

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 16, 2024
To: Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee
From: Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator
Report Number: FIN24-022
Attachments: None

Title: Communities in Bloom 2024 Additional Funding Request

Objective: To consider a request from Communities in Bloom for \$5,000.00 to cover expenses to send two members to the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

Background: At the June 6, 2024 meeting, the Committee discussed the potential of two members attending the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island and whether the 2024 budget would allow for financial assistance. It was determined there are no additional funds in the current budget to support member travel expenses. At that meeting, the following motion was made by the Committee:

THAT the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee requests an additional \$5,000.00 from Stratford City Council to assist with covering or reimbursing travel and registration costs for CIB members to attend the 2024 National Symposium in Charlottetown, PEI from October 17-20, 2024 in preparation for hosting the 2025 National Symposium in Stratford.

Over the past eighteen years financial assistance to members attending CIB events has ranged from full or partial coverage to no assistance dependent on budget funds available for the specific year.

Analysis: The 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium is being held in Charlottetown, from October 17 to 20. During the 2024 event Stratford will be promoted as the host for the 2025 Symposium. Councillor Beatty will be attending as a Council representative in the event Stratford wins in their judging category as well as welcoming everyone to Stratford in 2025.

Committee members attending will be able to view and understand the event from a participant perspective and evaluate the requirements of volunteers to make the 2025 event successful.

The Committee is requesting an additional \$5,000.00 to assist two members with expenses related to travelling to Charlottetown for the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium. If the request is supported, the amount could be funded from the reserve account containing advisory committee funds or an alternate location as directed by Council.

Options for consideration:

1. Approve the request: THAT the request from Communities in Bloom for an additional amount of up to \$5,000.00 to assist two members with expenses related to travelling to Charlottetown for the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium, be approved and funded from the advisory committee reserve.
2. File the request (meaning take no action): THAT the request from Communities in Bloom for an additional amount of up to \$5,000.00 to assist with member expenses related to travelling to Charlottetown for the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium, be filed.

The Advisory Committee Reserve supports all of the advisory committees, currently as follows:

- Active Transportation
- Heritage
- Accessibility
- Energy & Environment
- Town & Gown (currently inactive)
- Communities in Bloom
- Stratfords of the World

During the 2024 budget process, Council effectively reduced the tax levy by using these available funds from prior year surpluses of \$94,945. Therefore, the Advisory reserve is expected to have a 2024 year-end balance of \$42,170 before consideration of this request.

Financial Implications

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There is no anticipated effect on the net surplus or deficit for the City, as any funding requirements considered would flow through the reserve.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Not Applicable: This report does not align with one of the Strategic Priorities as the request is to cover expenses for two advisory committee members to attend the upcoming CIB Symposium.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee for an additional amount of up to \$5,000.00 for expenses related to sending two members of the Committee to the 2024 Communities in Bloom Symposium in Charlottetown to be funded from the Council Committees Reserve, be considered.

Prepared by:

Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator

Recommended by:

Tatiana Dafoe, City Clerk

Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services

Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer