



REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

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REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION

TO: Chair and Directors

File No.: BOA 1.8

FROM: Chris Calder, Chief Administrative Officer and
Renee McCloskey, Manager of External Relations

DATE: February 13, 2024

SUBJECT: Support for Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society
SUMMARY: Purpose: For information

Attachments: Letter dated February 9, 2024 from Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society
Previous Reports: January 2024, Item No. 11.4.1

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT the report and letter dated February 9, 2024 from the Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society be received for information.

| ENTITLEMENT | HOW VOTE COUNTED |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| All 1 Director/1 vote | Majority |

ISSUE(S):

In February 2023, the Board approved adjustments to the quarterly disbursement schedule in the funding agreement it holds with the Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society (the "Society"), which operates Exploration Place.

The Society has advised that operational challenges continued through 2023, putting the Society at financial risk. The Society has requested additional support from the Regional District.

At the end of 2023, the Regional District advanced the Society \$250,000 from its 2024 grant to assist with cashflow pressures. A further \$250,000 was advanced at the end of January, 2024. The attached document shows how the Society applied the funding received in January.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

N/A

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- Climate Action
 Economic Health
 Indigenous Relations
 Strong Communities
 None – Statutory or Routine Business

SERVICE RELEVANCE:

Heritage Conservation Service was established to support museums and societies that have contracts with the Regional District to provide heritage services and programming within the Regional District, consistent with the Regional Cultural Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

The Board has directed staff to pursue a loan agreement with the Society that would see the \$500,000 paid back over a number of years. In the event that a loan agreement can not be executed, the \$500,000 will be considered an advance on the 2024 Operating Grant.

During 2007, the Regional District entered into an agreement with the Society to refinance their long-term debt with the Municipal Finance Authority of BC using 20-year debenture financing. The debt service payments (currently approximately \$113,000 annually) are deducted from the funding the Society receives along with the cost of annual property insurance for the Exploration Place building.

For 2024, the gross operating grant for the Society is \$881,290.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

N/A

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. Approve recommendations.
 - the Board receives the report for information.

COMMENTS:

The Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society (Exploration Place) is the largest cultural organization supported by the Regional District and plays a valuable role in supporting the goals of the Regional Cultural Plan through its own programs and services as well as support and mentoring of smaller museums and galleries in the region.

During the pandemic, the Society undertook a \$1.4 million renovation and was closed from March 2020 until its reopening in October 2022. The pandemic, along with construction issues that delayed the re-opening of the museum, has presented ongoing operational challenges for the Society. The Society has advised it continues to face serious financial pressures.

A total of \$500,000 has been advanced to the Society from its 2024 Operating Grant.

Respectfully submitted,

“Chris Calder”

Chris Calder
Chief Administrative Officer

“Renee McCloskey”

Renee McCloskey
Manager of External Relations

CC/RM



February 9, 2024

Lara Beckett, Chair
Regional District Fraser-Fort George
155 George Street
Prince George, BC V2L 1P8

Dear Chair Beckett

In late January, the Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society received \$250,000 from the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George.

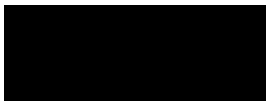
This support is greatly appreciated as we manage through financial challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and construction issues that delayed the re-opening of the museum last year.

The table below shows how this funding has been applied:

| Debt Type | Payment Amount |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Line of Credit | \$225,000 |
| Bank Account (overdraft) | \$25,000 |
| Total | \$250,000.00 |

Thank you again for your support during this challenging time. We will continue to keep you updated on the progress we are making to address the financial challenges we face.

Sincerely



Helena Trudel, President
Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum Society