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Report 2025-043

Report Title: Donation Policy

Committee Name: Corporate Support

Committee Meeting Date: March 4, 2025

Prepared by: Jennifer Hardy-Parr
Senior Advisor of Grant Development & Special Projects
Communications

Reviewed by: Kate Campbell
Director
Communications & Information Technology

Darrell Mast
Municipal Solicitor

Matthew Nitsch
Director/Treasurer
Finance

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: March 19, 2025

Strategic Plan Priorities: ☒ Innovate for Service Excellence
☒ Ignite Economic Opportunity
☒ Foster a Thriving Community
☐ Propel Sustainable Growth
☒ Champion a Vibrant Future

Information Report

“That the Corporate Support Committee, having considered Report 2025-043 ‘Donation Policy’, recommend that County Council adopt this policy at the March 19, 2025, County Council meeting.”

Purpose

To obtain approval for the Donation Policy.

Background

In response to community interest in making donations to support various County programs and services, staff have developed a comprehensive Donation Policy. This Policy aligns with the pillars of the County's 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan and municipal best practices while addressing the need for transparency, equity, and accountability in the handling of donations.

The Donation Policy defines a donation as a gift of money, land, or items given to the County to help with services, projects, or programs. Donations should always be given freely, without expecting anything in return. To be clear, the focus of this policy is donations and **not** sponsorships (where an external party contributes funds, goods, or services to the County in return for recognition, or promotional consideration).

This Donation Policy provides clear guidelines for evaluating and accepting donations while ensuring compliance with federal and provincial laws, as well as County policies and values.

Key objectives of the Donation Policy include:

- Ensuring donations are independent of County decision-making processes.
- Establishing a transparent process for accepting and recognizing donations.
- Delegating authority to effectively manage donation activities.

The policy applies to all donors, employees, and Council Members accepting donations on behalf of the County. It governs cash and in-kind donations for events, projects, programs, or corporate assets, but excludes:

- Archival materials and artifacts (covered by the Northumberland County Archives & Museum Program Policy).
- Donations involving Municipal Service Corporations (separate policies are encouraged).

It is important to distinguish Northumberland County's Community Grant Policy from the new Donation Policy. While the Community Grant Policy provides guidelines for distributing funds to community organizations, the Donation Policy provides guidelines for accepting donations on behalf of the County.

The County's donation and volunteer webpages have been updated to reflect the new Donation Policy and to align with the existing Volunteer Services Policy. Specifically, a unified 'Donate & Volunteer' landing page has been created that will serve as a 'one-stop shop' for anyone—community members, businesses, or non-profits—interested in making cash donations, in-kind contributions, or volunteering their time to the County. The new webpages are ready to launch following Council's anticipated adoption of the policy.

The Donation Policy applies to all County departments and aligns with all five strategic priorities of the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan: Innovate for Service Excellence, Ignite Economic Opportunity, Foster a Thriving Community, Propel Sustainable Growth, and Champion a Vibrant Future.

Consultations

To develop the Donation Policy, extensive consultations and reviews were conducted. This included analyzing donation webpages and policies from 30 municipalities. Donation policies and webpages from local hospitals and hospices were also reviewed. Relevant County policies and documents related to donations, fundraising, sponsorships, and volunteering were also assessed. Feedback and edits from County staff and the Senior Leadership Team were incorporated to finalize the policy.

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

N/A

Discussion / Options

N/A

Financial Impact

By formalizing guidelines and processes for accepting and managing donations, the Donation Policy has the potential to expand revenue streams in support of County-administered programs and services, through increased public trust and donor confidence.

Member Municipality Impacts

This policy is internal to the operation of the Corporation of the County of Northumberland. There is no impact to member municipalities.

Conclusion / Outcomes

Staff recommend that County Council adopt the 'Donation Policy'.

Attachments

1) Report 2025-043 ATTACH 1 'Donation Policy'