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Local organizations seek funding from council

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Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Shelburne Town Council recently took a first look at the local organizations seeking funding from the 2025 Municipal Grant Fund.

During their meeting on Monday (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.

?Not only did these presentations in my mind fulfill a practical purpose in giving us the information we need to evaluate them, but I do think it also highlights for the community the breadth and scope of important work that's being done by these civic organizations,? said Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills. ?It's really quite remarkable that these people are out there volunteering and the amount of work that they're doing to put back into the community.?

The Children's Foundation of Guelph Wellington, an organization that runs a food security program in the high schools and elementary schools in Shelburne, was the first to present its funding request to council. The food program requested $5,000 in funding from the Town of Shelburne, which will be used to purchase food items and gift cards for the rising number of students accessing the program. The requested funds will also help to tackle the increase in food costs to supply the program.

Feral Cat Rescue, a not-for-profit shelter for cats that has operated in the Shelburne community since 2011, requested funding of $3,000. The requested funds would be used to provide shelter, food and medical services for stray, abandoned and injured cats.

G.E.T Outreachworks, a local organization focused on education and unity through diversity, particularly through Black History Month, asked to receive $3,000 in cash to be used for event supplies, book club, summer camps, and improving the availability of cultural material.

Haunt in the Park, Shelburne's annual Halloween-themed attraction, operated by the Little Family, requested a donation of $20,000 in kind to host the event at Fiddle Park. Last year, the event saw almost 3,500 visitors and collected 2,200 lbs of food and $500 for the local food bank.

Pickin' in the Park, a country western festival that has been held at Fiddle Park for more than a decade, requested $4,600 in kind from council to host the annual event at Fiddle Park for July 2025. According to organizers, Greg and Heather Holmes, the 2024 event saw visitors from Sudbury, Fort Erie, Lindsay and Blenheim as well as internationally from Holland and Australia.

The Shelburne and District Agricultural Society requested $1,000 to assist with the Shelburne Fall Fair, which has been a tradition in the community for over 155 years. The funding would be used for activities and prizes at the Fall Fair as well as junior fair displays and the ambassador program.

Shelburne and District Horticultural Society requested $1,000 in cash to go towards maintaining entrance gardens, hosting their guest speaker series and purchasing plants, including trees, bulbs, material and mulch for community projects.

The Rotary Club of Shelburne brought forward applications for three of their programs ? the Backpack Project, Pumpkinfest, and Hamper Program.

For the Backpack project, which provides local students with back-to-school supplies, the Rotary Club is seeking $2,500 in order to purchase items such as reusable water bottles, backpacks and lunchboxes for the more than 175 students they support.

The Shelburne Rotary also asked for $3,000 for the Hamper Program to purchase groceries or gift cards for the holiday season recipients. Michael Conte from the Rotary Club said the Hamper Program assists over 186 local families during the constraints of the holiday season.

When it comes to hosting the third annual Pumpkinfest, the Rotary Club is requesting $5,000 in cash and $1,000 in kind, which will go towards utilizing Natasha Paterson Memorial Park and covering the cost of booking professional services.

Shelburne's local food bank, Shepherd's Cupboard, brought forward two funding requests from the Town of Shelburne through the 2025 Municipal Grant Fund. The first application was for $15,000 in cash to support the food bank's purchasing of groceries and gift cards for those in the community facing food insecurity.

According to Ardith Dunlop, the demand for the food bank has increased by 800 per cent since 2017 with more than 400 active files constituting over 1,000 people. Of the individuals accessing the food bank, 73 per cent are Shelburne residents.

New to the Shepherd's Cupboard's application this year is a request for an additional $10,000, which will go towards purchasing a van to help increase the pick-up of stock purchases as well as do more deliveries and food rescue trips.

Streams Community Hub, an art-centred youth-focused registered charity that is based out of Shelburne, requested $7,500 in cash to help provide scholarships and subsidies for Shelburne youth accessing their programs. The organization also requested $4,550 in kind to cover the cost of the rental fee for Grace Tipling Hall.

According to co-founder and executive director Juli-Anne James, Streams Community Hub has been able to serve over 1,800 youth each year and has awarded upwards of $140,000 in scholarships and subsidies to help local youth access the arts.

The last organization to present its application was Trinity Primrose United Church, which asked for $2,159 in funding to support its community freezer project. The project looks to provide food accessibility for individuals who choose not to utilize the food bank.

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

Each of the applications for the 2025 Municipal Grant Fund will be reviewed by a selection committee consisting of three council members. The committee is tasked with choosing which organizations will receive funding from the annual grant program and how much.

The recommendations from the review committee are expected to return at a future council meeting and will be part of the Town's ongoing budget process.