



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Economic Development and Customer Service, Economic Development and Tourism

Date of Report: December 7, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** January 7, 2013

Report Number: EDCS-001-2013 **File:** 35-60-20

Subject: Niagara Folks Arts Festival Funding Agreement

Recommendation

That the City of St. Catharines enter into an agreement with the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines for the provision of services associated with the annual Niagara Folk Arts Festival at a rate of \$26,000 per annum plus the in-kind contributions as indicated in the agreement to the maximum amount shown therein with the understanding that the Niagara Folk Arts Council is responsible for costs over and above for a period covering the 2013, 2014, and 2015 Festivals; and

That Economic Development and Customer Service be authorized to disburse \$26,000 to the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines for the 2013 festival after the said agreement has been executed; and

Further, that the City Solicitor be directed to prepare the necessary documents and by-laws. FORTHWITH

Summary

Since 1998, the Department of Economic Development and Customer Service (EDCS) has negotiated and implemented a series of fee-for-service agreements related to the Niagara Folk Arts Festival (NFAF). Prior to that year the City of St. Catharines provided annual grants for the Niagara Folk Arts Festival. The most recent agreement for 2010, 2011, and 2012 expired October 31, 2012.

In general terms, these agreements have sought to increase the overall economic impact of the NFAF by requiring the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines to pursue specific organizational, marketing and event goals in order to receive funding from the City of St. Catharines. Each year, EDCS has provided \$26,000 to support the NFAF.

Report

The NFAF has requested \$50,000 in 2013 however EDCS is not recommending this inclusion within the 2013 operating budget. The yearly allocation of \$26,000 has

already been included in the EDCS 2013 draft operating budget. The request for additional funds should be referred to the 2013 budget committee. If the additional funds are approved during budget deliberations staff will amend the fee-for-service agreement to reflect the budgetary changes.

A request was made to include fee waivers for RCS services typically charged back to the Festival for use of municipal venues. This request has been incorporated into the fee-for-service agreement.

In-kind Services by Department

The NFAF typically has an associated cost that is charged back for use of municipal venues and other Recreation and Community Services (RCS) and Transportation and Environmental Services (TES) related services including:

Recreation & Community Services

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Municipal Venue Rental | \$1,500 |
| 2. Park Repairs | \$2,800 (inclusive of labour and materials) |
| <u>Sub-Total</u> | <u>\$4,300</u> |

Transportation & Environmental Services

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 3. Road Closures | \$ 175 |
| 4. <u>Street Banner</u> | <u>\$ 160</u> |

Approximate Total \$4,635

It is being recommended that the charges associated with RCS and TES services be included in the NFAF agreement. It should be noted that the values provided are the maximum amount of in-kind contributions. Amounts over and above these values listed are the responsibility of the NFAF.

Fee-For-Service Obligations

In this fee-for-service agreement with the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines, the City has required that the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines meet certain obligations in order to receive the City's funding. These include:

- A) operating the NFAF in St. Catharines as a distinct event from other Folk Arts community programming during each year of the term of the contract;
- B) developing the NFAF as a fully professional arts event and a major cultural attraction for the City of St. Catharines;
- C) contracting a NFAF Producer who will organize, coordinate and promote the NFAF in a timely and professional manner;
- D) reporting back to the Council of the City on past festivals and contractual obligations, and also outlining future festival plans; inclusive of programming, marketing and other relevant initiatives relating to the Festival
- E) The NFAF will be required to annually prepare and submit to EDCS a review of its marketing initiatives for all upcoming events relating to the Festival.
- F) The NFAF shall document visitor data through event surveying, web and related marketing analytics and data collected from the cultural open houses.

- G) preparing and delivering a formal written report on services performed by the NFAF, including a full financial accounting, visitor and attendance metrics, volunteers and community involvement;
- H) ensure marketing and event promotional information is sufficient such that event promotions can begin at least 3 months prior to the event launch; and
- I) such other services as may be required for the successful operation of the NFAF in St. Catharines.

It is recommended that the preceding fee-for-service obligations will continue into the 2013-2015 agreement.

In addition to these general requirements, EDCS' fee-for-service agreements generally require the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines to carry out a specific program or project in each fiscal year. These initiatives are identified jointly by City staff and the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines staff, in order to increase the overall economic and tourism impact of the NFAF. The proposed fee-for-service agreement outlines the following specific obligations between 2013 and 2015:

The Children's Festival was introduced in 2011, an initiative supported by a successful Celebrate Ontario Grant Application. This was a welcomed addition to the Days in the Park event with cultural games and crafts, children's entertainment on a designated stage; this is an educational experience for youngsters.

In 2012, the NFAF recognized that there was lack of programming targeting the teen market. The Teen Talent Competition was introduced in 2012, supported by a Celebrate Ontario Grant. This well-received event focused on luring the "teen" market to our festival. Cultural Clubs have expressed their challenges with getting this age group involved in club activities so the Teen Talent Competition filled this need.

In 2013, a new initiative is the introduction of an International Food Pavilion and Demonstration Kitchen Area. With chef's preparing and serving ethnic cuisine in an atmosphere that will appeal to a diverse audience. The Food Pavilion will bring together a number of Ethnic Clubs in a global themed area. A one-ticket outlet will allow guests to purchase small or large plates of food from a choice of food stations and it may include ethnic drinks and deserts. 2013, will see stability in the Days in the Park weekend date.

The Festival dates for 2013 are as follows; May 18th - June 2nd, 2013, May 18th and 19th will play host to Days in the Park/Children's Festival at Montebello Park and it is also the opening weekend of the festival.

The Opening Ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 18th at 9am. Open Houses will operate from Monday, May 20th - Sunday, June 2nd, 2013. The cultural open houses continue to be supported from the cultural clubs-

The proposed, 2013 International Food Pavilion and Cultural Demonstration Kitchen, a new initiative has the potential to attract the "ethnic food aficionados." It is

expected that this demographic will exceed anticipated attendance at the Days in the Park event in the thousands.

In 2012, over 87,000 attendees were received at thirty-four events held over a 16-day festival period. The thirty-four events included: a Pre-Promotion event at the Pen Centre, the Ambassadors' Ball, Opening Ceremony, 28 Cultural Club Open Houses, Citizenship Ceremony, Days in the Park/Children's Festival and Teen Talent Competition.

The planning for 2014 will focus on the way attendance numbers are determined at all the above noted events. It will accurately measure attendees at the Days in the Park/Children's Festival event, with specific primary data collected at the International Food Pavilion and Cultural Demonstration Kitchen. Surveys by the Cultural Clubs will continue to track attendance numbers. And the exit survey used at the Days in the Park will include an online option for Festival attendees to provide additional feedback.

In 2014, continuing to build on the success of the International Food Pavilion and Cultural Demonstration Kitchen by continually expanding the reach of our ethnic food purveyors/restaurants throughout the Niagara Region. It is intended to make this a regional, cultural food experience for the community and visitors alike. This much needed addition to the festival, now in its 45th year, will expand reach to include those who appreciate cultural cuisine experiences.

A continued focus on building programming and extending marketing efforts regionally and on other short haul markets will remain a priority in 2013-14.

In 2015, quality programming, focused market research, strong brand messaging and solid partnerships will allow the ability to reach further to mid-markets for visitation. It will be a primary objective of the NFAF to grow this community festival to a viable tourism product.

Financial Implications

Staff recommends the disbursement of \$26,000 to the NFAF, as outlined in the fee-for-service agreement.

Conclusion

Staff believes that the NFAF continues to have a significant economic and tourism impact, and that it also offers significant value to City residents. As a result, staff recommends the disbursement of \$26,000 to the NFAF, as outlined in the fee-for-service agreement.

Notification

It is in order to advise Jeff Burch, Executive Director, Niagara Folk Arts Festival, 85 Church St. St. Catharines, ON L2R3C7.

Prepared and Submitted by:

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