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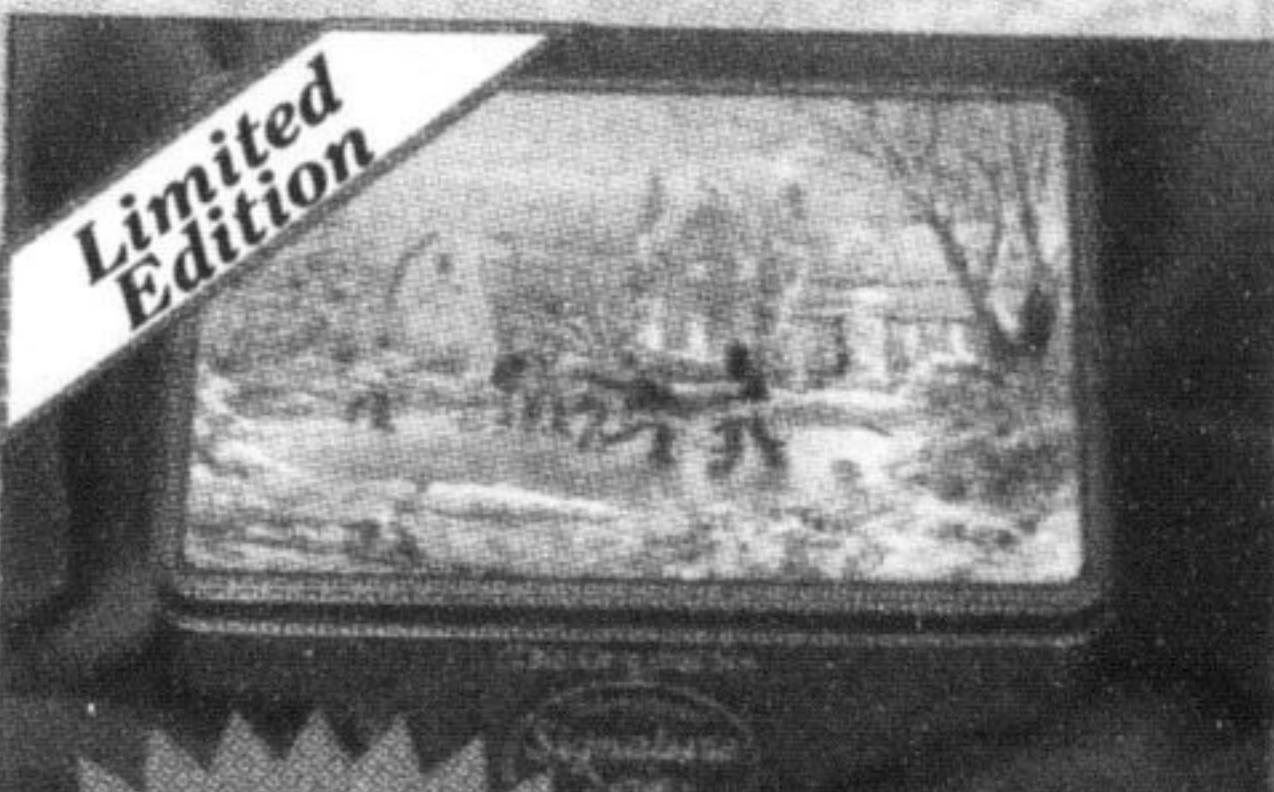
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## Fund process under review

By RICHARD VIVIAN

The Champion

After two years of distributing funds to local initiatives, the Milton Community Fund may be in for a few changes.

The fund is currently being reviewed by the community services advisory committee, which makes recommendations to town council as to how funds should be distributed. Council has the final say, following an extensive application review process.

It's that review process which is under the spotlight, explained Joy Anderson, Milton's coordinator of community development.

"We've had a full year now where people have had funding and reported back the outcome of what's been done," she told The Champion.

"It just seemed like time to take a look at our application process. We know there's probably a couple things we could streamline and

make it a bit easier."

Last year, 52 organizations and four individuals saw a total of \$470,000 in grants for a range of community initiatives.

So far this year, more than \$490,000 in grants have been provided to 38 organizations and 15 individuals. Two additional applications have been deferred, but may still be addressed before year's end. The fund review is being conducted with the input from both recipients and declined applicants, added Ms Anderson.

"There's no formal process. We're going on the advice of people who didn't receive funding or who had difficulty meeting our criteria," she said.

"I'm looking at those to see if there are problems, if we should be funding those groups."

Under the current structure, grant applications are evaluated based on community benefit, lasting impact of the proposal and the ability of

the organization to sustain its proposal once funding has been used.

Any changes to the application process or the management of the fund would have to receive the approval of town council prior to implementation.

A report to council outlining recommendations to change the system is expected in January, giving potential applicants time to adjust to any changes prior to the April application deadline for spring funding. Funds are allocated twice a year — during the spring and autumn — though deferred applications have been addressed as issues were resolved.

In each of the first two years, the Town made \$500,000 in revenues from the Mohawk Slots operation available for disbursement through the fund. Unspent funds from one year carry forward into the next for disbursement.

Funding levels for next year have yet to be announced.

## Fund recipients announced

Revenue from Mohawk Racetrack slots has turned into a windfall for numerous community organizations.

The Town of Milton announced last week that \$193,000 will be distributed during the fall allocations of the Milton Community Fund.

Among the major recipients are the Milton District Hospital Foundation (\$51,474), Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association (\$25,000), Halton Women's Place (\$24,256) and the Ontario Steam and Antiques Preserves Association (\$10,000).

The Community Services Advisory Committee reviewed 21 requests for funding, totalling \$344,000, before making their final recommendations to Milton council.

Applications were evaluated on benefit of the proposal to the community, lasting impact and ability of the organization to sustain the program once funding is used up. Council approved the committee recommendation, awarding funds to 15 groups. Previous allocations this year saw the Town award \$296,645 in grants to 23 organizations and 15 individuals.

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