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REPORT TO FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021

SUBJECT **First Nations Cultural Honorarium Policy**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To advance, for information, the CRD's First Nations Honorarium Policy (the "Policy") which establishes consistency in how First Nations are recognized for voluntary work such as blessings, welcomes, and cultural ceremonies, in support of CRD projects and activities.

BACKGROUND

Increasingly, the CRD is looking to engage First Nations in support of CRD projects and activities as a way to strengthen relationships, share information, and operate respectfully.

The Policy seeks to standardize the process by which honoraria are issued, and to provide some guidelines for staff on how to proceed in a consistent and respectful way when requesting the involvement of First Nations in events and projects. The First Nation Honorarium Guidelines (Appendix A) include brief descriptions of activities and approximate cost ranges that would be appropriate when First Nations are engaging in voluntary work at CRD's request. The policy approach outlined within the staff report builds on past corporate practice and seeks to standardize the process for staff across the organization when considering providing honorarium for First Nations (Appendix B).

Key background includes:

- *Year End Report on the Activities of the Special Task Force on First Nations Engagement (2016)* – Direct staff to develop options for increased resourcing and financial implications to accommodate greater participation, engagement and reconciliation.
- *Special Task Force on First Nations Relations: Final Report (2018)* – That the Board pursue a proposed First Nations Remuneration Policy, and direct staff to provide recommendations for consideration by the incoming Board.
- CRD Board Motion, March 2020 – That staff bring back a draft First Nations Remuneration Policy that establishes compensation for specific cultural, technical or subject matter expertise on CRD projects and activities.

The information contained within this staff report is specific to CRD providing honoraria when First Nations share their culture or traditional knowledge in support of events or initiatives. Remuneration for First Nation Members for committee participation is included in the Board Remuneration and Travel Expenses Reimbursement Policy. Additionally, the scope of this policy does not include circumstances where CRD engage First Nations under contract on a fee-for-service basis for specific technical or professional cultural services, such as cultural monitoring, or project-specific liaison positions. Honorarium, by definition, is a payment provided in recognition of voluntary work.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That this report be received for information.

Alternative 2

The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That the report be sent back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Intergovernmental Implications

Appropriately compensating First Nations' elders, knowledge keepers or cultural leaders for their contributions in support of CRD activities can be difficult for staff to navigate without appropriate guidance. The goal of this policy is to help build an understanding across the CRD about when, how and why First Nations could be engaged in projects and activities and what an appropriate range of honoraria may be. Further, this type of approach to more effectively support collaboration between the CRD and First Nations demonstrates the CRD understands the importance of creating space for Indigenous forms of knowing and doing. This will be especially important should the CRD continue to move in the direction of more inclusive governance and collaborative decision-making.

Financial Implications

Generally, the resources needed to support cultural honoraria are drawn from available project funds. It is not expected there will be any consequential financial impacts resulting from this policy as events where honoraria are paid are relatively infrequent. In addition, the costs are minor and can be contained within available project funds.

As a part of establishing a baseline to support future project planning and budget development, the First Nations Relations Division will be working to coordinate First Nations involvement in CRD projects so the costs can be tracked. This information through Q3 and Q4 of 2021 will be used to get a better understanding across the CRD of which divisions make most frequent use of First Nations where honoraria is used. This data will help to inform budget planning going forward should minor adjustments be necessary.

Service Delivery Implications

Though the primary function of this policy is to support greater consistency across the CRD when looking to engage First Nations in various projects and initiatives, the policy, along with support provided by the First Nations Relations Division, will also create more opportunity to discuss where, when and how First Nations' culture can be incorporated into CRD activities.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

This aligns with the Board priority of taking measurable steps toward developing respectful government-to-government relationships and partnerships with First Nations to foster shared prosperity for all.

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

This work aligns with the CRD's Task Force Report on First Nations Relations and complements

the CRD's ability to engage with First Nations on all relevant plans and strategies.

CONCLUSION

The First Nations Honorarium Policy provides guidance to staff on the process for paying honoraria to First Nations when sharing traditional knowledge or participating in cultural activities. It builds on work the First Nations Relations Division has been initiating over the last number of years and rolls it out across the CRD in a consistent and effective way, with a standardized practice that will enhance financial tracking when honoraria are paid. The key outcomes from this type of approach include greater clarity for CRD staff and First Nations as to how First Nations can be recognized for their voluntary contributions to CRD projects and events as well as enhanced CRD staff competency when looking to invite First Nations into ceremonial or cultural work.

RECOMMENDATION

The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That this report be received for information.

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Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Appendix A: First Nations Honoraria Guidelines
- Appendix B: First Nations Honorarium Policy