

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE GRANTS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF FRASER FORT GEORGE, HELD FRIDAY MAY 9, 2025, IN THE BOARDROOM GALLERY, 155 GEORGE STREET, PRINCE GEORGE, BC.

Members Present: L. Beckett, Chairperson
C. Ramsay (out 10:18 a.m.; in 10:19 a.m.)
K. Carlson
S. Stearns (remote)
T. Calogheros (remote)
M. Brumovsky (remote)

Absent: B. Uhl

Staff Present: H. Erasmus, Manager of Communications and Culture
W. Peters, Cultural Coordinator

Minutes Recorded and Produced by: D. Hegel, Confidential Assistant (Corporate Services)

Media: Colin Slark, Prince George Citizen

1. Call to Order

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

The Regional District acknowledged the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T'enneh, on whose land we live, work and play.

The Chairperson advised that the Lheidli T'enneh held their swearing-in ceremony for the newly elected Chief and Council on Friday, May 3, 2025.

2. Adoption of Agenda

In response to a query regarding media in attendance, the Chairperson advised that Select Committee on Arts, Culture, Heritage Grants meetings are open to the public.

Moved By Beckett
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the agenda for the May 9, 2025 Select Committee on Arts, Culture, Heritage Grants meeting be amended with the addition of Northern BC Queer Connection Budget and that the agenda be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1 May 3, 2024 Select Committee on Art, Culture, Heritage Grants Meeting Minutes

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the Minutes of the Select Committee on Arts, Culture, Heritage Grants meeting held on May 3, 2024 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Reports

4.1 Amendments to the Terms of Reference

In response to a query, H. Erasmus, Manager of Communications and Culture, provided a review of the amendments to the Terms of Reference.

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the report dated May 2, 2025 regarding "Amendments to the Terms of Reference" be received for information.

CARRIED

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT Section 3.1 of the Terms of Reference be amended to read "The Committee Members appointed by the Board are the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cultural Services Advisory Committee and five members of the public."

CARRIED

Moved By Stearns
Seconded By Brumovsky

THAT Section 3.2 of the Terms of Reference be amended to read "Individuals are appointed for a three-year term."

CARRIED

4.2 2025 Arts, Culture, Heritage Grant Applications

The Chairperson responded to a query regarding whether improvements to a facility meet the criteria for grant funding eligibility.

Discussion ensued regarding perspectives on the approach for choosing grant recipients included evaluating the impact of the event, ensuring fair allocation within the region, providing a reduced amount than requested to allow for a greater number of grants, refraining from supporting applications that have previously been awarded grants, and basing funding on the merit of the application.

H. Erasmus, Manager of Communications and Culture, responded to queries regarding the present status of the grant funds and the annual interest earned and noted that the Board approved \$50,000 for the grant budget this year.

Discussion ensued regarding applications that received scores lower than eight, in terms of their alignment with the cultural plan, as well as those that received scores under six for permitted use, in addition to those that achieved high scores.

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the report dated May 2, 2025, scoring package and applications from the following organizations, be received for information: Alban Classical Artists Society, Dunster Fine Arts School Society, The Exploration Place, Fraser Lyric Opera Society, Inspiring Women Among Us, Mackenzie Community Arts Council, Method Dance Society, Northern BC Queer Connection Society, Prince George Community Band, Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association, Prince George Folkfest Society, Robson Valley Music Society, Theatre Northwest, White Spruce City Chorus Chapter of Sweet Adelines International and the Wishbone Theatre.

CARRIED

Dunster Fine Arts School Society Grant Application for a Youth Film Camp

Discussion ensued regarding the Dunster Fine Arts School Society Grant Application for \$10,000 to support their Youth Film Camp, including that the application scored high, it focuses on children ages 12 to 15, will feature a community film festival afterward, local film members will be hired, and local artist will be involved.

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By: Brumovsky

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Dunster Fine Arts School Society grant application of \$10,000 for a youth film camp be approved.

Moved By Stearns
Seconded By Brumovsky

THAT the motion be amended to reduce the grant application to \$8,000.

CARRIED

Main motion, as amended.

CARRIED

The Chairperson responded to a query concerning the publication of grants in the media prior to official notification and advised that the committee is advising the Board to approve these grants, although the Board retains the discretion to approve or reject them.

H. Erasmus, Manager of Communications and Culture, advised that Administration can communicate with the applicants after the meeting today to inform them of their recommendation to the Board for approval and to provide clarity on the process.

Discussion ensued regarding the presence of media during the grant adjudication process, with concerns raised about how this might impact the dialogue and affect future partnerships with cultural organizations. It was also noted that if the Regional District Board intends to conduct grant adjudication at the community level, a clear process should be established to allow these discussions to occur in private, ensuring open and candid conversation.

C. Ramsay advised that she would advise the Board of the committee's concern about the presence of media during the grant adjudication process at the June 19, 2025 meeting.

Mackenzie Community Arts Council Grant Application for Flooring

Discussion ensued regarding the Mackenzie Community Arts Council Grant Application for \$9,921 to replace the flooring, including that the Mackenzie Arts Council offers valuable services to the community, engages in collaboration with other local entities, aligns with the cultural plan, is the sole application submitted in the community, and addresses a significant need for the services they provide.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that the Mackenzie Community Arts Council Application grant application of \$9,921 for new flooring be approved.

CARRIED

Method Dance Society Grant Application for Community Moves Festival

Discussion ensued regarding the Method Dance Society's grant application for \$8,000 to support the Community Moves Festival and while they acknowledged the application's scored high amongst the committee, they noted concerns about the numerous typographical errors. Additionally, they suggested that funding could be awarded at a reduced amount, given the project's confirmed revenue sources.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that the Method Dance grant application of \$8,000 for their Community Moves Festival be approved.

Moved By Brumovsky
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the motion be amended to reduce the grant application to \$6,000

CARRIED

Main motion, as amended.

CARRIED

C. Ramsay left the meeting due to perceived conflict of interest due to her position as a band member at 10:18 a.m.

Prince George Community Band Music Grant Application for Library and Equipment

Discussion ensued regarding the Prince George Community Band Music Grant Application of \$4,000 for Library and Equipment, including that the application received a high evaluation score.

Moved By Calogheros
Seconded By Brumovsky

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that the Prince George Community Band grant application for \$4,000 for a music library and equipment be approved.

CARRIED

C. Ramsay returned to the meeting at 10:19 a.m.

Northern BC Queer Connection Society Grant Application for Pride Picnic

H. Erasmus, Manager of Communications and Culture, provided an overview of the grant budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the Northern BC Queer Connection Society Grant Application of \$7,650 to support a Pride Picnic, including that the initiative is valuable and deserving of support, but some concerns were raised about its heavy emphasis on Prince George.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that the Northern BC Queer Connection Society be approved for a \$2,000 grant for the Pride Picnic.

CARRIED

Wishbone Theatre Grant Application for Production of Mourning After

Discussion ensued regarding Wishbone Theatre Grant Application of \$10,000 for support for their Production of 'Mourning After', including that the Committee has awarded grants for the past three years but liked the regional representation as it included McBride, Valemount, and Dunster.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Wishbone Theatre be given a grant for \$5,000 for their production of Mourning After.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the motion be amended to increase the grant to \$8,000

CARRIED

Main motion as amended.

CARRIED

Theatre Northwest Grant Application for Accessibility Upgrades

Discussion ensued regarding Theatre Northwest Grant Application for \$10,000 for accessibility upgrades and the committee expressed varied opinions on endorsing this, while also voicing concerns about the potential difficulty in securing funding for female hygiene products and a change table, and indicated a willingness to offer a grant to facilitate the purchase of these items.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Brumovsky

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Theatre Northwest be given a grant for \$2,275.18 to purchase a Feminine Hygiene Dispenser and Baby Changing Station.

CARRIED

The Exploration Place Grant Application for Children's STEAM Gallery

Discussion ensued regarding the Exploration Place Grant Application for \$10,000 to support the Children's STEAM Gallery, including concerns that the proposal appeared to be more science-focused and may not align with the goals outlined in the cultural plan and that the requested grant amount is relatively low compared to the funding the organization is receiving from other sources.

Moved By Stearns
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that The Exploration Place be given a grant for \$5,000 for their Children's STEAM Gallery.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Stearns

THAT the motion be amended to increase the grant to \$7,500.

CARRIED

Main motion as amended.

CARRIED

Fraser Lyric Opera Society Grant Application for Children's Summer Camp

Discussion ensued regarding the Fraser Lyric Opera Society grant application of \$10,000 for support for their Children's Summer Camp, including concerns regarding their budget and the lack of supporting documents.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Brumovsky

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that the Fraser Lyric Opera Society be given a grant of \$2,500 for their Children's Summer Camp.

CARRIED

Alban Classical Artists Society Grant Application for Two Concert Performances

Discussion ensued regarding the Alban Classical Artists Society Grant Application of \$7,500 for support for two concert performances, including concerns regarding the size of the funding request relative to the proposed impact, the organization's existing federal grants, and the need for clarification on whether the two featured musicians are also directors of the organization.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Alban Classical Artists Society grant application of \$7,500 for concert performances be approved.

DEFEATED

Inspiring Women Among Us Grant Application for November 2025 Event

Discussion ensued regarding the Inspiring Women Among Us grant application for \$7,000 to support their November 2025 event, including concerns the application lacked detail and supporting documentation, and that they may have time to seek alternative funding sources, and that the event is likely to proceed even if this grant is not awarded.

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Inspiring Women Among Us grant application of \$7,000 for a November 2025 Event be approved.

DEFEATED

Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association Grant Application for Winterfest

Discussion ensued regarding the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Associations grant application for \$5,000 to support Winterfest, including that the Association has secured funding from other sources, they have been applying for this grant for multiple years, and that the event is expected to proceed regardless of the outcome of this grant application.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association grant application of \$5,000 for Winterfest be approved.

DEFEATED

Prince George Folkfest Society Grant Application for Dak'et Shun Inli

Discussion ensued regarding Prince George Folkfest Society's grant application to support Dak'et Shun Inli, including that this is a multi-year funding request and that the organization has already received \$20,000 from this grant program.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Calogheros

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Prince George Folkfest Society grant application of \$10,000 for Dak'et Shun Inli be approved.

DEFEATED

Robson Valley Music Society Grant Application for the Robson Valley Music Festival

Discussion ensued regarding the Robson Valley Music Society's grant application to support the Robson Valley Music Festival, including that the Society has received funding from this committee in the past and that the festival will proceed even if this grant is not awarded.

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that Robson Valley Music Society grant application of \$10,000 for the Robson Valley Music Festival be approved.

DEFEATED

White Spruce City Chorus Chapter of Sweet Adelines International Grant Application for Risers

Discussion ensued regarding the White Spruce City Chorus Chapter of Sweet Adelines International grant application for \$8,000 for the purchase of risers to provide elevated platforms for singers, including that the committee gave the application a low score.

Moved By Ramsay
Seconded By Carlson

THAT the Committee recommend to the Board that White Spruce City Chorus Chapter of Sweet Adelines International grant application of \$8,000 for Risers be approved.

DEFEATED

Discussion ensued regarding the grant applications submitted this year, noting the challenge of decision-making given the outstanding work being done by all the applicant groups in the community. It was also observed that, in contrast to previous years when there were not enough applications to allocate all available funds, this year saw a strong response. The committee expressed their appreciation to the Regional District for its continued support of arts and culture in the region.

5. New Business

Central BC Railway Museum New Employee

K. Carlson advised that Baptiste Marcere is the new Executive Director for the Central BC Railway and Forest Museum.

Cultural Plan

C. Ramsay advised that the committee should look at including a reference to STEAM in the next iteration of the cultural plan to ensure science and engineering are represented, and that the committee reviews STEAM within the context of cultural planning.

Discussion ensued regarding revising the cultural plan in response to the increased number of applications, including a review of the eligibility criteria and a potential increase in the total grant funding available.

6. Next Meeting

The Manager of Communications and Culture will coordinate the next meeting.

7. Adjournment

Moved By Carlson
Seconded By Ramsay

THAT the Select Committee on Arts, Culture, Heritage Grants meeting be adjourned at 10:56 a.m.
CARRIED

Chair

General Manager of Legislative and
Corporate Services