

Section: Finance	Policy Number:
Sub-section:	Effective Date: September 6, 2016
Subject: Blyth Leaf Account	Revision Date:

Blyth Leaf Account

Policy Statement:

The Township of North Huron encourages donations to the Blyth Living Tree, and for projects to be funded by the Blyth Leaf Account. The purpose of the policy is to establish a procedure by which donations are made to the Living Tree, and projects can be funded using the Blyth Leaf Account.

Definitions:

Blyth Living Tree: The Blyth Living Tree is a display located in the lobby of the Blyth and District Community Centre. Plaques are added in memoriam. The Living Tree is owned and maintained by the Township of North Huron. It was erected as part of the Heart and Soul renovations to the Blyth and District Community Centre.

Blyth Leaf Account: A reserve account that is part of the North Huron reserve accounts. Donations made to the Blyth Living Tree are tracked through the municipal accounting system and transferred to this reserve account.

Blyth and District Community Centre (BDCC): 377 Gypsy Lane, Blyth.

Blyth and District Community Centre grounds: The outdoor space owned and operated by the Township of North Huron, including the campground, skate park and ball parks.

Reserve Account: means an allocation set aside from municipal net revenue at the discretion of council, or revenue raised from community fundraising, established for a predetermined purpose and applied for that purpose at the discretion of council.

User Group: A community group that has rented the Blyth and District Community Centre and grounds during the past 12 months.

Background:

The Living Tree was established as a community fundraising program and donations are made as memorial gifts. Funds are collected in the Blyth Leaf Account and funds are directed toward an improvement project at the Blyth and District Community Centre and the grounds. The role of the Blyth Arena Board has been to provide recommendations to Council on how the funds could be spent, and benefit the Blyth and District Community Centre and the grounds.

With a request and recommendation of the Blyth and District Community Centre Board, North Huron Council dissolved the Blyth Arena Board on August 22, 2016. The request of the Blyth & District Community Centre Board was that the Blyth Leaf Account would continue to exist and projects would be approved by Blyth community groups as it had been in the past. This policy outlines the procedure by which the Blyth Leaf Account funds can be allocated to a project, with the intent to continue the Blyth community group input to decisions. It also outlines the procedure for inclusion on the Living Tree.

Policy:

Donations to the Blyth Leaf Account

The Township of North Huron will keep a separate reserve account to collect the donations made to the Blyth Leaf Account. A leaf on the Living Tree is provided with a minimum donation of \$250. Donations are made in memoriam.

Funds can also be donated to the Blyth Leaf Account, without a request of a leaf, for the purpose of supporting a municipally approved project.

Leaf Account Funds

The Leaf Account funds are to be donated to projects for the betterment of the BBDC and grounds:

- Funding is donated to projects that invest in betterment of the Blyth and District Community Centre and grounds.
- Items are Tangible Improvements and not used for programming or consumable items.
- Funds are for improvements and not to be used for routine maintenance of the facility.
- Funds may be directed toward the new or replacement of Capital items that have reached their life expectancy, and are desired by the community to be replaced.
- Items purchased through the funds will become the property of the Township of North Huron and included in the facility inventory for insurance and asset management.

The Township of North Huron Council has final approval of how the funds will be spent. Requests will not be unreasonably withheld or denied, however in considering the request the Township must:

- Evaluate if the improvement will increase operating expenses, and if so whether the municipality is willing to support the improvement on an ongoing basis in the operating budget.
- Ensure the improvement will benefit the Blyth community as a whole.
- Evaluate the expense of maintenance and long term asset management of the improvement.
- Evaluate if the improvement fits into the strategic plan and goals of the Township of North Huron.

Blyth Leaf Account Spending Process:

Approval Process

- The process for intake, review, and approval of purchases will be managed by the North Huron Recreation and Facilities Department.
- Throughout the year, North Huron will collect recommendations for spending funds in the account.
- Recommendations will be submitted to North Huron via a form that requires that the recommender complete all sections of the form for the item to be considered. It is not the responsibility of the Township of North Huron staff to research the item, however the Blyth Facilities Manager can assist with building specifications if needed.
- Annually, the department will host a meeting in Blyth where the recommendations are considered. Representatives of the different building user groups will be invited to attend the meeting. Each building user group will be awarded one vote toward the decision process. North Huron staff will facilitate the process, but will not have a vote. If no submissions are received by the designated deadline, no meeting for that year will be called, and funds will roll over to the next meeting the following year for consideration of submissions.
- A quorum of 5 user groups must be present for a decision to be binding.
- Meetings are open to the public, and more than one user group representative is invited to attend. North Huron staff will establish a procedure for identifying who the voting representative of the user group is.
- Decisions that achieve a majority vote by the user groups will be forwarded by staff to North Huron Council for consideration.

Procurement Process:

- Items purchased using the Blyth Leaf Account will follow the Township of North Huron Procurement Procedure.

Community Awareness/Marketing

In order for the process to work, and for the Blyth Living Tree to continue to be relevant, North Huron will publicize the program by:

- Advertising the annual meeting of the Leaf Account in the local paper for one week.
- Sending invitations to the user groups to attend the annual meeting.
- Informing the public via the Rec and Leisure Guide and/or the North Huron web site of the program and process for submitting recommendations or spending the funds.
- Permanently displaying information about the program in a visible area at the Blyth and District Community Centre.
- Making forms made available on-line at the North Huron website, and at the Blyth and District Community Centre.

Dissolving of the Program

The Township of North Huron Council has authority to dissolve the program at any time it is no longer relevant by a motion of Council.

The program could be considered no longer relevant due to lack of donations, or lack of submissions for improvements or a consistent lack of user group interest. Any funds remaining in the account will be allocated by a motion of North Huron Council to a Blyth community betterment project. The program could be considered no longer relevant if the following were to be realized:

- For a period of 36 months or longer, no donations to the Blyth Living Tree were received.
- For a period of 36 months or longer, no submissions were made for spending the Blyth Leaf Account. (note that as long as submissions are made, the program is relevant, it is not whether or not projects are approved).
- The Blyth Living Tree program is replaced by another relevant program supported by the community and North Huron Council.
- For three consecutive years, quorum is not achieved at the community meeting.
- A majority vote of the community groups at the community meeting decides the program is no longer relevant, and that decision is supported by North Huron Council.