



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: May 15, 2013
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: June 25, 2013

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Community Services
SUBJECT: 2013-14 Theatre Rental Grant Allocations

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve Theatre Rental Grants to 15 organizations totalling \$222,117 as listed in Table 1, for use of the Civic Theatres for the remaining months of 2013; source of funds to be the 2013 Theatre Rental Grants budget.
- B. THAT Council approve, in advance of the 2014 operating budget, Theatre Rental Grants to 30 organizations totalling \$1,467,105 as listed in Table 2, for use of the Civic Theatres in the first eight months of 2014; source of funds to be the 2014 Theatre Rental Grants operating budget.

REPORT SUMMARY

In accordance with a process Council established in 1995, this report recommends approval of Theatre Rental Grants for the remainder of calendar year 2013 and approval in advance of approval of 2014 operating budget for Theatre Rental Grants for the first eight months of 2014.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Approval of grant recommendations requires eight affirmative votes.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

In 1995, Council approved the process for Theatre Rental Grants which provided for seasonally based grants allocated in June of each year for the coming "fall" (approximately the second half of a given year) and "spring" (approximately the first half of the following year). Recommendations for the spring of the following year were approved in principle, in advance of the Operating Budget review and approval process for that year.

In 2008, Council approved recommendations arising from the Cultural Grants Program review, which streamlined programs to support the City's strategic cultural priorities and culture plan and increase efficiencies in program administration. As a result, the Theatre Rental Grants Program shifted from a seasonal allocation to a calendar year allocation.

Following consultations with Civic Theatres' user groups, a staff review of the program in the fall of 2012 in advance of the Vancouver Civic Theatre Business Review, the Theatre Rental Grant program has returned to the seasonal allocation to better align with the planning cycles of user groups and Civic Theatre operations, in particular the timing of the rental rate increases, which take effect September 1st. This report reflects this change.

Led by staff from Cultural Services, applications are evaluated against published criteria. The review considers each proposal's relative merits and impacts of presenting in one of the centrally-located and well-equipped civic theatre venues would have on an organization's artistic development, public profile and potential for expanded audiences, as well as the organization's capacity to produce the event, and community impact of such a presentation.

Strategic Analysis

The recent loss of multiplex film screens, such as the Empire Granville 7 Cinemas and live theatre venues, such as the Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts has placed enormous pressure on non-profit film festivals and performing arts groups to find suitable and affordable venues in the city. This has in turn created opportunities for the City of Vancouver's Civic Theatres, which has tried to accommodate the venue needs of arts organizations, some of which have not traditionally used civic theatres in the past, such as the Vancouver International Film Festival.

The City is currently undertaking a strategic business review of the Vancouver Civic Theatres operations. This review will look at the design and administration of the Theatre Rental Grant program in order to maximize convenience and efficiency for grant recipients. As part of the Review, consideration will be given to streamlining and positioning rental rates and services to best serve user groups. Any recommended changes to the administration of the program will be reviewed with stakeholders and actual changes will be phased in over future granting cycles to allow ample time for planning and transition. Further, the Theatre Rental Grant program will be considered in the larger context of the pending sale of the Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts, Cultural Services' Cultural Strategy and other forms of civic support provided to Vancouver's cultural sector which include cash grants, transit shelter and video screen promotion, rehearsal, office and storage space in-kind contributions.

These grant recommendations bolster Council priorities of supporting local and diverse groups, and entail a range of established and emerging groups, presenting traditional forms such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and cross-cultural collaborations from the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra, groups with a mandate to present culturally diverse dance, such as the Vancouver International Dance Festival and film festival presentations, such as the Vancouver Queer Film Festival.

Support from the Theatre Rental Grant program augments financial contributions from other public and private sector funds. And in addition to earned revenue, enables groups to achieve their stated goals for presenting activities in Vancouver's civic theatres.

Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations - June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013

A total of 15 applications were received by Cultural Services for support of events in Civic Theatre venues for the remaining months of 2013, for a total value of \$222,117 and with an available budget of \$227,085. These requests included the proposed Civic Theatre rental increase of 2.0% for all venues for the 2013-14 performing arts season.

As per Table 1, staff recommend that Council approve 15 Theatre Rental Grants for a total of \$222,117 for the remainder of the 2013 calendar year. Approval of these recommendations will leave an unallocated balance of \$4,968 in the 2013 Theatre Rental Grant budget.

TABLE 1 - Remainder of 2013 Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations

| Organization | \$ Request | \$ Recommendation |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
| Ballet B.C. (Pacific Ballet B.C. Society) | 116,364 | 116,364 |
| Big World Band Society | 1,020 | 1,020 |
| Canadian Society for Asian Arts * | 6,460 | 6,460 |
| Chibi Taiko Association * | 3,295 | 3,295 |
| Friends of Chamber Music | 2,479 | 2,479 |
| Karen Flamenco Dance Society | 9,069 | 9,069 |
| Railtown Cultural Enhancement Association | 2,040 | 2,040 |
| Vancouver Cantonese Opera * | 1,530 | 1,530 |
| Vancouver Chopin Society | 3,295 | 3,295 |
| Vancouver Dance Centre Society | 4,590 | 4,590 |
| Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra (VICO) * | 1,020 | 1,020 |
| Vancouver International Children's Festival Society | 6,590 | 6,590 |
| Vancouver International Film Festival Society | 55,570 | 55,570 |
| Vancouver Latin American Film Festival (First Latin American Film Festival of Vancouver) * | 3,295 | 3,295 |
| Vancouver Pride Society * | 5,500 | 5,500 |
| Total | 222,117 | 222,117 |

There were 6 recommended first-time applicants (identified with an asterisk) to this deadline for support in the final months of 2013, for a dollar amount of \$21,100 representing 11% of the total value of recommended grants.

Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations - January 1, 2014 to August 31, 2014

Cultural Services received a total of 30 applications requesting support of events in Civic Theatre venues for the first eight months of 2014, for a total value of \$1,528,927. Again, the proposed Civic Theatre rental increase of 2.0% for all venues was included within these requests. Working on the assumption that the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant budget will remain the same as 2013, and with the knowledge and experience of historical uses of the venues by user groups, staff recommend that Council approve 30 Theatre Rental Grants for the first eight months of 2014, totalling \$1,467,105, as per Table 2.

TABLE 2 - First Eight Months of 2014 Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations

| Organization | \$ Request | \$ Recommendation |
|--|------------|-------------------|
| Awkward Stage Productions Soc.* | 1,020 | 1,020 |
| Ballet B.C. (Pacific Ballet B.C. Society) | 120,362 | 112,362 |
| Children's Arts Umbrella Association | 25,542 | 18,954 |
| Coastal Jazz and Blues Society | 24,970 | 24,970 |
| DanceHouse (Seismic Shift Arts Society) | 22,336 | 22,336 |
| DOXA Documentary Film and Video Festival (The Documentary Media Society) | 9,885 | 9,885 |
| Early Music Vancouver (Vancouver Society for Early Music) | 15,659 | 15,659 |
| Electric Company Theatre Society | 81,146 | 81,146 |
| Friends of Chamber Music | 28,839 | 28,839 |
| Karen Flamenco Dance Society | 9,069 | 6,590 |
| Norman Rothstein Theatre (Vancouver Westside Theatre Society) * | 5,774 | 5,774 |
| PuSH International Performing Arts Festival Society * | 4,942 | 4,942 |
| Railtown Cultural Enhancement Association | 3,060 | 3,060 |
| The Plastic Orchid Factory Society * | 4,590 | 4,590 |
| Vancouver Academy of Music | 28,092 | 28,092 |
| Vancouver Bach Choir | 20,727 | 20,727 |
| Vancouver Chamber Choir | 20,727 | 20,727 |
| Vancouver Chinese Singers Society | 3,295 | 3,295 |
| Vancouver Chopin Society | 3,295 | 3,295 |
| Vancouver International Children's Festival Society | 6,590 | 3,295 |
| Vancouver International Dance Festival Society | 14,827 | 14,827 |
| Vancouver International Song Institute Society For Innovation in Song Studies (VISI) | 1,020 | 1,020 |

| | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Vancouver New Music Society | 2,040 | 2,040 |
| Vancouver Opera Association | 200,789 | 192,789 |
| Vancouver Out on Screen Film Festival Society | 9,885 | 9,885 |
| Vancouver Pro Musica | 1,020 | 1,020 |
| Vancouver Recital Society | 29,980 | 29,980 |
| Vancouver Seniors' Singing Club Association | 9,900 | 9,900 |
| Vancouver Symphony Society | 818,526 | 785,066 |
| Yarilo Contemporary Music Society | 1,020 | 1,020 |
| Total | 1,528,927 | 1,467,105 |

There were 4 recommended first-time applicants (identified with an asterisk) to this deadline for support of events in the first eight months of 2014, for a dollar amount of \$16,326, representing 1% of the total value of recommended grants.

Financial

The 2013 Theatre Rental Grants budget is \$2,583,300. On January 30, 2013 Council approved 38 Theatre Rental Grant recommendations at a total value of \$2,368,455 (RTS: 09888). Since then, one previously granted use of the Orpheum with a value of \$12,240 was cancelled, leaving an unallocated balance of \$227,085 in the 2013 Theatre Rental Grants budget.

From this budget, staff recommend 15 Theatre Rental Grants with a total value of \$222,117 to support productions and presentations in the civic theatres during the remaining months of 2013, leaving an unallocated balance of \$4,968 in the 2013 Theatre Rental Grants budget.

Table 3 - Summary of 2013 Financial Implications

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| 2013 Theatre Rental Grants Budget | 2,583,300 |
| Theatre Rental Grants Approved - Jan 2013 (RTS: 09888) | (2,368,455) |
| Unallocated Balance | 214,845 |
| Add-back: Unused Theatre Rental Grant | 12,240 |
| Adjusted Unallocated Balance | 227,085 |
| Proposed Theatre Rental Grant - June 2013 | (222,117) |
| 2013 Theatre Rental Grant Unallocated Budget | \$ 4,968 |

Assuming no change to the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant budget and working with information from regular user groups regarding their anticipated needs for latter part of 2014, staff are further recommending approval in advance of the 2014 budget process, 30 Theatre Rental Grants with a combined value of \$1,467,105 for the first eight months of 2014. The source of funds is to be the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant operating budget, leaving an unallocated balance of \$1,116,195.

In June of 2014, Council will be asked to confirm the Theatre Rental Grant recommendations approved in advance of the 2014 operating budget for the first eight months of 2014 from this report, approve grant recommendations for the remaining four months of 2014, and approve in advance of the 2015 Operating budget, Theatre Rental Grant recommendations for the first eight months of 2015.

CONCLUSION

Based on the merits of the applications and the degree to which they met the evaluation criteria and budgetary constraint, not all requests could be recommended to the full amount.

Approval of these Theatre Rental Grant recommendations will support a diverse and thriving cultural ecology that enriches the lives of residents and visitors through a wide range of cultural activities including film screenings, classical and contemporary performance genres in dance, theatre, and music, featuring professional and community artists and students.

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