

Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87

Request for Decision (RFD)

Meeting: Regular Meeting of Council
Meeting Date: November 14, 2023
Originated By: Esther Quiambao, General Manager of Planning & Community Services
Title: Policy C-3C.021 Municipal Scholarship Program Policy – NEW – Update

PROPOSAL & BACKGROUND

Council recently reviewed a draft of a new Municipal Scholarship Program Policy that would support the pursuit by M.D. residents of post-secondary education in veterinary medicine and/or the healthcare field. They directed Administration to bring back additional information on other similar scholarship programs available in this area of study and to make a few amendments to the draft policy.

This scholarship program was deemed a priority given the current severe shortage of medical professionals in both human and veterinarian medicine in rural Alberta. The M.D. currently supports the pursuit of post-secondary education by rural residents through both the Rural Municipalities of Alberta's annual scholarship program as well as the scholarship programs at Portage College through the sponsorship and attendance of annual fundraising events.

DISCUSSION ON BENEFITS, DISADVANTAGES & OPTIONS

With further research, Administration has found multiple scholarship programs for these areas of study through involved post-secondary institutions. We also found "return to local area" criteria based scholarships provided by other municipalities including Saddle Hills County and Big Lakes County for veterinary medicine, and the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) for both veterinary medicine and Healthcare fields.

The following are three approach options for Council's consideration with varying levels of commitment from the applicant to return to the region, and varying levels of annually financial commitment by the M.D.:

1. \$2,000 x3: adopt proposed Policy C-3C.021 with a preference to applicants demonstrating a return to the area after completion of their program. Maximum of three scholarships per year.
2. \$7,000, \$10,000, and \$14,000: direct Administration to amend Policy C-3C.021 to require the successful applicants to commit to a similar NADC one-year agreement to practice in the region upon completion of their program. Maximum three scholarships per year (one per the area similar to the NADC three bursaries).
3. \$7,000, \$10,000, and \$14,000: direct Administration to register for the NADC Bursary Partnership Program. The same level of commitment to practice in the region and the same level of financial commitment, however facilitated through NADC who would provide a matching bursary to the applicant thereby doubling the applicant's scholarship award.

Attached for Council's consideration:

- Appendix A – NADC Bursary Programs
- Appendix B – Policy C-3C.021 – Municipal Scholarship Program Policy – DRAFT updated
- Appendix C – NADC Bursary Partnership Program information

REFERENCE TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 3: Promote Community Development

REFERENCE TO PROVINCIAL/FEDERAL LEGISLATION

n/a

COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING

Cost

Option 1: maximum of \$6,000 per year

Option 2 or 3: potential maximum of \$31,000 per year

Source of Funding: to be included in the 2025 Operating Budget

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The chosen Scholarship Program approach will be promoted and advertised through the M.D. website and social media and communicated to local schools and school districts.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDED ACTION

THAT Council adopts new Policy No. C-3C.021 Municipal Scholarship Program Policy, as presented.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. THAT Council adopts new Policy No. C-3C.021 Municipal Scholarship Program Policy, as presented.
2. THAT Council directs Administration to revise Policy C-3C.021 Municipal Scholarship Program Policy to require the successful applicants to commit to a one-year agreement to practice in the region upon completion of their program, as presented in Option Two.
3. THAT Council directs Administration to register for the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) Bursary Partnership Program, as presented in Option Three.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Policy C-3C.021 Municipal Scholarship Program Policy - NEW.docx
Attachments:	- APPENDIX A - NADC Bursary Programs.docx - APPENDIX B - Municipal Scholarship Program Policy - DRAFT.pdf - APPENDIX C - NADC Partnership Bursary Program Summary.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jul 3, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Stephanie Severin