



Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: Community Funding Requests – Wedgeport Bleachers

Date: Dec 7/22

VISION

We see Argyle as home to a healthy and thriving rural population. Our municipality promotes and supports economic and social opportunities for the region and engages in the active expression of our unique Acadian heritage. We are a place of choice for rural living and are widely recognized for our warm hospitality and joie de vivre. Surrounded by fresh air and cool ocean breezes, we work and play in the great outdoors. People choose to live in Argyle because of our commitment to each other, to our community, and to our neighbors. Argyle is a place we are proud to call home.

Request:

Staff is seeking guidance on how to deal with community funding requests outside of the Grants to Organizations allocations twice a year. Staff has been experiencing challenges with many organizations that do not use the Grants to Organization tool and send funding requests at any time. One example, which is the main reason for this RFD, is that staff recently received a request from the Festival de Wedgeport, asking the Municipality to partner with them in purchasing new bleachers for the Wedgeport School. They have indicated that the bleachers at the school are currently at the end of their life, and they are becoming a safety issue for the community. This is just one example of many funding requests that staff has received in the past few months. Staff is seeking guidance from council on the following:

1. How does council want staff to handle requests outside of the Grants to Organization application deadlines twice a year?
2. Does council wish to approve or deny the funding request from the Festival de Wedgeport?

Background information on the bleachers:

1. The community of Wedgeport has identified these bleachers as a safety issue, which needs to be repaired immediately. Below are some photos of the safety concerns.
2. Since the request has been received from the Festival de Wedgeport, staff has reached out to the province to assist in funding for this project. There has been no approval received yet, but we have received indication that this project can be partially funded through the province.
3. If we approve this funding request, the agreement would be that the bleachers would belong to the Municipality.
4. If council approves this request, the total cost for 4 step bleachers is \$7825.50. This amount would be shared between the community of Wedgeport, the Province of Nova Scotia, and the Municipality of Argyle.

Challenges with Current Grants to Organization Process

Currently, some non-profit organizations that apply under the grants to organizations policy get compared and considered next to multiple applications, and often times, get a portion of the funding they are asking for under the two deadlines council has set out for the grants to organizations. However, staff feels that some requests that come through after these deadlines should be considered but has no direction on how to handle requests outside of these deadlines.

How and can staff handle certain sponsorships, such as the Timber Cup request that is less than \$1,000? Or should these requests be brought to council to approve?

How and can staff handle other funding requests, such as the Fidelis House? Or should requests of this nature also be brought to council for approval?

Things to consider:

- Council could have a quarterly deadline for Grants to Organizations instead of just bi-annually, so requests could be dealt with more frequently. Council would have to consider financial impacts.
- Council may give more power to staff for funding requests, such as festivals, sponsorships for events, and community grants under \$500. If council wishes to do this, staff will approve said requests, and bring them to council for advisory purposes.
- Council could create another process for capital projects over \$5000. These projects could follow a ranking process to be completed by staff prior to presenting to council for approval. These rankings could ensure the following are included in a grant application: inclusion, accessibility, strategic alignment, etc... and the final decision would sit with Council.

Options for Dealing with this Funding Request:

Option #1 Council approve the funding request from the Festival de Wedgeport not exceeding the amount of \$2,500.

Option #2 Council denies the funding request from the Festival de Wedgeport.

Recommendation:

Safety is a priority of the Municipality. Staff feels the Municipality should address this issue and approve the funding request, providing the Province pays one-third. Staff feels this is the right thing to do for the Community of Wedgeport before a resident gets injured. These bleachers are also located on a field that the municipality maintains and has used for

programming. These bleachers would be a great asset to the Municipality for years to come with very little maintenance, as they will be brand new and made of aluminum.

The cost breakdown:

The total cost is \$7826 for 4-step bleachers

Province portion = \$2609

Community of Wedgeport portion = \$2609

Municipality of Argyle portion = \$2109 +\$500 (in kind)

Suggested Motion:

Move that Council support the funding request from the Festival de Wedgeport to cover one-third of the cost of the bleachers, not to exceed the amount of \$2,500.





