

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Council Special District Grants Policy
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	34
<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	November 19, 2013 (#2013-147)
<b>DATE REVISED:</b>	

**TITLE:**

This Policy may be cited as the “Council Special District Grant Policy” of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

**PREAMBLE:**

The Municipal Government Act (1998), Part IV, Section 65, provides the broad framework within which policies authorizing the expenditure of public monies are developed.

Councillor's often receive requests for assistance from individuals and local community groups that are either ineligible, too small or time-sensitive to be handled in an effective manner by larger General Operating Cultural & Recreation Grants, administered by the Municipality of the County of Antigonish (*herein referred to as the Municipality*). Flexibility is required to address such local requests. Therefore, an amount is allocated in the Budget for Council Special District Grants (*herein, referred to as “Grants” or “Grant”*), to provide a simple, effective method of providing funding for use within each district.

This policy is intended to assist members of Council and staff in the appropriate expenditure, record-keeping and reporting of expenses related to *Grants*. This policy also applies to grant monies received from St. Francis Xavier University, for which Councillors have authority to award.

**POLICY:**

**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 Generally, *Grants* focus on local activities related to social welfare; culture; community development, engagement or support; charitable fund-raising by a recognized institution or duly registered community group; civic events; environmental protection; and, community-based educational initiatives.
- 1.2 In all cases, *Grants* can only be used for the intended purpose for which it was authorized.

**2.0 Parameters for Awarding Grants:**

- 2.1 The amount allocated to *Grants* will be established annually through the Municipal budget.
- 2.2 The fiscal year starts April 1 and ends March 31. No expenses shall be claimed or reimbursed after March 31 for the ending fiscal year.
- 2.3 There shall be no *Grant* over-expenditures.

- 2.4 *Grant* funding may be carried forward to future fiscal years for projects identified as a priority by the majority of Council. Councillors seeking to identify projects in their districts as a priority for the purpose of *Grant* funding shall present these projects to the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Finance Committee (herein referred to as the *Finance Committee*) for approval prior to the end of the first fiscal year in which they are seeking to allocate funding. Presentations shall outline an approximate timeline, associated cost and benefit to the local community.
- 2.5 *Grant* funding not awarded, or identified for a specific purpose by the process described in section 2.4, by the end of the fiscal year shall not be carried forward to the following fiscal year. The balance of *Grant* funding that has not been awarded or identified shall become part of the Municipality's operating revenue.
- 2.6 Any *Grant* request in excess of \$2000 shall be approved by the Finance Committee prior to being awarded.
- 2.7 *Grants* may be awarded to individual persons or families in emergency situations only.
- 2.8 Any *Grants* to parishes, individual churches or religious groups shall be awarded solely by the *Finance Committee*.
- 2.9 Staff is not to encourage individuals or groups in lobbying members of Council. If a request for *Grant* funding is received, staff are expected to relay the request to members of Council. Such information should be relayed in the form of a written memorandum.
- 2.10 *Grants* are not intended for use in fund-raising activities that are of direct benefit to a department, program, project, service, or individual of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.
- 2.11 Funding requests under \$250 for individuals participating in a sporting event shall be referred to the Director of Recreation for funding under the Financial Assistance Program for Non-Profit Organizations.
- 2.12 *Grants* expenditures shall be suspended 3 months prior to Nomination Day in an election held pursuant to Section 54(4) of the Municipal Elections Act. Once an incumbent has officially declared their candidacy in a government election, their use of *Grants* shall cease. Spending shall resume upon the day a candidate is officially sworn into office as an elected representative.
- 2.13 *Grants* shall not be spent on an incumbent's election related costs.
- 2.14 In the event of an incumbent's acclamation to Council, access to *Grants* shall not be suspended.

### **3.0 Accountability Requirements:**

- 3.1 The authority and responsibility for appropriate expenditure of *Grants* is that of each member of Council. Each member of Council is responsible for making a clear determination if expenditures are permissible and shall be expected to award all *Grants* in accordance with this policy.

- 3.2 Written authorization shall be required for all *Grant* expenditures in the form of an invoice, fax, email, letter or cheque requisition. Where written authorization cannot be provided in advance of the expenditure, the councillor awarding the *Grant* shall sign the cheque requisition.
- 3.3 Written authorization for Grant expenditures shall include the name of the recipient, the amount and a clear and concise rationale.
- 3.4 A donation to a registered charitable organization or event shall be recognized with a receipt. Members of Council shall receive no personal tax benefit. All receipts for such donations are to be submitted to the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Finance Department.
- 3.5 In the case of uncertainty, the authority and responsibility for the determination of a permissible award is that of the Finance Committee. Any dispute regarding the appropriate expenditure of funds shall be mediated by Chair of the Finance Committee.
- 3.6 *Grants* are included in the annual audit. Any audit shall check for complete and appropriate documentation, compliance with policy, the fair and consistent application of policy, accurate reporting, and any other issues determined relevant by the audit team.

#### **4.0 Reporting Requirements:**

- 4.1 Staff shall be responsible for processing *Grant* awards, the maintenance of financial records including all original receipts, invoices, and cheque requisitions, and shall oversee the auditing of accounts as required.
- 4.2 Staff shall prepare for the Finance Committee a semi-annual, itemized report of *Grant* expenditures by electoral district, recipient and amount. A clear and concise rationale for the expenditure shall also be provided. An example of this report can be found in Annex A.

#### **5.0 Policy Review:**

- 5.1 This policy shall be assessed after one (1) year of implementation to evaluate its scope, relevance and effectiveness. Thereafter, the policy shall be reviewed:
  - 5.1.1 Every five (5) years, or
  - 5.1.2 Upon request of Council or the Finance Committee, or
  - 5.1.3 To reflect substantive changes in legislation.
- 5.2 Responsibility for policy review and revision shall be that of the Finance Committee. Recommended changes to policy shall be forwarded to Municipal Council for approval.

**Annex A**

**Council Special District Grants  
*Report to Finance Committee***

<b>District</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Rationale</b>