



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

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

Date of Report: June 6, 2013

Date of Meeting: June 24, 2013

Report Number: EDCS-159-2013

File: 68.46.1

Subject: Recommendations for Funding under the 2013 Festival and Events Grant

Recommendation

That Council approve the recommendations for funding applications under the 2013 Festival and Events Grant; and

That staff be directed to make the necessary notifications. FORTHWITH

Summary

This report is an overview of staff recommendations with respect to allocation of funds to applicants under the Festival and Events Grant program. Recommendations have been developed through consultation and feedback from a five member review panel which assessed all applications.

Background

On June 12, 2012, Council approved the Festival and Events Grant Policy. The intent of the policy was to support and complement the St.Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP) objectives - "to strengthen, build and invest in the cultural community of the City in order to improve the spirit and quality of life for residents in St.Catharines" (SCIPP Application Guidelines), but with additional focus on outcomes that generate an economic impact – specifically visitation to St.Catharines. Consequently, the priorities for applicants were to articulate and demonstrate a good marketing and operational program for their events.

Information about the grant was disbursed through various distribution channels including electronic and direct contact/inquiries with potential candidates. Discussions were had with several potential applicants. In some cases eligibility was an issue, in others the event did not move forward. At least one inquiry, currently supported under SCCIP, indicated they will apply to this program in 2014.

Applications closed on May 1, 2013, with four applications received. The funding budget for 2013 events was \$39,700. Total requested grants under the program were \$44,000.

Report

In addition to Tourism Services staff, a review panel was established comprising of industry experts from the Greater St.Catharines Niagara Accommodation Partners, 20 Valley Tourism, Venture Niagara, Tourism Partnership of Niagara and Cultural Services (RCS). The comments and scores from the panelists were collated and used to form the following staff recommendations.

Organization	Request Amount	Maximum Recommended Funding
Niagara Buskerfest 2013 Value Media Inc.	\$12,000	\$8,000
My Downtown St.Catharines Downtown Association	\$8,000	\$8,000
S.C.E.N.E. Stumble Recording Company	\$9,000	\$9,000
STRUTT Wearable Art Weekend Niagara Artists Centre	\$15,000	\$12,800

While generally most applications were quite strong, it was felt that some additional information should be provided to strengthen individual applications and consequently the events themselves. Once funding is approved in principle by Council, staff will prepare and disburse letters notifying applicants of their approved funds and any outstanding requirements/additional terms to process payment. Post event reports are also a requirement of the disbursements.

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications as the Festival and Events Program funds were approved in the 2013 Economic Development and Tourism Services budget.

Conclusion

Four applications were received in 2013 under the Festival and Event Grant Program. This is the first year of the Festival and Event Grant Program, and staff will work closely with all applicants to monitor the effectiveness of the grant to meet its economic impact and visitation objectives.

Notification

Tourism Services staff will contact all applicants to inform them of Council's decisions with regard to the Festival and Event Grant Program.

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