



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 11, 2014
Contact: Richard Newirth
Contact No.: 604.871.6455
RTS No.: 10509
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: June 24, 2014

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Community Services
SUBJECT: 2014 Theatre Rental Grant Allocations

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council confirm Theatre Rental Grants to 29 organizations totalling \$1,383,480 that were approved in principle in June 2013 (RTS 10110) , as per Table 1, in advance of the 2014 operating budget for the first eight months of 2014; source of funds to be the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant operating budget.
- B. THAT Council approve re-allocating two unused Theatre Rental Grants from the first eight months of 2014 totalling \$83,625 that were approved in principle in June 2013 (RTS 10110) in advance of the 2014 operating budget; source of funds to be the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant operating budget.
- C. THAT Council approve Theatre Rental Grants to 31 organizations totalling \$1,081,981 as listed in Table 2 for use of the Civic Theatres for the remaining months of 2014; source of funds to be the remaining 2014 Theatre Rental Grant 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 the year in 2014.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On June 25, 2013, Council approved 30 Theatre Rental Grants totalling \$1,467,105 for the first eight months of 2014 (RTS 10110). This approval in advance of the 2014 Theatre Rental grant operating budget has been adjusted to actual uses with two cancellations being returned to the current-year Theatre Rental Grant budget for re-allocation in 2014.

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.

Between 2008 and 2013, Theatre Rental Grants Program shifted from allocating grants seasonally to the calendar year to align with priorities in the 2008 Cultural Grants Program review. Efficiencies in program administration were delivered that included eliminating "base use" levels and reserve pool allocation to user group trends and needs. Expanded funding at the time allowed the program to support more occasional users and shifting needs in the community—for example the requirement by film festival producers in 2013 to access suitable and affordable venues after the closure of several multiplex film houses.

In 2013-14, the Theatre Rental Grant program returned to a 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 annually on September 1. The change followed consultations with Civic Theatres' user groups, and integrates anticipated program and policy review in the pending Vancouver Civic Theatre Business Review, as well as existing directions in the 2013 *Culture Plan: Strategic Directions for the Next Five Years*.

Led by staff from Cultural Services, grant applications are evaluated against published criteria and cross-checked against applicants' bookings and theatre availability. 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

On October 23, 2013, Vancouver's *Culture Plan: Strategic Directions for the Next Five Years* was presented to Council providing policy directions and a framework to support our diverse, thriving cultural ecology. The plan identified five strategic directions including optimizing investment in civic cultural facilities and assets such as the Civic Theatres. As a part of this framework, the City is undertaking a strategic business review of the Vancouver Civic Theatres operations in the context of a new Director beginning in June 2014. As part of the review, consideration will be given to streamlining and positioning rental rates and services to best serve user groups and reduce the number of times grant requests appear before Council for this program. 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.

Based on the merits of the applications and the degree to which they met the evaluation criteria together with Civic Theatre availability, not all requests could be recommended to the full amount, even with fall 2014 requests lower than the available budget.

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

On June 25, 2013 (RTS 10110), Council approved 30 Theatre Rental Grant recommendations for the first eight months of 2014 at a total value of \$1,467,105 (RTS: 10110). Since then, two previously granted uses (identified with a double asterisk) of the Queen Elizabeth and Playhouse Theatres in 2014 with a value of \$83,625 were cancelled. One group found it operationally necessary and financially prudent to cancel their proposed large-scale production scheduled for the first half of 2014. The second group requested and received permission to use a different civic venue and did not use the entire approved grant amount. This report requests re-allocation of those funds to in the 2014 theatre rental grant budget.

TABLE 1 - Confirm Theatre Rental Grants from First Eight Months of 2014

Organization	\$ Request	\$ Allocated in Principle on June 25, 2013 (RTS 10110) in advance of the 2014 Budget	\$ Actual Uses
Awkward Stage Productions Soc.*	1,020	1,020	1,020
Ballet B.C. (Pacific Ballet B.C. Society)	120,362	112,362	112,362
Children's Arts Umbrella Association	25,542	18,954	18,954
Coastal Jazz and Blues Society	24,970	24,970	24,970
DanceHouse (Seismic Shift Arts Society)	22,336	22,336	22,336
DOXA Documentary Film and Video Festival (The Documentary Media Society)	9,885	9,885	9,885
Early Music Vancouver (Vancouver Society for Early Music)	15,659	15,659	15,659
Electric Company Theatre Society**	81,146	81,146	0
Friends of Chamber Music	28,839	28,839	28,839

Organization	\$ Request	\$ Allocated in Principle on June 25, 2013 (RTS 10110) in advance of the 2014 Budget	\$ Actual Uses
Karen Flamenco Dance Society	9,069	6,590	6,590
Norman Rothstein Theatre (Vancouver Westside Theatre Society)* **	5,774	5,774	3,295
PuSH International Performing Arts Festival Society*	4,942	4,942	4,942
Railtown Cultural Enhancement Association	3,060	3,060	3,060
The Plastic Orchid Factory Society*	4,590	4,590	4,590
Vancouver Academy of Music	28,092	28,092	28,092
Vancouver Bach Choir	20,727	20,727	20,727
Vancouver Chamber Choir	20,727	20,727	20,727
Vancouver Chinese Singers Society	3,295	3,295	3,295
Vancouver Chopin Society	3,295	3,295	3,295
Vancouver International Children's Festival Society	6,590	3,295	3,295
Vancouver International Dance Festival Society	14,827	14,827	14,827
Vancouver International Song Institute Society For Innovation in Song Studies (VISI)	1,020	1,020	1,020
Vancouver New Music Society	2,040	2,040	2,040
Vancouver Opera Association	200,789	192,789	192,789
Vancouver Out on Screen Film Festival Society	9,885	9,885	9,885
Vancouver Pro Musica	1,020	1,020	1,020
Vancouver Recital Society	29,980	29,980	29,980
Vancouver Seniors' Singing Club Association	9,900	9,900	9,900
Vancouver Symphony Society	818,526	785,066	785,066
Yarilo Contemporary Music Society	1,020	1,020	1,020
Total	1,528,927	1,467,105	1,383,480

Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations - September 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014

A total of 31 applicants applied to Cultural Services for support of events in Civic Theatre venues for the remaining months of 2014, for a total value of \$1,130,313. These requests included the Civic Theatre rental increase of 2.0% for all venues for the 2014-15 performing arts season, which was approved by Council on April 29, 2014 (RTS 10489).

As per Table 2, staff recommend that Council approve 30 Theatre Rental Grants for a total of \$1,081,981 for the remainder of the 2014 calendar year. Approval of these recommendations, together with the add-back of two grants which were allocated (RTS 10110) but not used, will leave an unallocated balance of \$117,839 in the 2014 Theatre Rental Grant budget.

Recommendations for the full use of the unallocated funding will be included in a fall 2014 report and will set out strategic steps to streamline the Theatre Rental Grant program for future intakes.

TABLE 2 - Remainder of 2014 Theatre Rental Grant Recommendations

Organization	\$ Request	\$ Recommendation
Accordion Noir Soc.	1,550	1,550
Ballet B.C. (Pacific Ballet B.C. Soc.)	131,190	129,928
Borealis String Quartet Soc.*	1,035	1,035
Canadian Soc. for Asian Arts	12,640	12,640
Caravan World Rhythms Soc.	3,335	3,335
Children's Arts Umbrella Assn.	16,710	16,710
Chor Leoni Men's Choir	21,705	21,705
DanceHouse (Seismic Shift Arts Soc.)	20,020	20,020
Diwali Celebration Soc.*	1,035	1,035
Early Music Vancouver (Van. Soc. for Early Music)	4,110	4,110
Erato Ensemble Soc.	1,035	1,035
Flamenco Rosario (Rosario Ancer Flamenco Arts Soc.)	3,335	3,335
Friends of Chamber Music	12,515	12,515
Karen Flamenco Dance Soc.	8,340	8,340
New Performance Works Soc.*	1,035	1,035
Seven Tyrants Theatre Soc.*	18,960	18,960
Sophisticated Laughter Theatrical Soc.	15,405	15,405
Taiwanese Canadian Cultural Soc.*	2,510	2,510
Turning Point Ensemble	3,335	3,335
Van. Academy of Music	18,960	18,960
Van. Bach Choir	15,800	15,800
Van. Chamber Choir	21,485	21,485
Van. Chopin Soc.	2,510	2,510
Van. Inter-Cultural Orchestra (VICO)	2,070	2,070
Van. Intl. Children's Festival Soc.	3,335	3,295

Organization	\$ Request	\$ Recommendation
Van. Intl. Film Festival Soc.	100,100	91,220
Van. New Music Soc.	4,655	4,655
Van. Opera Assn.	177,295	170,975
Van. Recital Soc.	10,040	10,040
Van. Seniors' Singing Club Assn.	2,510	2,510
Van. Symphony Soc.	491,753	459,923
Total	1,130,313	1,081,981

There were 9 recommended first-time applicants (identified with an asterisk) in 2014, for a dollar amount of \$38,422 representing 1.5% of the total value of recommended 2014 grants.

Grant recommendations for September to December 2014 for less than the request amount have been adjusted to reflect theatre availability. Therefore, not all requests are recommended to the full amount, even with fall 2014 requests lower than the available budget. Noting the unusual circumstance of the return of two 2014 grants worth \$83,625, staff anticipate expending in full the unallocated funds on several possible uses: i.e. for spring 2015 requests which are known to be greater than the available budget, unplanned opportunities or decreasing outstanding balances at Civic Theatres on grantees' eligible expenses when funds were not previously available.

Theatre Rental Grant Requests - January 1, 2015 to August 31, 2015

During the same April 2014 intake, Cultural Services received a total of 35 applications for the first eight months of 2015 requesting support of events in Civic Theatre venues for a total value of \$1,826,796 and an available budget of approximately \$1,625,000. Using enhanced database capacities and analytics, staff will make funding recommendations to Council for approval—in principle—for these requests for the first eight months of 2015. This will be presented in a separate report to Council this fall. This recommendation will be conducted in coordination with the newly-appointed Director of Civic Theatres, using the *Culture Plan: Strategic Directions* as a guide and will include strategic use of the unallocated 2014 funding in the fall report. Final approval of these grant recommendations will be requested of Council next spring within a Report to Council for the 2015-16 Theatre Rental Grant Allocations.

Financial

The 2014 Theatre Rental Grants budget is \$2,583,300. On June 25, 2013 Council approved - in principle - 30 Theatre Rental Grant recommendations for the first eight months of 2014 at a total value of \$1,467,105 (RTS: 10110). Since then, two previously granted uses of the Queen Elizabeth and Playhouse Theatres in 2014 with a value of \$83,625 were cancelled.

From the 2014 Theatre Rental Grants budget, staff recommend 31 Theatre Rental Grants with a total value of \$1,081,981 to support productions and presentations in the civic theatres during the remaining months of 2014, leaving an unallocated balance of \$117,839 in the 2014 Theatre Rental Grants budget. Recommendations for the full use of the unallocated funding will be included in a forthcoming report in fall 2014.

Table 3 - Summary of 2014 Financial Implications

2014 Theatre Rental Grants Budget	2,583,300
Theatre Rental Grants Approved in Principle on June 25, 2013 (RTS 10110) in advance of the 2014 Budget - Jan 1-Aug 31, 2014 (RTS: 10110)	-1,467,105
Add-back: Theatre Rental Grants Allocated but not used from Jan 1-Aug 31, 2014	83,625
Theatre Rental Grants Recommended this Report - Sep 1-Dec 31, 2014 (RTS: 10509)	-1,081,981
2014 Theatre Rental Grant Unallocated Total	\$117,839

CONCLUSION

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 from diverse communities.

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