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## STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** Chief Administrative Officer  
**FROM:** Ronnie Gill, Director of Finance  
**SUBJECT:** 2025 Grant-in-Aid Budget  
**MEETING DATE:** April 14, 2026

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### PURPOSE

The proposed budget for 2026 includes \$5,000 for grants-in-aid available to organizations upon submission of an application to the Town.

### BACKGROUND

The grant-in-aid policy states that the discretionary aid is intended to provide financial assistance to an organization (the organization should be registered as, or belong to a parent Society under the laws of British Columbia and/or Canada) with the following objectives:

- One-time financial assistance for a specific project or event that benefits the residents of the Town.
- Preference given to organizations that are locally based and whose efforts are regional in nature.
- The Town will not grant monies for a “for profit” organization.

### IMPLICATIONS

- a. **Financial:** 2026 Grant-in-Aid remaining budget is \$3,000. The Town has committed \$2,000 for two \$1,000 for scholarships.
- b. **Policy/Legislation:** Grant-in-Aid Policy
- c. **Strategic Priority:**

N/A

**d. Sustainability:**

N/A

**e. Communication:**

N/A

**f. Staffing Implication:**

N/A

**Current year applicants:**

	<b>Request</b>	<b>2025</b>
a. Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship	\$ 500	\$500
b. Earth Day Clean Up Request – April 22	not specified	-
c. Take A Hike Foundation	\$1,000	\$500
d. River Notes Community Choir	\$1,000	-

**Recommendation**

No recommendation is provided. Allocation of the discretionary grant-in-aid funds, if any, remains at Council's discretion.

Signed:

**Ronnie Gill**

Ronnie Gill, CPA, CGA

Director of Finance

Concurrence:

**John T**

John Thomas

Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachments:**

1. Grant in Aid Guidelines
2. Application – Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society
3. Earth Day Clean Up Request
4. Take a Hike Foundation
5. River Notes Community Choir



## TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN POLICIES and PROCEDURES

<b>Title:</b>	Grants-in-Aid Guidelines		
<b>Classification:</b>	Finance - Grants to Organizations		
<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2002 (148(3)/02)	<b>Revision Date:</b>	June 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2012

### **PURPOSE:**

To establish a policy for Grants-in-aid provided by the Town of Lake Cowichan.

### **POLICY:**

In granting financial assistance to an organization for a discretionary Grant in Aid, the Council of the Town of Lake Cowichan will take into account the following objectives:

1. The primary purpose of a grant in aid is to provide one time financial assistance to an organization for a specific project or event that benefits the residents of the Town of Lake Cowichan. The organization should be registered as, or belong to a parent Society under the laws of British Columbia and/or Canada.
2. Preference will be given to organizations that are locally based and whose efforts are regional in nature.
3. An organization applying for a grant in aid must provide the following information in order to have its application considered:
  - a) name of the organization;
  - b) name of the individual;
  - c) description of the project or event for which funding is requested;
  - d) indicate whether or not the project or event is already provided in the community;
  - e) identify the beneficiaries of the project or event;
  - f) indicate if the organization is 'for profit';
  - g) indicate the total cost of the project or event;
  - h) indicate other sources of funding for the project or event;
  - i) indicate whether the application to other local governments has been made;
  - j) indicate the volunteer labour and in-kind donations to be contributed towards the project or event by the members of the organization;
  - k) specify the amount of financial assistance required;
  - l) provide the organization's current annual budget and previous year's financial statement;
  - m) list any in-kind or cash contributions from the Town of Lake Cowichan.
4. The Town of Lake Cowichan will not grant monies for a "for profit" organization.



## TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN POLICIES and PROCEDURES

<b>Title:</b>	Grants-in-Aid Guidelines (Cont'd.)		
<b>Classification:</b>	Finance - Grants to Organizations		
<b>Approval Date:</b>	March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2002 (148(3)/02)	<b>Revision Date:</b>	June 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2012
<b>5.</b>	The Town of Lake Cowichan may also grant a fifty per cent (50%) reduction in rental fees for groups that will be fundraising for a charitable or not-for-profit event as long as all established guidelines for a grant-in-aid request are met.		
<b>6.</b>	All grant-in-aid applications must be submitted to the Town of Lake Cowichan on or before March 1 <sup>st</sup> in order to be considered by the Town of Lake Cowichan for funding in the current year.		
<b>7.</b>	Grant-in-aid applications received after March 1 <sup>st</sup> will not be considered for funding in the current year. If the applicant wishes, such applications for a grant-in- aid will be considered for the following year.		
<b>8.</b>	The Finance and Administration Committee will consider all applications for funding received on or before March 1 <sup>st</sup> and make recommendations to the Town Council on or before April 15 <sup>th</sup> prior to adoption of the Annual Budget.		



TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN

RECEIVED FEB 27 2026

GRANT – IN – AID APPLICATION

ORGANIZATION			
NAME OF ORGANIZATION: <i>COWICHAN LAKE and RIVER STEWARDSHIP SOCIETY</i>		NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: <i>DIANNE FLOOD</i>	
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION NUMBER: <i>N/A</i>		NON-PROFIT ENTITY: <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	
ADDRESS: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>			
CITY:	POSTAL CODE: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>	PHONE: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>	FAX:

EVENT/PROJECT			
DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT / PROJECT: <i>STREET TO STREAM LITTER PICK-UP 2026</i>			
Is the Event/Project already provided in the Community by another organization?		YES	<input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/>
Will the Event/Project proceed without this Grant-in-aid?		<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Who will benefit from the Event / Project?: <i>The residents and property owners of the Town</i>			
Total Cost of the Event / Project: <i>\$2500.00</i>		\$	
Will you receive other sources of funding? <i>The Stewardship Society has allocated \$1,000.00 Other sources of funding are being explored</i>		<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO:
If YES, list all other sources of funding and amounts (provide on separate page)			
Indicate the volunteer labour and/or in-kind donations to be contributed to the Event / Project: <i>400 volunteer hours are expected in planning and delivery.</i>			
		\$	
List any in-kind or cash contributions provided by the Town of Lake Cowichan for the last year: <i>Some safety vests (14) and litter pickers (7)</i>			
		\$ <i>500.00</i>	
Is funding request for new event?:		YES	<input type="radio"/> NO: <input checked="" type="radio"/>
If NO, list previous years' grant-in-aid contributions made by the Town of Lake Cowichan <i>\$500.00</i>			
Year _____		\$	Amount
Year _____		\$	Amount

(use separate page for funding sources and other details, if required)

Grant in Aid applied for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Note: All applications must be received by the Town of Lake Cowichan on or before March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to be considered in the current year. Please attach documentation as required by the Town of Lake Cowichan policy, and any additional documentation supporting your Event/Project.

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved:  YES  NO

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**From:****Sent:** February 26, 2026 7:58 PM**To:** General <general@lakecowichan.ca>**Cc:****Subject:** Earth Day Cleanup Request

Hello,

My name is Justice Waller, and I am currently completing my teaching practicum at Palsson Elementary School. Another student teacher, Kelsey Hines (cc'd here), and I are hoping to organize a community-focused garbage cleanup and "Big/Little Buddy" walk with our students for Earth Day, April 22nd.

The goal of this activity is to help students build environmental awareness, take pride in their community, and practice caring for shared spaces in a hands-on and meaningful way.

We are reaching out to ask if the Town of Lake Cowichan would be willing to support this initiative through a donation of garbage bags and/or gloves for students to use during the cleanup. Any support would be greatly appreciated and would help make this event possible.

Thank you so much for your time and for all you do to support our community. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like more information.

Kind regards,

**Justice Waller** (she/her)  
EA & Student Teacher

**Cowichan Valley School District**

AD: 2557 Beverly Street, Duncan, B.C.

PH: 250-748-0321

W: <https://sd79.bc.ca/>

Our Journey is **Beyond**  
**Education**



I acknowledge that for thousands of years the Cowichan, Malahat, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Halalt, Penelakut, Stz'uminus, & Lyackson Peoples have walked gently on the territories where I now work.



**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**  
**GRANT – IN – AID APPLICATION**

<b>ORGANIZATION</b>			
NAME OF ORGANIZATION: Take a Hike Youth Mental Health Foundation		NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Jaydeen Williams	
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION NUMBER: 891394611 RR 0001		NON-PROFIT ENTITY: YES <span style="float: right;">NO</span>	
ADDRESS: 301-470 Granville St			
CITY: Vancouver	POSTAL CODE: V6C 1V5	PHONE: 236-558-0268	FAX:

<b>EVENT/PROJECT</b>		
DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT / PROJECT: Please see attached document.		
Is the Event/Project already provided in the Community by another organization?	YES	NO
Will the Event/Project proceed without this Grant-in-aid?	YES	NO
Who will benefit from the Event / Project?: Please see attached document.		
Total Cost of the Event / Project:	\$ 444,725	
Will you receive other sources of funding?	YES	NO:
If YES, list all other sources of funding and amounts (provide on separate page)		
Indicate the volunteer labour and/or in-kind donations to be contributed to the Event / Project:		
\$0		
List any in-kind or cash contributions provided by the Town of Lake Cowichan for the last year:		
\$1000		
Is funding request for new event?:	YES	NO:
If NO, list previous years' grant-in-aid contributions made by the Town of Lake Cowichan		
Year <u>2025</u>	\$1000	Amount
Year <u>2024</u>	\$1000	Amount

(use separate page for funding sources and other details, if required)

Grant in Aid applied for: \$ 1000

Note: All applications must be received by the Town of Lake Cowichan on or before March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to be considered in the current year. Please attach documentation as required by the Town of Lake Cowichan policy, and any additional documentation supporting your Event/Project.

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved:  YES  NO



## Town of Lake Cowichan Grant-in-Aid 2026 Application

### Description of the event/project:

There is a youth mental health crisis in our communities. A recent Mental Health Research Canada report states that Canadians' mental health was already on a downward trend before the COVID-19 pandemic and has only worsened since, especially for young people. Youth who identify as LGBTQIA+, racialized, and Indigenous are also reporting higher rates of poor mental health and greater barriers to accessing care. Moreover, the Cowichan Region, including the Town of Lake Cowichan, is seeing an increase in social challenges related to unmanaged mental health issues and economic uncertainty, including homelessness, extreme poverty, housing insecurity, and increased substance use.

Without support, too many young people will enter adulthood with unhealthy coping behaviours, disengaged from school and their communities. We know that early intervention and prevention are key to reducing the impacts of long-term unmanaged mental health challenges, and this is where Take a Hike makes a difference.

Take a Hike Foundation is a leader in providing early intervention and prevention mental health supports in partnership with public schools in BC. Our mission is to empower vulnerable youth with the skills and resilience they need to graduate high school, build healthy relationships, and achieve success—however they define it. We do this by engaging youth in a full-time mental health and well-being program that incorporates intentional and continuous clinical counselling and outdoor land-based learning in a safe and caring community.

We bring mental health supports into a full-time classroom setting because school connectedness is the number one determinant of youth mental health, and school is where youth are most open to receiving mental health supports. Our distinctive approach integrates continuous clinical counselling both in the classroom and in all outdoor land-based learning activities. This reduces stigma around mental health supports and empowers youth to improve their well-being, academic success, and capacity to choose their own way along the path of life.

Take a Hike Cowichan is free of cost for youth and delivered full-time in the classroom throughout the school year, with open access to counselling supports throughout the summer. Based at the Cowichan Valley Open Learning Co-op, this program is in direct partnership with School District 79 and is accessible to local youth aged 15–18 within the district catchment area, including the Town of Lake Cowichan. Program staff and up to 20 youth spend substantial shared time together. This program model creates a unique environment for youth to engage in four key program pillars:

- **Clinical Counselling:** A full-time, embedded mental health clinician helps youth build social and emotional skills, find healthy ways to cope with life's stressors, and improve mental health and well-being daily during the school year. Clinicians also provide continuity of support through the summer months. For many youth, our program is their first encounter with therapy.
- **Outdoor Land-based Learning:** Youth spend one day outside the classroom each week, with two multi-day wilderness trips taken in the fall and spring. Around one half to three quarters of participants will leave their community for the first time with Take a Hike.
- **Community Involvement:** Youth build connections in their local communities and gain work experience through regular volunteering. In parallel, local volunteers mentor and tutor youth in the program and youth learn that they are a valued part of their communities.



- **Academics:** Youth can complete all classes required for their high school diploma through individual education plans, and through cross-curricular and experiential learning integrated into land-based activities.

Funding will support up to 20 youth in the Cowichan program in the 2026-27 school year by providing them with barrier-free access vital mental health supports and land-based learning opportunities, including weekly out days and a seasonal multi-day expedition. Some examples of land-based learning opportunities where youth can participate include: camping at Saratoga Beach; hiking at Christie Falls, Maple Mountain, Skutz Falls, Stoney Hill Regional Park, and Mount Tzuhalem; and skating at Cowichan Lake Recreation Centre. These opportunities support youth in their mental well-being, skills development, relationship-building, and academic learning. It is also a crucial opportunity for the youth to learn from and gain a connection to their local environment.

### Who will benefit from the event/project?

Take a Hike serves youth who often face complexity, trauma, and instability in their lives. Many have experienced a lifetime of stresses that make them more vulnerable to mental health challenges like depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. These vulnerabilities at such a critical stage of development affect the way young people remember, attend school, learn, and make decisions. As a result, youth who join Take a Hike have often turned previously to destructive coping behaviours like skipping school, isolating, or using substances, and most are at risk of leaving school without graduating. Take a Hike works to provide youth with a safe environment where they can build resilience and succeed.

A \$1,000 grant-in-aid from the Town of Lake Cowichan will directly support youth in the Take a Hike Cowichan program, including youth who live in the Town of Lake Cowichan. The Town's investment will go towards outdoor Land-based Learning (LBL) costs in our Cowichan program. These costs include gear and supplies for up to 20 youth, such as boots, tents, backpacks, and jackets, as well as park fees and trip food, so youth can participate in weekly out-days and multi-day wilderness trips (see above for examples of LBL activities).

Since 2000, Take a Hike has supported over a thousand youth and their families to achieve deep change – change that lasts for their lifetimes and beyond, positively affecting future generations. By providing critical early intervention and preventative mental health supports, Take a Hike has an immediate positive impact on youth health and wellness. This change often creates a ripple effect through families, friends, and caregivers that also positively impacts overall community wellness, safety, and connectedness. Youth improve their mental health, community engagement, and academic success, which leads to increased graduation rates and post-secondary enrollments.

Overall, the deep transformation experienced by each individual is a direct result of the intentional, evidence-based program TAH delivers, and this investment leads to ripple effects that extend to the greater community and society at large. Take a Hike graduates rely less on medical support services and problematic substance use, and they stay clear of criminal behaviour, all of which contribute to increased public safety. Graduates are also far less likely to experience homelessness. Moreover, these ripple effects and long-term societal impact have been quantified through a collaboration with PwC: every dollar invested in TAH generates \$5.60 to \$13.40 in social return to communities. Based on this, and investment of \$1,000 from the Town of Lake Cowichan could generate at least \$5,600 and up to \$13,400 in social value, highlighting the far-reaching impacts of our programs and your support.

An investment in the Take a Hike Foundation is an investment in today's local youth, who are the future of our communities. Together, with the support of the Town of Lake Cowichan, we can help to ensure local



youth have opportunities to change the trajectories of their lives and find academic, social, and emotional success—however they define it.

**2026-27 BUDGET (DRAFT)**

Take a Hike Foundation		
2026-27 Budget DRAFT		
	FY 26/27	
	Budget	Cowichan
<b>Direct Program</b>		
Salary & Benefits	\$ 2,605,987	\$162,874
LBL Equipment	\$ 56,000	\$ 2,735
LBL Weekly Outdays	\$ 62,200	\$ 4,150
LBL Expeditions	\$ 123,000	\$ 8,000
Transportation - Vehicle Maintenance & Gas	\$ 38,333	\$ 3,833
Transportation - Insurance	\$ 15,750	\$ 1,425
Transportation - SD Transportation	\$ 63,050	
Meal Program	\$ 30,400	\$ 1,015
Youth Engagement	\$ 24,400	\$ 1,525
IDEA and education fund	\$ 34,000	\$ 2,500
MHC Workstation / Office	\$ 3,100	\$ 100
Alumni Program	\$ 5,000	
Professional fees	\$ 28,000	
<b>Program Leadership</b>		
Salary & Benefits - Current Programming	\$ 937,890	\$ 58,618
Salary & Benefits - Future Programming	\$ 198,347	
Expenses	\$ 447,783	\$ 27,986
<b>Total Program</b>	<b>\$ 4,673,240</b>	\$274,761
<b>Development &amp; Communications</b>		
Salary & Benefits	\$ 1,816,956	\$113,560
Expenses	\$ 339,414	\$ 21,213
<b>Total Dev &amp; Coms</b>	<b>\$ 2,156,370</b>	\$134,773
<b>Shared Services</b>		
Salary & Benefits	\$ 539,437	\$ 33,715
Expenses	\$ 188,456	\$ 11,779
<b>Total Shared Services</b>	<b>\$ 727,893</b>	\$ 45,494
Vacancy Savings	\$ (164,845)	\$ (10,303)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 7,392,657</b>	\$444,725
Amortization/ disposal	\$ 55,000	
<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 2,046</b>	

Please note that this is a DRAFT budget. A board-approved 2026–27 program budget will be available in Spring 2026.



**SOURCES OF FUNDING**

<b>Funder</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Confirmed/Pending</b>
Town of Lake Cowichan	\$1,000	Pending
Municipality of North Cowichan	\$2,500	Pending
City of Duncan	\$2,500	Pending
Cowichan Valley Regional District	\$2,000	Pending
Rotary Club of South Cowichan	\$2,500	Pending
Royal Canadian Legion #210	\$1,000	Pending
Vancouver Island Real Estate Board	\$2,500	Pending
Mid-Island Co-op	\$5,000	Pending
Peninsula Co-op	\$5,000	Pending
Other corporate, foundation, and individual donors	\$420,725	Confirmed/Pending
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$444,725</b>	



**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**  
**GRANT – IN – AID APPLICATION**

ORGANIZATION			
NAME OF ORGANIZATION: <i>River Notes Community Choir</i>		NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: <i>Kim Miller</i>	
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION NUMBER: <i>N/A</i>		NON-PROFIT ENTITY: <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	
ADDRESS: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>			
CITY: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>	POSTAL CODE: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>	PHONE: <i>Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy</i>	FAX:

EVENT/PROJECT			
DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT / PROJECT: <i>Several Choir Performances at Local Events</i>			
Is the Event/Project already provided in the Community by another organization?		<input type="radio"/> YES	<input checked="" type="radio"/> NO
Will the Event/Project proceed without this Grant-in-aid?		<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Who will benefit from the Event / Project?: <i>Audience &amp; Choir members : all local residents</i>			
Total Cost of the Event / Project: <i>Our annual budget for all performances is:</i>		\$ <i>6000</i>	
Will you receive other sources of funding?		<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO:
If YES, list all other sources of funding and amounts (provide on separate page)		<i>Attached</i>	
Indicate the volunteer labour and/or in-kind donations to be contributed to the Event / Project: <i>Members time, set-up, equipment, transportation \$ several thousands</i>			
List any in-kind or cash contributions provided by the Town of Lake Cowichan for the last year:		\$ <i>0</i>	
Is funding request for new event?: <i>Annual, ongoing performances</i>		<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO:
If NO, list previous years' grant-in-aid contributions made by the Town of Lake Cowichan			
Year _____	\$ <i>0</i>	Amount	
Year _____	\$ <i>0</i>	Amount	

(use separate page for funding sources and other details, if required)

Grant in Aid applied for: *any amount is appreciated* \$ *500 - 1000*

Note: All applications must be received by the Town of Lake Cowichan on or before March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to be considered in the current year. Please attach documentation as required by the Town of Lake Cowichan policy, and any additional documentation supporting your Event/Project.

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:  YES  NO

## RiverNotes Community Choir

### Current/recent sources of cash funding (2025/2026):

Member Fees	1250
Country Grocer Hot Dog Days	600
Cowichan Lake Community Forest Co-op	1000
Country Grocer Save-a-Tape Program	300
Canada Day	150
Christmas Concert Donation	170
Total:	\$3470

# RiverNotes Community Choir

## About RiverNotes

RiverNotes is a volunteer-run community choir made up of members from the Cowichan Lake area (Youbou, Mesachie, Honeymoon Bay and Lake Cowichan). Open to all ages and genders, our primary goal is simple yet meaningful: to share the joy of singing with our community.

## Our Role in the Community

RiverNotes adds to the vibrancy of local life by offering free performances at community events throughout the year. These include the Lake Cowichan Christmas Parade and Market, the Honeymoon Bay Market, the 50+ Activity Centre, and Canada Day celebrations.

Our performances bring together people of all ages and backgrounds, offering entertainment while fostering a sense of connection and togetherness. With about 30 members, and always welcoming more, RiverNotes creates a space where music strengthens both individual wellbeing and community spirit.

## Our Request

We are reaching out in hope that the Town of Lake Cowichan might consider supporting our efforts with a modest grant to help us remain active in the community.

While our choir thrives on volunteer energy, we rely on donations to cover essential costs. Specifically, we are seeking funding to support:

- **Sheet music** to expand our repertoire and provide new musical challenges for members.
- **Stipends for our conductor and accompanist**, whose leadership and expertise ensure the high quality of our performances.
- **Matching scarves and performance accessories** to present a unified and professional appearance at community events.
- **Operational costs** necessary to keep the choir running smoothly.

Any amount would be appreciated. For reference, we have received donations in the \$1000 to \$1500 range from some local organizations.

## Why It Matters

Though we keep things modest and low-key, our contributions to the Cowichan Lake area are meaningful. RiverNotes offers free performances, builds community connections, and fosters a spirit of belonging for both participants and audiences. By sustaining our work, your support will help preserve and grow a cultural tradition that enhances the social fabric of our community.

## Conclusion

We respectfully request your consideration for funding to ensure that RiverNotes can continue sharing music, joy, and connection in the Town and Cowichan Lake area. With your support, our voices can carry even further, strengthening the bonds that make our community thrive.

## Contact

Kim Miller, Fundraising Coordinator

Section 22 - Disclosure harmful to Personal Privacy

