



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: FN-BRD-007

From: Teri Vetter, Interim Chief Financial Officer

Date: May 22, 2020

Subject: Policy Amendment – Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid

The following recommendations from previous Rural Budgets Administration Committee meetings are presented to the Regional Board for its consideration:

RECOMMENDATION #1: *[Corporate Unweighted]*

That the Regional Board adopt the amended Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid Policy, to delete the requirement for grant recipients to submit receipts and claim for reimbursement, and allow for the immediate release of funds to applicants upon approval of a grant by the Rural Budgets Administration Committee.

RECOMMENDATION #2: *[Corporate Unweighted]*

That the Regional Board waive Section 7 b) and c) of the Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid Policy, which state:

- b) Upon approval of the Rural Budgets Administration Committee, eligible applicants along with their Electoral Area Director will meet in the spring of each year to allocate the budgeted amount as set in the current Financial Plan.
- c) At least one representative from each applicant organization must be in attendance at the allocation meetings to receive a grant allocation.

To allow for the release of the 2020 Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid funds, as the spring Grant-in-Aid meeting was not possible to hold due to COVID-19.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

At the February 20, 2020 Rural Budgets Administration Committee (RBAC) meeting, the following resolution was passed:

That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee amend Section 11 of the Rural Recreational and Cultural Grants-in-Aid policy, titled "Claim Reimbursement" to read:

11) Payment of Funds

- a) Grant funds will be payable to the recipients upon ratification by the Rural Budgets Administration Committee.

At this time, the Regional Board has not formally approved the recommended policy amendment. Therefore, the Committee is unable to release the approved 2020 Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid funds to the applicants, and this housekeeping amendment is necessary to facilitate the release of funds to applicants in advance of the short construction season. Further, it was not possible to hold a 2020

spring Grant-in-aid meeting with applicants, as per the Policy, due to COVID-19. Therefore, it is recommended that the Regional Board waive Section 7 b and c of the Policy for 2020.

The current deadline to release funds to approved applicants is August 1st, upon submission of receipts. The recommended amendment will allow groups to receive funds in advance, and submit invoices and receipts at the completion of the project. If a group does not meet reporting requirements by submitting the required documentation by the end of January, they may not be approved for any grant funding the following year.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board retain the current Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid Policy as is.
2. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Organizational Effectiveness
- ☒ Comprehensive Policy Review

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

If approved, \$440,468.00 in grant funding will be released to the Committee approved 2020 Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid applicants.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

The Regional Board's decision will be communicated to staff and the grant applicants.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

If the Policy amendment is approved, Section 13 – Annual Reports will be updated to reflect reporting requirements that complement the amendment. Section 10 – Unspent Funds would be removed as it would no longer be required or relevant.

Attachments:

1. Amended Rural Recreational & Cultural Grants-in-Aid Policy