

THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAMBTON SHORES

Report DCS 04-2024

Council Meeting Date: February 27, 2024

TO: Mayor Cook and Members of Council

FROM: Ashley Farr, Director of Community Services

RE: Royal Canadian Legion Branch 176 Forest Large Vibrancy Request

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report DCS 04-2024 regarding the “Royal Canadian Legion Branch 176 Forest Large Vibrancy Request” be received.

*Council direction is required on the application

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with information regarding the Vibrancy Request received from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 176 Forest (Forest Legion) and seeks Council direction on a funding decision.

BACKGROUND

At the February 6, 2024 meeting Council heard a presentation from the Forest Legion requesting funds through the Community Vibrancy Fund – Large Projects grant program for capital upgrades to the Legion building located in Forest. Funds are requested to complete masonry repairs, replace flooring, update the audio and video systems and convert all lighting to LED. The Legion is a publicly accessible facility and hosts many community and private events. The Legion is also one of the emergency reception centres in the Municipality.

A copy of the presentation and the funding application is attached for Council review.

The eligibility requirements for funding through the Vibrancy Fund – Large Projects includes:

- Aligns with one or more of Council’s Strategic Priorities.
- Takes place in Lambton Shores on property that is accessible to the general public and is used for community purposes.
- Falls under one or more of the following categories:
 - Energy sustainability
 - Land stewardship
 - Recreation projects
 - Agriculture / Rural Affairs
 - Arts / Culture / Community Heritage
 - Community / Special Events
 - Community Beautification / Environmental Awareness
 - Supporting Youth / Seniors

- Tourism / Economic Development
- Funding for ongoing and/or annual cultural and/or historical events that are not capital projects, but promote tourism and/or historical significance to Lambton Shores, but does not include Canada Day Celebrations
- The project must not require operational support from the Municipality.
- There is demonstrated community need and support for the project.

Applications are reviewed and assessed by staff using the approved evaluation grid (attached). The request from the Forest Legion received an evaluation score of 11/14.

ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER

To date, Council has received a total of three (3) requests through the Large Vibrancy Program. Additional applications and requests for funding are not currently known.

When presented with funding applications, Council may wish to consider the following guiding principles:

- Is the project “shovel ready” – meaning, does the applicant have the required 2/3 funding on hand needed to complete the project?
- How does the project align with Council’s priorities and/or other identified supported initiatives?
- If the project is for municipal property, what are the operational implications?
- What is the overall long-term impact and benefit of the project?
- Does the project align with Council’s vision for Vibrancy projects?

Council has the sole authority to approve or deny funding requests at its discretion.

This report seeks Council direction on the funding request from the Forest Legion. There are several options outlined below that may be considered:

- 1) Fund the project as requested.

The request made by the Forest Legion for capital upgrades to their facility is an eligible project under Policy CP-CS-POL-005 Community Vibrancy Fund – Large Projects. The total funding request is \$66,163.44 which is equal to 1/3 of the total project costs. Council could fund the request through the non-segregated portion of the Vibrancy Fund as there are sufficient funds to cover the request.

If Council chooses to fund the request, staff recommends that the Vibrancy Funds are not released to the applicant until the applicant can provide proof that the remaining 2/3 of project funding has been received, to the satisfaction of the Director of Financial Services. The applicant will be required to sign a funding agreement with the Municipality prior to the release of the funds. A copy of the agreement is attached.

- 2) Do not fund the request.

Council may choose not to fund the request. Council is the sole authority to make funding decisions under the Vibrancy Fund – Large Projects program. Generally, staff will recommend that Large Vibrancy requests are funded through the non-segregated portion

of the Vibrancy Fund. This fund exists through the initial amount of just under \$2 million plus 50% of the annual contribution received through Cordelio Power (formerly known as Nextera and Jericho Wind). There are finite funds available and unlike the segregated portion of the Vibrancy Fund that has been established for the Community Vibrancy Small Projects, there is no plan for long-term sustainability of the non-segregated fund.

3) Fund the request at a reduced amount.

There is no obligation for Council to fully fund the request from the Forest Legion. Council may choose a lesser amount if desired.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This report is being provided for Council direction.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The financial impact of this report depends on Council's decision to fully fund, partially fund, or not fund the request. The amount requested from the Forest Legion is \$66,163.44 and if funded, staff recommend that funds come from the non-segregated portion of the Vibrancy Fund. The current status of the Fund is outlined below:

Base Vibrancy Fund					
	2023 YE	Interest	Contribution	Expense	Balance
	\$ 1,895,264.24				\$ 1,895,264.24
Jan		\$8,956.13			\$ 1,904,220.37
Jan 15	Budget CIP			\$ 50,000.00	\$ 1,854,220.37
Jan 16	Large - Paint Ontario			\$ 31,413.00	\$ 1,822,807.37
					est
	FO Legion			\$ 66,163.00	\$ 1,756,644.37

CONSULTATION

Janet Ferguson, Director of Financial Services
Steve McAuley, CAO
Forest Legion

Attached:

- 1) Forest Legion Community Vibrancy Fund – Large Projects Application
- 2) Forest Legion Presentation: <https://pub-lambtonshores.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=9409>
- 3) Evaluation Form
- 4) Funding Agreement