

In the many years since that wise investment was made, millions of dollars have been distributed to assist community based organizations that provide programs, projects, services or activities that enhance the quality of life for residents in the areas of health, arts, culture, leisure, heritage, education and the environment.

The fund has always said that groups can only apply to receive assistance for funding capital projects like a splash pad or lights at a soccer field. Money has never been available to fund the day-to-day expenses of an organization or charity.

That may be changing for 2021 only as council discussed a proposal brought forward at the last meeting of the whole by Councillors Pat Dunn and Patrick O'Reilly who represent the city on the CHEST fund board of trustees.

“The civilian members on the board suggested that for this year only they would like to see charities/non-profits that have been hard hit by the pandemic be eligible to apply for CHEST fund support,” Dunn shared.

“There is a strong desire to help out charities this year,” Dunn continued.

“The change of terms would be for just this year,” Dunn added, “and groups like the Boys and Girls Club, legions and seniors groups could benefit from help with their operating expenses in a year where it has been hard to raise money.”

A suggestion was also made during discussion of this possible change that money not allocated to charities and non-profits this year simply be rolled over to the 2022 grant season.

Discussion was also had that if not enough charities applied, any remaining funds this year could be allocated to more traditional kinds of projects that the CHEST fund is well known for supporting.

More discussion on this issue will occur at the September 15 regular council meeting because CHEST fund submissions are due the last Friday in October.

Any changes in eligibility for the grant will need to be finalized quickly and advertised widely so groups who have long not been eligible for CHEST fund money get their applications in to make the best use of this

