as a change in budget recording and will not be a tax levy increase. The available amount would first be allocated to groups that have formal agreements with the municipality, and the remaining funds would be available for applications that formally request support, via the new proposed Special Event Application, (Attachment 2).

5.1 Asset Management

N/A

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

N/A

7.0 Communications

This policy shall be published on the municipality website and be highlighted on the newly created Community Organizations webpage. The information will also be shared at the Fall Mayor's Networking Event and in municipal e-newsletters and social media channels.

8.0 Conclusion

If adopted, this policy will clarify the support available from the municipality for non-profit and community organizations and ensure equal access. Staff recommend this policy be implemented immediately upon receiving Council approval.

9.0 Recommendation

Be it resolved that Report 2024-GG-017, Support for Community Organizations Policy be received; and

That Council approve the adoption of the Support for Community Organizations Policy.