



Staff Report

Administration – Communications

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: June 10, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.063
Title: Recommendation for Budget Pitch Day
Prepared by: Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications and Economic Development

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.063, entitled “Recommendation for Budget Pitch Day”;

AND THAT Council directs staff to proceed with scheduling a budget Pitch Day as part of the 2025 budget process.

B. Overview

This report provides Council with a summary of the staff recommendation to implement a Pitch Day into the 2025 budget process.

C. Background

Every year the Town receives funding requests from various community groups and organizations. Most requests are administered through the Towns Grants and Donations Committee as they relate to non-for-profit requests and initiatives. However, the Town also receives request that are community economic development focused that do not fit the criterial and intent of the Grants and Donations program. These requests are received and presented to Council by the Manager of Communications and Economic Development through the budget process.

Over the last five years, the process for community economic development focused requests has been inconsistent with some groups presenting directly to Council, others submitting requests that are presented by the Towns Manager of Communications and Economic Development or a mix of both. Staff would like to highlight that a Pitch Day was originally scheduled as part of the 2024 budget process but was cancelled with the funding requests presented to Council by the Manager of Communications and Economic Development and with groups instructed to attend the formal public meeting to share their feedback.

Examples of previous funding requests have included but are not limited to, The Blue Mountain Film Festival, The Institute of Southern Georgian Bay and the Georgian Bay Accelerator.

D. Analysis

To formalize the process and to make it fair for all groups that may be interested in making a funding request, staff recommend that Council approve the implementation of an annual budget Pitch Day. Staff propose that the budget Pitch Day would be held during a special meeting of Council scheduled for October each year. At the meeting, groups would present their funding requests directly to Council, and Council would provide direction to staff whether the request should or should not be added to the proposed budget.

The Pitch Day would be advertised by the Town's Communications Division and promoted through a variety of means including the Town website, e-newsletters, local newspapers, social media and through direct letters of invitation to groups that presented previous year funding requests.

It's extremely important to highlight that the Pitch Day is not intended to replace the establish Grants and Donations program. Instead, the Pitch Day is intended to provide an avenue for community economic development focused requests to be presented and considered by Council.

Staff acknowledge that the proposed Pitch Day has the potential to put Council in a difficult position to approve or deny the requests for inclusion and formal consideration as part of the proposed budget. However, it is the opinion of staff that the challenges and risks associated with the current inconsistent practice of some funding requests being submitted directly to Council and with others being received and presented to Council by Economic Development staff is no longer viable.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders.

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

G. Financial Impacts

All funding requests presented to Council on the Pitch Day would be formally considered by Council for inclusion in the proposed budget that is presented by staff.

All funding requests would be considered as additions to the base budget and would be required to be funded through taxation.

H. In Consultation With

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

Sam Dinsmore, Acting Director of Finance

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications & Economic Development communications@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Hendry
Manager of Communications & Economic Development

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

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This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Shawn Everitt - May 10, 2024 - 6:19 PM