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**TO:** Mayor J. Lehman, and Members of Council

**FROM:** Rudi Quammie Williams, B.F.A., M.B.A. Director of Department of Culture

**NOTED:** Richard Forward, MBA, M.Sc., P.Eng, General Manager of Infrastructure, Development and Culture   
Carla Ladd, Chief Administrative Officer 

**RE:** Cultural Grant Program

**DATE:** April 30, 2012

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This memo is meant to provide some pertinent information on the Cultural Development Grants and Processes.

The Department of Culture's mandate is to promote and assist in the development of the arts in all its diversity for the enjoyment and benefit of all Barrie residents and visitors. The Department is guided by three key principles in awarding Cultural Development grants:

- Arms length – which defines its relationship with all levels of government;
- Peer Assessment – which defines its relationship with the arts community; and,
- Diversity – reflecting that which exists in the community.

Granting decisions are directed to supporting and building excellence within Barrie's cultural organizations and projects. This ensures that decisions made are based on artistic and organizational merit, not political or other criteria.

Our Peer Assessment/Juried Process ensures that the Department of Culture (DOC) uses knowledgeable arts professionals to assess grant applications, give advice on priorities, and make recommendations on the awarding of grants. Through peer assessment the DOC will directly utilize the expertise of the broader regional, provincial and national arts community to ensure that arts organizations and projects are awarded with integrity, transparency and fairness. Peer assessment is regulated by DOC policies, processes and procedures that are approved by Barrie City Council and are consistently communicated and applied.

1. **Jury Selection:** Jurors are selected for the City of Barrie arts granting process based on several factors:
  - Arts education – Bachelors or Masters degrees in Fine Arts, Arts Administration, Music, Design
  - Arts experience – working in the arts sector, i.e. theatres, publishing companies, dance companies, symphony orchestras, professional choirs etc.
  - Possession of a broad spectrum of knowledge and experience regarding art forms, artists, arts organizations and related issues
  - Experience with reading arts applications and previous experience as jurors for arts grants with organizations such as the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council, private foundations that support the arts such as the Metcalf Foundation etc.
  - Ability to provide fair and objective opinions and are able to articulate their opinions and work in a group decision making environment.
2. **Conflict of Interest:** The DOC encourages members of the community to nominate people to act as jurors if they fit the criteria above. It is most important that the jurors are not active in Barrie's arts community, so that they avoid being accused of favouring one group or individual over

another due to personal reasons. It is through employing people at arms length from the governmental interference that we are able to keep the process objective and equitable. Nominations forms can be found on the City of Barrie website and are available to the public throughout the year. Many jurors have been hired through this process by the DOC, such as Will Gorlitz, David King, Alana Wilcox, and more.

The City of Barrie is particularly mindful of potential or perceived conflicts of interest. There are two dimensions of conflict of interest – direct and indirect. There are also two kinds of direct conflict of interest – financial and private.

A juror is in direct conflict of interest with a particular application if he or she, or member of the juror's immediate family (spouse or equivalent, son or daughter, parent, sibling or members of the immediate household), has a financial interest in the success or failure of the application. Staff or board members of an organization, or members of their immediate families, would also be considered in direct conflict.

A juror is in direct conflict of interest with a particular application, if he or she has a private interest in the success or failure of the application. Staff or board members of an organization, or member of their immediate family (spouse or equivalent, son or daughter, parent, sibling or member of the immediate household), would be in direct conflict. A private interest also includes affiliations or activities that compromise or unduly influence decision making.

Any reason that makes it difficult for a juror to evaluate an application objectively may create an indirect conflict of interest. The City will not choose jurors who are in direct conflict of interest with any of the applications being assessed. If a direct conflict of interest becomes apparent, the City will ask the juror to stand down from the panel.

All jurors are asked to sign forms to identify conflicts of interest as a further means of documenting the integrity of the process. At the jury panel meeting, the City will answer questions and assist them with clarification of information on the groups being judged. The jury's role is to remain objective and facilitate decisions based on their impartiality as jurors.

City of Barrie, Department of Culture Staff are not eligible to apply for City of Barrie Cultural Development Grants.

3. **Criteria for Judging Applications:** Jurors are paid to spend time reading and evaluating the grant applications prior to convening in Barrie. Applications are judged on the following criteria:
  - Applicants are residents of Barrie or in the case of organizations, a significant number of the members of their organization are residents of Barrie
  - Applicants are participants in Barrie's Culture Sector e.g. they performed artistic services in Barrie within the past three years.
  - Artistic Quality of Programming
  - Organizational Profile- solid business practices, solid board governance, proven financial track records
  - Organizational Effectiveness – are they attracting an audience
  - Community Contribution and Impact
  - Financial Forms and Statistical forms are included in the applications that demonstrate last years results, the current years activities and the planned activities for the upcoming years.

It is important to note that applications for organizations and individuals are at their core business plans. Jurors are asked to evaluate if the business plans are detailed, carefully planned and thought through, with realistic goals and ambitions for the future. They are asked to articulate a response to their assessment that will be of service to artists or organizations seeking to improve their opportunities for success.

4. **Evaluation and Feedback:** Jurors spend one to two days reading and evaluating the applications in the comfort of their homes or in their places of business before being asked to convene in Barrie. When they arrive in Barrie they are sequestered for two very long intensive days where they discuss each and every application and reach an agreement on who will be funded and for how much. Each application is discussed in detail. The most important part of this process is not the allocation of funds but the feedback received by the jury panel that will be passed on to the individuals and arts organizations. These comments are recorded by an Administrative Assistant who then transfers them to the jury feedback sheets and they are discussed with the artists and arts organizations when they are given their results. A copy of one of these forms has been provided for your perusal.

**REGARDING MR. GLENN COULSON'S ELGIBILITY:**

Recently questions from local media have been received by City Hall regarding the eligibility of Mr. Glenn Coulson a successful applicant who has an independent contract with the City of Barrie as a fundraising coordinator. The contention as to his eligibility is based on an erroneous understanding of Mr. Coulson's relationship with the City of Barrie. Mr. Coulson is not a temporary or permanent employee of the City of Barrie or its DOC, he is an independent contractor contracted on behalf of the fundraising committee for the Mady Centre for the Performing Arts. Clause 16 of Mr. Coulson's contract with the City of Barrie to provide the services of a coordinator specifically states that the relationship created between the City and Mr. Coulson will not, directly or indirectly constitute Mr. Coulson or any personnel of his hiring as an employee. He will remain an independent contractor and is not able to bind the City or operate as its agent except with expressed written permission. Benefit plans to which employees are entitled are not available to Mr. Coulson and the City makes no deductions from payments to Mr. Coulson.

Mr. Coulson is a Barrie artist and songwriter who is NOT employed by the DOC or the City of Barrie and with the same rights and access as any other eligible Barrie artist to the funds provided by Council as an investment in local artistic excellence.

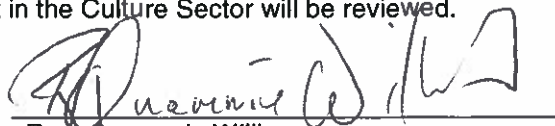
**OTHER CONCERNS:**

Regarding **ARTISTS' FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES;** The City does not assess whether artists are financially struggling prior to determining their eligibility. The funds given are to be expended on eligible elements of their projects or operations. Thus from the perspective of the jurors, it is irrelevant whether artists are struggling financially or not.

Regarding **ARTISTS AS MULTI-TASKERS;** In most communities as is the case in Barrie, artists hold many other positions and wear many hats. Most artists are multi-taskers and sing/dance/act/play music/administrate with a variety of organizations as well as developing their own arts practice. Significant travel may be a part of artists' life. What is being funded by the City's grants to artists is their work as artists or arts organizations and the value they bring to the community. Their review is not influenced by their success or failure in other business endeavours.

Regarding **POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION;** When eligible artists apply to the City of Barrie Cultural Grants Program, their political affiliations, employment at other jobs, knowledge of City Councilors etc. are not considered. This information is not asked for on the application form and the impartial jury process ensures that they are assessed on the basis of their arts practice and arts business – nothing else.

The City of Barrie's Cultural Development Grants process will be reviewed again in 2016 as part of the ten year review of "Building a Creative Future", the City of Barrie's Plan for Culture. At that time a thorough review of all facets of Council's investment in the Culture Sector will be reviewed.

  
Rud Quammie Williams  
Director of Culture