**July 1, 2023**

**RCLS PURPOSE**

**“Support youth and other vulnerable community members, and have a positive impact through programs both locally and internationally”**

**FINAL**

**Rotary Club of London South**

**Working Group on Projects and Approvals**

(Members – Hector, Brenda, Barrie, Elisa, Don)

**Issues to be addressed by the Working Group (WG) (in no prioritized order)**

1. Develop an understanding of, and definition for, Rotary Club of London South (RCLS) projects.
2. Develop an understanding and definition for other organizations’ projects which RCLS could sponsor.
3. Review and assess the current RCLS development and approval process for the two standing committee’s budgets.
4. Review current assessment and approval process for RCLS potential projects.
5. Develop an understanding of the current sources of funds for RCLS.
6. **Develop an understanding of, and definition for, Rotary Club of London South (RCLS) projects.**

**RCLS Project**

**Definition** – an activity or initiative which will not occur without support by RCLS. The project shall be approved by the RCLS membership and can extend over a defined, or open, period of time. It will also have a pre-determined total financial commitment from RCLS funds, for the entire project, on an annualized basis.

**Background** - Support can be in the form of monetary funds (RCLS dollars or Rotary Grants), volunteer time, insurance coverage. Added funding and volunteer time support for a project, could come from members themselves, and non-RCLS member parties. The added funding support could be encouraged if a tax receipt is possible e.g. via Canada Helps, but, not necessarily, e.g. insurance companies’ contributions to Keep London Warm.

A potential RCLS project can be created by either a standing committee submitting a resolution to the Board and membership, or by an individual submitting a resolution. The process for doing so is provided in the RCLS By-laws, Article 8, which can be reviewed below. All components of the process shall be recorded in minutes of the Board and a membership meeting.

Currently the following are RCLS Projects:

* Keep London Warm (monetary funds, volunteer time) plus (Canada Helps)
* Community Fridge London (insurance, volunteer time, monetary funds) plus (Canada Helps)
* Integrated Water and Menstrual Hygiene Management Project (monetary funds, volunteer time) plus (Canada Helps)
* Thanksgiving Turkeys (monetary funds, volunteer time)

**Article 8 Resolutions**

Any Club member may propose a resolution or motion to be considered by the Club.

Any resolutions or motions to commit the Club to any position or action shall first be reviewed and approved by the Board. If resolutions or motions are first offered at a Club meeting, they shall be sent to the Board without discussion. A vote on any resolution shall require a quorum of the Club and a majority vote of those present.

1. **Develop an understanding and definition for other organizations’ projects which RCLS could sponsor.**

**Sponsoring Other Organizations**

**Definition** – an activity or project owned or managed by another organization, which RCLS sponsors by providing financial support, and/or, volunteer time.

**Background** - Some such organizations which RCLS currently sponsors are:

* Shelter Box
* Guatemala Literacy
* Sleeping Children
* Salvation Army Kids Camp
* White Oaks Breakfast program
* Rotary Habitat Home
* Science Fair
* student backpacks
* RYLA
* Etc.

1. **Review and assess the current RCLS development and approval process for the two standing committee’s budgets.**

**Standing Committee Budget Approval**

The current budget approval process is included in the RCLS By-laws, and can be consolidated as follows:

**Article 10 Finances**

10.1 **—** Prior to each fiscal year, committee chairs shall make recommendations to the Board for the annual budget prior to May 31. The Board shall draft an annual budget for Club approval based on the Board approved budgets for the standing committees and other entire Club commitments no later than July 15.

**9.2 Other Chairs and Representatives**

9.6 — Except where special authority is given by the Board, committees shall not take action over and above the approved budget, until a report has been made and approved by the Board.The president or the Board shall refer additional business to a specific committee as needed.

**Article 5 Meetings**

5.2 **—** For the purposes of approving the budget at a meeting of the Club, no later than July 15, the Board – elect shall present, and the membership shall review and approve the budget for the new fiscal year.

**Commentary**

In its review the WG determined the current approval process does not provide adequate and sufficient guidance with regard to the following:

* Who in RCLS determines how much funding could be provided to each standing committee, as guidance, for developing its next year’s draft budget recommendations to the Board. **Recommendation** – The Treasurer should provide to the Board the funds available based on the end of the prior year’s financial statement.
* There is no clear guidance to the standing committees with regard to what is a RCLS project and what other initiatives to which the committee can direct its funds e.g. sponsorships. **Recommendation** – the club’s final decision on this WG report should provide the guidance for what is a RCLS project and what is a sponsorship.
* There is no clear guidance (if deemed worthwhile) what proportion of the standing committees’ funds should be directed to projects and how much to sponsoring other organizations’ initiatives. **Recommendation** – RCLS projects should be funded first, with the balance of funds provided to the standing committees for sponsorship funding.
* If a standing committee has not committed all funds in its annual budget prior to initial RCLS approval, how are the balance of funds (referred to as contingency funds) managed?
* Can the committee spend those funds as it subsequently determines, with no additional RCLS approval? **Recommendation** – up to $3000.
* If approval is required, how is it to be done? **Recommendation** – require Board approval.
* If a committee decides to alter the approved budget to reduce spending on a RCLS ***project*** and re-direct the funds to another initiative, does that change require a RCLS approval? **Recommendation** – the proposed change to the spending on an approved RCLS project shall follow the Article 8, Resolutions by-law process.

1. **Review current assessment/evaluation process for RCLS potential projects.**

**Current assessment/evaluation process for RCLS potential projects.**

Each standing committee has a set of criteria that are being used to assess or evaluate potential initiatives it could support. (a copy of each is attached to this report)

The international committee, to date, has used the criteria as a comparative, subjective assessment of more that one initiative to assist in determining which one to support as a project.

The community services committee has used the criteria as an evaluation (a numerical scoring) of an initiative, in order to determine if the committee could sponsor it.

**Commentary**

The criteria, as employed, are useful tools. The ability to employ them with a clear understanding of the distinction between whether the committee is considering an initiative a potential RCLS project or a sponsorship of another organization would be beneficial.

1. **Develop an understanding of the current sources of funds for RCLS.**

**Current Sources of Project and Sponsorship Funds for RCLS**

**Fundraising** – RCLS fundraising currently includes

* Ornament sales
* Donations by RCLS members (often for a specific project)
* Rotary Grants
* Donations by others e.g. insurance companies for the London Warms project
* Raffle Box
* Special sales e.g. Elton John tickets.

The total funds raised has tended to decline in the recent past. This decline can be attributed to several factors.

* Most recently the lockdown and contact restrictions from COVID.
* In addition, the reduced number of club members.
* Perhaps some burnout by club members.
* The limited number of club members who volunteer for fundraising stints have all contributed.

**Commentary**

The ornament sales have been a welcome and major source of fundraising for RCLS. There is a sense the club should continue with new ornaments to continue to interest the purchasing community. **Recommendation** - There should be an assessment of the sales history of the ornaments struck to date, in order to determine what has influenced or caused the best sellers. This could assist with picking future winners.

There is a significant inventory of several different ornaments from previous years. They have been paid for. In order to assist with and boost RCLS fundraising, consideration should be given to how to best clear the inventory. **Recommendation** – the ad hoc Ornament Committee should evaluate and recommend to the club alternate ways of discounting or otherwise promoting the sale of the inventoried ornaments.

Rotary Grants can be a supplemental source of funds for specific projects. Grant funds are not always available, nor guaranteed when applied for.

Donations by RCLS members and others will no doubt continue, but their interest must be piqued by the projects they could support. In certain cases, being able to obtain a tax receipt for the donation can enhance participation.

**Recommendation -** The Raffle Box should receive periodic review to assess its continued viability and value.

Special sales can be a helpful added funding source, but typically cannot be viewed as a consistent and frequent tool. Ticket sales do not appear to be well supported within RCLS.

**Overall Observations and Recommendations from the Working Group**

* RCLS should continuously recognize and promote its primary **PURPOSE:**

*“****Support youth and other vulnerable community members, and have a positive impact through programs both locally and internationally.”***

* RCLS should act immediately on the results of the Working Group on Projects and Approvals report, once approved by RCLS.
* RCLS should recognize our more limited membership resources and re-think our total fundraising goals.
* RCLS should make a decision to focus on a specific, total club membership supported fundraising initiative.
* RCLS should focus its resources on its projects first and sponsorships second.