



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2018052

DATE: 27 June 2018

RE: "A" Fresh Start initiative launched by Amherst town council

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – There's "A" Fresh Start for those wishing to obtain a community support grant from the Town of Amherst.

Amherst town council approved the "A" Fresh Start Community Initiative when it passed amendments to its community support grant policy during its regular session on June 25.

"The new program would see presentations made and voted on in a manner loosely based on the 100 Women Who Care format," Deputy-Mayor Sheila Christie explained as she presented the motion to make the amendments.

"In order to qualify, the presentation, idea, or use of the money must be for creative, new events or initiatives, or that enhance current programs. For example: a new cultural play, new event, festival, fundraising event with funds going back into Amherst and area, or new enhancement to an existing service or event."

The initiative, which will be administered by the Amherst Recreation Department, will see two "A" Fresh Start" events held each year, with \$17,500 available at each event. The events will be held in the spring and fall. Because this year is already half over, only \$17,500 will be available when the first session is held in the fall.

The policy states organization may apply up to twice per year, but then may only be chosen once in any given year.

Normal ongoing operations of an organization do not qualify for "A" Fresh Start grant.

Five qualifying applications will be picked at random from all the applications received during the September council meeting. Those drawn will be required to make a 10 minute presentation during a public event that will be held in October at the Community Credit Union Business Innovation Centre.

The entry fee for all those attending the public event will be \$2, with the proceeds being donated



to a local charity.

After the presentations are finished, the people attending the event will vote for the organization they believe deserve the grants. The top three organizations having the most votes will be forwarded to council, where a majority vote of council will determine the order of finish.

All five organizations that made presentations will be given a community support grant, but the amount will be determined by where the ranking each organization receives as a result of the public and council's vote.

The first place finisher will receive \$8,000, second place gets \$4,500, third \$3,000, fourth \$1,250 and fifth \$750.

More details on the "A" Fresh Start initiative will be available later this summer as the town works its way towards the first event this fall. Anyone with specific questions on the initiative is asked to contact Recreation Director Bill Schurman.

The other amendments adopted by council were housekeeping items. They do not affect the current level of support provided to the Amherst Food Assistance Network, Cumberland Early Intervention Program, Sexual Health Centre for Cumberland County, Autumn House, Seniors' Safety Advisory Committee or the Cumberland County Museum.

Recreational and physical activities grants will also be continued for the Fundy Youth Soccer Association, Amherst Little League.

Grants for teams or individuals travelling to provincial, national or international competitions or for those hosting an invitational, provincial or national tournament as well as those hosting festivals and events are still available to those who qualify.

All community support grants are funded through the Community Support Area Rate that was set at 6.5 cents per \$100 of assessment for the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Applications for community support grants can be picked up at town hall. The entire Community Support Grant policy can be found at: bit.ly/2tJKsW9.

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