



Date: April 15, 2025
To: Council
Cc: Kim Ramsay, CAO
From: Alana Tapper, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture
Re: Tide Fest, East Hants Challenger Baseball & Air Cadets Sponsorship Request

Tide Fest - Come Home East Hants Society

The Come Home East Hants Society has reached out in follow-up to their 2024 request for municipal support for Tide Fest. This year's event is being held from July 13-15 at the East Hants Sportsplex. The group is requesting reconsideration and while grateful for the initial review last year, feel there is significant benefit to the community for their event. The increased cost of renting the Sportsplex facility poses a significant barrier to the group for this year and for the longer-term sustainability of the event.

Based on the areas the group wants to use, the estimated cost of using the facility for the event is \$7700, charging for the entire facility would be approximately \$9900.

Background

Past motions of Council related to Tide Fest include:

May 25, 2016 - C16(117) That Council approve a Special Event grant of \$10,000 to the East Hants Arena Association Society for year one of this new East Hants festival; And that subsequent year funding of \$10,000 per year for up to four years be taken from the Tourism Economic Development (TED) Fund grant, conditional upon the organization meeting grant criteria, capturing a set of agreed upon metrics and providing reporting and self-sustainability requirements as approved by staff; And that all funding will be conditional upon successful receipt of \$55,000 funding from other levels of government or an equivalent amount of additional corporate sponsorship; And that the Municipality be recognized as a Founding Sponsor for Year 1 and all future years which will be equivalent to the second tier partnership level available. And that Staff will include a report to Council from Staff for years 2, 3 and 4, gauging the success of the festival before funding is granted by Council in those years.

June 27, 2018 - C18(181) That the Come Home East Hants Society be awarded \$10,000.00 in support of Tide Fest 2018 with the source of funds being the Tourism Economic Development Fund.

June 26, 2019 - That Council approve the Come Home East Hants Association be awarded \$10,000 in support of Tide Fest 2019 with source of funds being the Tourism Economic Development Fund Reserve and that the 2019/2020 grant be the final contribution to Tide Fest as the Come Home East Hants Association has achieved profitability

From the success of Tide Fest in 2023, donations were made to a number of non-profit organizations throughout East Hants including East Hants Skating Club, CCOA (Corridor Community Options for Adults), East Hants Family Resource Centre, Milford Recreation Association, Lantz Recreation Society, Caring & Sharing Angel

Tree Food Bank Association, Hants North Community Food Bank Association, Indian Brook Food Bank Society and Shumilacke Food Bank Society.

In 2024, the Come Home East Hants Society requested the Municipality sponsor Tide Fest held July 12-14, 2024 by covering or waiving the full venue rental for this year, as well as in the future. The group has traditionally been charged a rate of \$4000 tax included, whereas the typical billing for the facility use would be approximately \$9000. From discussion at Council, motion C24(196) was passed that the Municipality would support the group by honoring the commitment made previously for a reduced rental of \$4000 for the venue for the 2024 event.

Municipal staff have continued to provide the group support this year. In October 2024, the group reached out about grant support and what might be available now that costs are increasing. Municipal support was limited to existing grant programs, but staff also provided information on provincial funding, external (corporate) grants, as well as sponsorship program resources.

Staff reached out again in February 2025 to remind the group of the provincial funding deadline (February 28) and recommended they speak with the program manager to find the best way to use funding.

In early March, staff received a request from Tide Fest volunteer Grants Coordinator to meet and scheduled a meeting for the next week. At that meeting, staff discussed a number of supports and ideas and how to maximize programs. In addition, they also discussed ways to regroup after this year's event to make a business plan and consider some new approaches, community partnerships and potential of summer student/event staff as volunteer capacity is a challenge with many not-for-profit organizations. Staff indicated that the group should develop an accurate budget/business plan to prove shortfall due to increased costs and if they indeed needed municipal support, the group needs to be specific in both need and justification. Staff suggested the group could make a presentation to Council with those details. While no request to present came from this meeting, the letter of request posted for Council was sent in early April.

Staff Recommendation

Should Council wish to contribute to Tide Fest through the General Government grant program, the funds would be internally transferred to offset the Sportsplex rental revenues. Current general government grant funding includes \$4000 for miscellaneous requests for 2025/2026 and the reserve as of March 31, 2025 has a balance of approximately \$148,000.

Staff would recommend that any grants provided should include the condition that the groups provide follow-up reporting similar to other municipal grant funding programs.