

Shelburne council accepts \$42,500 in community grant recommendations for 2025 budget

By Paula Brown, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Shelburne Town Council has approved \$42,500 in recommended funding for the 2025 budget that local organizations will receive through the 2025 Municipal Grant Fund.

During their meeting on Monday (Sept. 23), Shelburne Town Council received a memo from the review committee, consisting of Deputy Mayor Shane Hall, Coun. Walter Benotto and Coun. Kyle Fegan, with their recommendations on how to allocate the municipal grant funds.

"We really based this year on anything that is food related. That is where the majority of the grant money went to this year," explained Coun. Benotto.

At their last meeting on Sept. 9, Shelburne Town Council received presentations from 11 local organizations asking for a total of \$58,159 in cash and \$29,150 in-kind through the Municipal Grant Fund to support a total of 14 community initiatives.

The Town of Shelburne allocated \$42,500 for the 2025 Municipal Grant Fund as part of the 2025 draft budget.

Through the review process, the committee was able to bring the approved funding amount down to \$38,659 with a remaining \$3,841.

The largest cut the review committee made was a \$10,000 application from the Shelburne Foodbank, Shepherd's Cupboard, which requested the money as a sponsorship to help towards the purchase of their new food delivery cargo van.

"The committee recognizes their need to provide enhanced services and recommends this funding request instead be evaluated by the full council and not within municipal grants," read the memo.

Council also opted not to provide funding to the Feral Cat Rescue through the Municipal Grant Fund process as the local organization has been included in past annual operating budgets and is still listed as a budget item. In the past, the Feral Cat Rescue has received \$1,500 and was recommended to be given the same amount.

Coun. Len Guchardi inquired about the possibility of increasing the amount given to the Feral Cat Rescue when council begins drafting the operating budget for next year.

"\$1,500 on the budget line isn't really a huge amount of money for what they do," said Guchardi.

Coun. Lindsay Wegener agreed with the sentiment, adding, "If she's coming through the grant process and asking for \$3,000 and then we're going to say no because you're a budget line item, we might want to look at that. I understand we draw from the tax base, but just a little bit of an increase will at least help her."

As part of the Municipal Grant Fund, any organization that is receiving more than \$5,000 and does not have a "set event date" for the funding will get their money in four installments throughout the calendar year in February, May, August, and October.

The remaining \$3,841 of the municipal grant fund that was unallocated has been recommended to remain within the 2025 budget to allow Council to consider other funding request that may arise throughout the year.