



TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON

REPORT

Item No.

REPORT TO: Reeve Vincent and Members of Council
PREPARED BY: Pat Newson, Director of Recreation and Facilities
DATE: 18/12/2017
SUBJECT: Blyth Memorial Community Hall Renovation Wrap Up Report
ATTACHMENTS: Presentation slides, Project Financial Summary, Article from Architectural Conservancy Ontario publication

RECOMMENDATION:

MOTION 1

THAT the Council of the Township of North Huron hereby receive the report from the Director of Recreation and Facilities on the Blyth Memorial Community Hall Renovation Wrap Up for information purposes;

AND FURTHER THAT Council accepts the disbandment of the Blyth Memorial Community Hall Renovation Committee and thanks the members for their dedicated work;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves the spending of the additional expenses to a maximum of \$70,600 to complete identified building deficiencies.

MOTION 2

THAT the Council of the Township of North Huron hereby approves allocating \$5,000 of the project funds to a Township of North Huron Reserve Account, for the purposes of acting as a “security deposit” for the lease agreement between the Township and 14/19 Inc. for Blyth Memorial Community Hall;

AND, FURTHER THAT at the end of the lease, the “security deposit” funds will be either used for the same purpose in a renewal lease agreement, or the funds will be re-allocated to Blyth Memorial Community Hall capital expenses reserve account. As per the lease agreement, the Township of North Huron Council may draw upon these funds to fulfil the purposes of the security deposit in the lease agreement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blyth Memorial Community Hall renovation is completed, and the Renovation Committee that was formed in June 2014, as an advisory committee for the renovation, has disbanded. This report summarizes the renovation results and final recommendations to Council from the renovation committee.

DISCUSSION

Background

On June 17, 2014 the Blyth Memorial Community Hall Renovation Committee was formed. Terms of Reference were created and used as the guiding principles for the committee members. The membership represented the major stakeholders of Blyth Memorial Community Hall: The Blyth Festival, 14/19 Inc., The Township of North Huron, the Blyth Royal Canadian Legion and the Blyth

Legion Ladies Auxiliary. At the time the committee was formed, there were some seed funds raised to initiate the process of selecting an Architect for the project and developing the Schematic Design. Over the last three and a half years, the project progressed through the design phase, tendering phase and construction phase, as funding was made available. On May 19, 2017 the facility celebrated a grand re-opening. The role of the committee was to provide advice and recommendations for the renovation project. Now that the renovation is completed, the committee has made a motion at their October 25, 2017 meeting to disband. Overall the experience was positive for everyone involved, and the committee is very proud of the work achieved.

Renovation Results

Attached to this report is a photo library showing the renovation progress and final results.

Warrantee and Deficiencies

The construction time lines were tight with only 8 months to complete a \$4.3M renovation, encompassing all interior spaces and the courtyard. This meant that as the deadline for completion approached, the renovation was being completed as the building “load in” was taking place. The facility was turned over to Blyth Festival to begin preparing for their season. At the same time the Township was working through construction wrap up and deficiencies. Some items could not be dealt with until the Festival Season was completed. For these reasons, the final report to Council has been delayed until the majority of deficiencies were dealt with. It is not uncommon for a renovation project of this scale and scope to experience deficiencies. Some deficiencies are a result of construction. Other deficiencies are a result of design and outcomes experienced after the building is opened, and additional equipment and work is required to effectively correct the renovation to operate the building as intended. As part of the project, a thorough inspection is made at the time the building is turned over for occupancy to the owner. As the building systems are turned on, and the public and renters begin using the facility, discoveries are made and adjustments or repairs need to be made by the contractors and/or suppliers to fulfil the contract.

At this time there are a handful of significant deficiencies that are still being addressed, along with some smaller items. Larger items include the in-floor/in ground heating system, the flooring in the lower hall and lobby, the courtyard concrete cleaning and sealing, and the balcony riser lighting. Smaller items include planting replacements, and the proscenium base trim.

Some items that are still in the works to improve upon the renovation design include the front row balcony leg room and sight lines, the noise from stage left HVAC duct work, the front door hinges, the kitchen swing doors, and theatre technical equipment gaps.

Next Steps

Blyth Memorial Community Hall is a treasured asset and the programming that takes place inside the facility is impactful for economic development for the Blyth Community. The Township is fortunate that the \$500,000 invested in the renovation was converted to \$4.3M invested in the facility. This is a ratio of 1:8.6 for each dollar invested from North Huron rate payers. An excellent return on investment. Going forward it is important to begin planning for life cycle planning for this facility. Any surplus funds and future donations will be used to continue to benefit capital investment in the facility, and plan for a time when capital items require replacement. In their final comments, the committee advised Council to look at long term planning for that inevitable future.

14/19 Inc. are the lease holders of the building and are responsible for managing the facility. They are working on a plan to create a new advisory committee to assist in guiding the future use of this shared community resource. The renovation committee has completed their purpose and through a motion at the October 25, 2017 meeting they disbanded.

Motion 5 Moved: Rick Elliott **Seconded:** Ric McBurney **Carried**
THAT the Blyth Memorial Community Hall Renovation Committee, having completed the task of renovating Blyth Memorial Community Hall, at this time dissolves the committee at the adjournment of this meeting on Wednesday October 25, 2017.

The new committee will be an initiative of 14/19 Inc. and staff will report to council once when more information is available. As owners of the building, the Township of North Huron is a significant stakeholder in the building, and will be invited to be part of the committee.

Proposal from 14/19 Inc.

14/19 Inc will be attending the December 18, 2017 meeting as a delegation to present their proposal for building capacity in Blyth Memorial Community Hall. As part of the renovation project, the committee had allocated, as an additional expense, \$15,000 toward marketing initiatives of 14/19 Inc. This allocation is to increase utilization of the off-season and is to be spent at the end of the renovation. Business and bookings were lost as a result of the building closure. Goals of the renovation included increasing rentals during the off season to increase economic development in Blyth. 14/19 Inc. is responsible for developing the plan to increase rentals during the off season, and will be presenting their initiative toward this goal at the Council meeting, and their report is included in the Council package. 14/19 Inc.'s request is for an additional \$10,000 which increase the expense allocation for marketing initiatives to \$25,000. If approved by Council, these funds would be sourced from the Township of North Huron's contribution to the project.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The project budget summary is attached. Included in that summary are the expenses still to be completed as part of the renovation and a small surplus is anticipated from the project. The identified expenses are attached in the financial summary.

- Theatre technical equipment includes lighting, sound equipment, and other items to ensure the facility is outfitted appropriately for off-season renters.
- The front row balcony seating will be adjusted to improve leg room along the front row.
- Building hardware to improve door functionality.
- Sound baffling installed to reduce noise from the side stage HVAC duct work.
- Additional building wayfinding signage
- Specialized house lighting bulbs to improve light levels
- An additional support bar in the bathroom to improve accessibility
- Small equipment items to outfit the building for the off-season

The renovation committee disbanded, however as part of that process they made the following motions with respect to future expenses and funding, at the October 25, 2017 wrap up meeting:

Motion 4 Moved: Ric McBurney Seconded: Rick Elliott Carried

THAT the Memorial Hall Renovation Committee transfer future responsibility to the Township of North Huron for allocation of spending of project revenues and that any project surplus funds be allocated in a Township of North Huron Reserve Account with the condition that funds be allocated to expenses for Blyth Memorial Community Hall. It is understood that the Township will consult with any stakeholder impacted Blyth Memorial Community Hall for these purchases and expenses. And subject to the recommendations by this new formed committee as long as the committee exists.

There is more revenue to be realized through the project. There are pledges that continue to come in, there are seats still available for sale, and there are some items from the renovation to be sold off. This future revenue will be placed into the Township reserve account. Any other future donations to the facility are welcome and will be placed into this Township reserve account.

As part of the lease agreement with 14/19 Inc. it requires that 14/19 Inc. provide the Township of North Huron with a \$5,000 security deposit. The term of the lease is 20 years. This essentially ties up \$5,000 of 14/19 Inc. cash flow for the next 20 years. The committee recommends that \$5,000 of the surplus be allocated to this security deposit in a Township reserve account. The following motion was made by the committee as a recommendation to North Huron Council:

**Motion 3 Moved: Anthony Hodsman Seconded: Ric McBurney
Carried**

THAT the Memorial Hall Renovation Committee approves allocating \$5,000 of the project revenue funds to a Township of North Huron Reserve Account, for the purposes of acting as a "security deposit" for the lease agreement for Blyth Memorial Community Hall, with the understanding that at the end of the lease, the funds will be either used for the same purpose in a renewal lease agreement, or that the funds will be allocated to Blyth Memorial Community Hall capital expenses reserve. As per the lease agreement, the Township of North Huron may draw upon these funds to fulfil the purposes of the security deposit in the lease agreement.

Publicity

The project has enjoyed significant publicity which has been positive for exposure of the facility and the Municipality. Attached is an article recently published in the Architectural Conservancy Ontario magazine, *A Place to Gather: Blyth Memorial Community Hall*.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The Blyth Memorial Community Hall Project is almost completed, with a few final building finishing pieces to complete. The goal of this report was to bring Council up to date on the status and recognize that the renovation advisory committee has disbanded. Going forward the Township will be invited to actively participate in the new advisory committee for Blyth Memorial Community Hall to ensure the ongoing benefit and longevity of this shared community asset.

The facility is under warrantee with the general contractor for one year. 14/19 Inc., the Township and the Blyth Festival are all working together to identify any building deficiencies and have them addressed as part of the warrantee.

The intent going forward is for Council to move any funds from the project that are not used into a Township of North Huron Reserve Account identified for future capital improvements to the Blyth Memorial Community Hall. North Huron Council would authorize any spending from this account. The motion to set up this reserve account will be part of the treasurer's report as part of the 2018 budget discussions and 2017 year end Township budget wrap up.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Our community is attractive and welcoming to new businesses and residents.
Our administration is fiscally responsible and strives for operational excellence.



Pat Newson, Director of Recreation and
Facilities



Dwayne Evans, CAO