



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: CS-BRD-028

From: Trish Morgan, General Manager of Community Services

Date: December 1, 2020

Subject: **COVID-19 Safe Restart Funds**

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board establish a reserve fund for COVID-19 response costs and that a report be brought back at a future Regional Board meeting outlining options to allocate the \$700,000 COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant to the reserve as well as current and future costs related to the pandemic.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

At the November 12, 2020 Board meeting the following resolutions were passed:

MOVED, SECONDED, and CARRIED

That the Regional Board be provided with a report on the financial impacts to the PRRD in 2020, including increased operating costs and decreased revenues, related to COVID-19.

MOVED, SECONDED, and CARRIED

That the Regional Board be provided with a report that identifies how the \$700,000 grant provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing - COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments, can be placed into a reserve fund directed by the Board.

On November 2, 2020 the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) received notice that the PRRD would receive \$700,000 under the Province of BC's COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant program. Before December 31, 2021 the PRRD must fully allocate the grant funds to the appropriate services. In order to do so, staff have been seeking clarification from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs regarding how the funds may be used, such as:

- establishment of a reserve fund to address ongoing pandemic costs (confirmed by staff with the Ministry)
- addressing revenue shortfalls for both services operated by the PRRD, facilities that the PRRD owns and facilities that have PRRD service functions
- facility reopening costs such as Plexiglas, cleaners, sanitizers, COVID Safety Plan development, etc.
- additional staffing or increased staffing or human resources costs as a result of COVID-19
- emergency planning and response costs
- computer and other electronic technology costs

Funds cannot be used for new capital projects that are not directly related to COVID-19 response or restart costs.

Staff have started to gather costs associated with reopening facilities and providing services. In Quarter 1 of 2021 a report will be provided to the Regional Board outlining:

- current and future costs;
- any deficits as a result of COVID-19; and
- options to allocate the funds whether directly into budget functions or the reserve.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Not Applicable to Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

A report will be brought forward to the Regional Board outlining COVID-19 restart costs and any deficits as a result of COVID-19 and options to allocate the funds.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

None.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None.

Attachments:

1. Ministry Ltr (Nov. 2, 2020) Re: COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments