

GAMING GRANTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

The Comox Valley Regional District board, on occasion, elects to support province-wide concerns and issues in the form of a board resolution. These resolutions are normally forwarded first to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC) for consideration but may also be forwarded directly to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Based on the nature of the concern, UBCM will either endorse or not endorse the recommendation and if endorsed, will present the concern to the provincial or federal government on behalf of all BC municipalities and regional district.

Date of Board meeting: May 25, 2010

Board Resolution: WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has historically funded environmental groups in the province through the proceeds obtained through gaming and that a recent Cabinet decision has been made to eliminate funding of environmental groups through gaming grants; and, WHEREAS environmental groups have contributed significantly to the protection and conservation of the environment and have contributed to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of British Columbia through projects implemented with the funding received from Provincial gaming grants; and, WHEREAS the environmental protection and conservation projects completed by environmental groups with funds from gaming grants contribute to making British Columbia a healthy, vibrant, environmentally secure and desirable province to live and work in and that without the initiatives undertaken by the environmental groups these qualities appreciated by British Columbia residents will be diminished due to the lack of availability of gaming grants to environmental groups; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Comox Valley Regional District request the Union of British Columbia Municipalities work with the Provincial government to have the Province reinstate the provision of gaming grants to environmental groups to continue protecting and conserving the natural environment in British Columbia.

This resolution was referred to UBCM on, May 26, 2010

A response was received on October 25, 2010

Response from UBCM: On motion, not admitted for debate. Referred to resolution B115: WHEREAS in the Fall of 2009 the Ministry of Housing and Social Development announced changes in the Government Gaming Grant Program as a result of unprecedented global economic challenges; AND WHEREAS the aforementioned changes included a reduction or elimination of gaming grant funding to a number of non-profit organizations, including the elimination of funding to arts and cultural organizations, major capital projects grants and playground grants;

AND WHEREAS the reduction and elimination of this funding has impacted the ability of non-profit organizations to deliver services that contribute to the economic viability, sustainability and cultural fabric of our communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM strongly request the BC government to continue its commitment to build strong communities by funding non-profit organizations through the Government Gaming Grant Program.

Additionally this resolution was referred to the Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General

The Province remains committed to helping build strong communities by funding non-profit organizations through the community gaming grant program.

The amount of gaming grant funding provided to non-profit organizations is contingent on spending priorities established by government and the funding made available each year in the budget.

Given the world-wide economic situation, and fiscal pressures faced by the Province, gaming grant funding has been targeted to non-profit community organizations that provide programs in the key areas of health and social services, youth, public safety and Parent Advisory Councils.

Gaming grant funding in fiscal year 2010/11 was \$120 million, an increase of \$7 million over 2009/10. Funding levels and priorities will be reviewed as part of the 2011/12 budget planning process.

Eligible non-profit community organizations may apply through the gaming branch website at: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/gaming.