



AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2025033

Date: March 24, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living

DATE: March 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Community Support Grants Policy Amendments

ORIGIN: The Town of Amherst has been awarding community support grants to individuals and organizations for many years. This places value in our community and ensures that non profit organizations are able to operate to support the individuals of our community. It also ensures that our community has a robust schedule of events that support participation of the community.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve the following revisions to section 5(d) of the Community Support Grants policy:

Funding for Social Equity Initiatives

For the purposes of this policy, Social Equity Funding” is defined as the annual funding allotment within the Community Support Area Rate, including any reserves for this purpose, to be used for initiatives that specifically target social equity issues. **All** applications which Council feels meet this definition and for which Council is considering funding from the annual Social Equity Funding allotment or associated reserves set aside for this purpose ~~will~~ **may** be referred to the respective committees for a recommendation.

BACKGROUND: Previous practise by policy was to forward social equity grant applications to the respective committees of Poverty Reduction, IDE or Accessibility for review and provide recommendation on the awarding of grants. This was at times not timely or conducive to being able to award grants to organizations in a timely manner to meet their operational needs.

DISCUSSION: With the quarterly meeting schedule of the combined Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committees, and the fact that we no longer have a Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee this would make it even more difficult to award grants in a timely manner. Changes are being requested by staff to the existing policy that could still allow this process to happen if council or staff are unsure of how to proceed with an application. The change in wording would allow this to continue if needed but not make it mandatory.





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It is felt by staff that this recommendation will make our grant program more responsive to the community organizations but still consider review by committees at the discretion of council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There is no detriment to the community at large. We will continue to support applications that enhance the overall wellbeing of the community and elevate the social determinants of health such as reducing food insecurity and providing opportunities to positively impact the health of our community.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Community engagement will continue as always.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1 Keep the policy as it exists
- 2 Send back for further review
- 3 Defer to April meeting

ATTACHMENTS: Revised Community Support Grants Policy

Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:

