

Council Discretionary Funds Policy

Department:	Finance Department	Policy Code:	A09-COU
Approval Date:	September 20, 2023	Approved by:	Council
Next Review:	As required	Revision Date:	Not applicable

Purpose

The Township of Springwater recognizes the need for funds to encourage, support and assist individuals, groups and organizations that engage in community initiatives that benefit its residents.

Each member of Council will be provided access to discretionary funds to be allocated to eligible recipients for community initiatives, including events, programs, projects, activities, services, or causes, which in the opinion of the member of Council and Council as a whole, would be meaningful, beneficial, and worthwhile to residents of their ward or the Township as a whole.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of Council of the Township of Springwater.

Definitions

Discretionary Funds: means funds budgeted for use by members of Council in accordance with this policy.

Member of Council: means an individual elected or appointed to the Council for the Township of Springwater who has taken the declaration of office for the current term.

Policy

1. Discretionary Funds Budget

The Discretionary Funds budget shall be identified and, if desired, adjusted each year during the budget process.

Separate operating accounts will be established for each member of Council and discretionary funds will be allocated equally to each operating account on an annual basis in accordance with the budget.

The current annual allotment is \$4,000 for each member of Council. Any unused portion of the annual allotment will be carried forward for a maximum of twelve (12) months.

Discretionary Funds will not be available or carried forward in a municipal election year.

2. Authority to Allocate Discretionary Funds

Discretionary Funds are intended to be allocated by members of Council as a whole at their discretion and each member of Council is authorized to allocate funds not exceeding their operating account budget, subject to the allocation criteria and restrictions set out in this policy.

Members of Council may jointly contribute to a project. For example, three members of Council may agree to jointly approve and contribute to a request for funds in the amount of \$750, with \$250 to be allocated from the discretionary funds operating account of each member.

3. Public Disclosure

In the spirit of accountability and transparency, all discretionary fund allocations will be made public, including the identity of the recipient and the amount and purpose of the funds paid to the recipient or the initiative.

The individual allocations of discretionary funds by each member of Council will be publicly disclosed on the Township's website on a quarterly basis. A Statement of Discretionary Funds paid by each member of Council will be reported to Council and the public each year.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Council is responsible for determining the amount to be included in the annual discretionary funds operating budget for each member of Council.

Each member of Council is responsible for:

- assessing requests for funds to ensure they align with the assessment criteria and restrictions set out in this policy;
- determining how discretionary funds will be allocated, subject to the limits and the assessment criteria and restrictions set out in this policy; and
- presenting the request for funds to Council as a whole for consideration and approval; and,
- submitting requests for funds and supporting documentation to the Director of Finance/Treasurer or designate for payment.

The Director of Finance/Treasurer or designate is responsible for:

- processing payments of approved funds to recipients, subject to receipt of complete documentation;
- recording and publishing the details of all discretionary funds payments on the Township's website on a quarterly basis;
- reporting the Statement of Discretionary Funds to Council on an annual basis.

5. Allocation Criteria and Restrictions

5.1. Eligibility for Receipt of Discretionary Funds

Eligible recipients of discretionary funds include:

- individuals who reside within the Township; and,

- volunteer-based community groups and not-for-profit organizations based in the Township or delivering events, programs, projects, activities, or services directly benefitting the residents of the Township.

The following are **not** eligible to receive discretionary funds:

- for-profit businesses or organizations;
- individuals, groups, or organizations with a political mandate;
- any person holding office or seeking election on any level of government;
- coalitions such as ratepayers or tenant/landlord associations;
- special interest groups and/or clubs with exclusive membership, not precluding charitable/not-for-profit organizations such as Girl Guides/Scouts, etc.

5.2. Use of Discretionary Funds

Discretionary funds are to be used for community initiatives, including events, programs, projects, activities, services, or causes, which:

- are meaningful, beneficial and worthwhile to residents of the member of Council's ward or the Township as a whole; and
- address a community need; or
- contribute to the positive image of the Township.

Discretionary funds must **not** be used for:

- initiatives which are political in nature;
- initiatives intended to generate profit or marketing opportunities for businesses;
- initiatives which are unlawful, contrary to Township policies, or discriminatory on the basis of race, ethnic origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
- religious activities or instruction, including renovations to a place of worship unless it is also used for community activities;
- private events or initiatives not accessible to members of the community, not precluding charitable/not-for-profit organizations such as Girl Guides/Scouts, etc.
- day-to-day operating costs of an organization (e.g. staffing, rent, property taxes, office supplies, electronic equipment, etc.); or
- repayment of debts or recovery of costs for initiatives already completed at the time of requesting the funds.

Allocations of discretionary funds must not conflict with rules set out in other related legislation and policies (i.e. Election-related, Council Code of Conduct, etc.) and no allocation of discretionary funds shall create a conflict of interest, or the appearance of such a conflict.

5.3. Limits on Allocation of Discretionary Funds

An eligible recipient can only receive discretionary funds once per calendar year.

Members of Council may not approve requests for funds which exceed these limits unless approved by Council Resolution. A member of Council shall bring a request for funds to Council for consideration and approval by Council as a whole.

6. Administration

6.1. Requests for Discretionary Funds

Requests for funds can be made at any time during the year.

To make a request, an eligible recipient must complete the Request for Funds Form set out in "Appendix A" of this policy and submit it directly to a member of Council for their consideration. A member of Council shall bring a request for funds to Council for consideration and approval by Council as a whole.

There is no guarantee that any request for funds will be approved, and the approval of a request for funds in one year is not to be considered a commitment to provide funds in future years.

6.2. Approval of Requests for Discretionary Funds

A member of Council shall bring a request for funds to Council for consideration and approval by Council as a whole. A Request for Funds Form must be completed by the recipient and submitted to a member of Council.

Members of Council must declare no conflicts of interest on approved Request for Funds Forms and disclose details of any relationship between the member of Council and the recipient.

Once approved, the recipient must provide a receipt for the approved expenditure in order to claim the funds (reimbursement).

6.3. Submission of Documentation to Finance

The eligible recipient/member of Council is responsible for submitting the Request for Funds Form and corresponding receipt to the Director of Finance/Treasurer or designate, in order for payment to be made to the recipient from the member's discretionary funds operating budget.

Payments will not be processed without complete documentation. Complete documentation must include original transactional receipts and proof of payment. If the funds are provided to an organization to support services, programs, etc., a letter recognizing the funds from the recipient/organization is required.

Requests for funds exceeding the available funds in the member of Council discretionary funds operating budget will not be paid.

6.4. Reporting

The Director of Finance/Treasurer or designate will maintain an up-to-date Allocation of Discretionary Funds Record in the form set out in Appendix B of this policy and will publish the record on the Township's website on a quarterly basis. A formal Statement of Discretionary Funds will be reported to Council on an annual basis.

Authority

By signing below, the official representative validates that the policy has been approved by the appropriate Approval Authority.

Approval Authority Official Representative:	Mayor	Resolution or By-law #: By-law 2023-088
Signature:		
Date signed:	October 5, 2023	

- Outline the community benefit(s) intended to result from the use of the requested funds:

The requestor certifies that all information provided is accurate and, if this request is approved, the funds received will be used only for the purposes described in this form.

The requestor understands that:

- there is no guarantee that any request for funds will be approved; and,
- the approval of a request for funds in one year is not to be considered a commitment to provide funds in future years.

Signature of Requestor (individual) or on behalf of Requestor (group/organization):

Print Name:

Date:

APPROVAL OF REQUEST (for internal purposes only)

Date:

Council Resolution:

Appendix B: Allocation of Discretionary Funds Record

Council Member: Mayor Coughlin					
Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining
Council Member: Deputy Mayor Cabral					
Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining
Council Member: Councillor Garwood (Ward 1)					
Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining
Council Member: Councillor Alexander (Ward 2)					
Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining
Council Member: Councillor Thompson (Ward 3)					

Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining

Council Member: Councillor Moore (Ward 4)

Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining

Council Member: Councillor Fisher (Ward 5)

Date	Recipient	Purpose	Approved Funds	Total Allocation	Balance Remaining