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Staff Report

Infrastructure & Public Works

Report To: Committee of The Whole
Meeting Date: June 26, 2017
Report Number: CSPW.17.064
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Fund
Prepared by: Jeffery Fletcher, Manager of Solid Waste and Environmental Initiatives

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CSPW.17.064, "Environmental Sustainability Fund";

AND THAT Council direct an Environmental Sustainability Fund be created and that \$5,000 be allocated in 2017 and annually thereafter to benefit local sustainable initiatives and distribute funds through the funding program.

B. Overview

The disbanding Sustainability Committee is recommending to Town Council that a \$5,000 sustainability fund be established to support local sustainable projects. The Sustainability Committee has recognized that the Town and many local organizations and groups are working on improving the environmental footprint of their activities. Providing financial support to projects can help to get big ideas and efforts going and raise the profile of the innovation throughout the local area.

C. Background

During the creation of the Town's integrated community sustainability plan (Sustainable Path) a Sustainability Committee was formed. This Committee was establish to assist with keeping the strategies and actions in the plan the community created alive. Since the creation of the plan in 2010 Staff resources have changed and the ability of the Town to maintain and resource the Committee has been reduced.

Without available Staff resources the Committee has decided to disband and their closing recommendation was to create an Environmental Sustainability Fund. The Committee is encouraged by the efforts of many local groups including the Town that are now taking on sustainable thinking in every day decisions. The Committee recognizes that the Sustainability Committee's previous work to develop the plan and continue the conversation has served a great purpose locally and has brought a large cross section of the community together on this issue.

D. Analysis

An Environmental Sustainability Fund would involve relatively little effort, but continue the encouragement of sustainable projects and help elevate maybe small but meaningful efforts on the environmental sustainability front.

The fund would be distributed by the Town annual through a call for applications. The applicants would need to meet eligibility requirements (i.e.: not for profit groups). The funds would be awarded to the applicant that can best demonstration that their project satisfies the following guidelines:

- Supports the Town Strategic Plan and Sustainable Path;
- Measurable environmental benefit;
- Innovation;
- Sound financial benefits;
- Reduces strain on municipal infrastructure, finances and/or facilities;
- Technical merit and chance of success and long lasting benefits;
- Potential for collaboration and reproducibility;
- Contributes to climate adaptation and/or mitigation; and
- Benefit to the local The Blue Mountains area.

Applications will be reviewed by a Town Staff committee and the selected application will be approved by Council. Town Staff recommend the establishment of the Environmental Sustainability Fund be created and that \$5,000 be allocated in 2017 and annually thereafter to benefit local sustainable initiatives and distribute funds through the funding program.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #1: Create Opportunities for Sustainability

F. Environmental Impacts

This fund will work to provide significant financial resources to meaningful projects and provide demonstrable, widespread and lasting environmental benefits in The Blue Mountains.

G. Financial Impact

The Town will donate \$5,000 to the successful applicant. The 2017 Budget does not include \$5,000 for sustainable initiatives, however the Town received \$62,207 from 2 property tax sales forfeited. This money has been taken into the Town's revenue and will form part of any 2017 surplus. Staff is recommending that \$5,000 will come from the money received from the forfeited tax sales.

H. In consultation with

Troy Speck, CAO and Ruth Prince, Director of Finance

I. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,

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