



RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

4325 Blackcomb Way TEL 604 932 5535
Whistler, BC Canada V8E 0X5 TF 1 866 932 5535
whistler.ca FAX 604 935 8109

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: December 17, 2024 **REPORT:** 24-114
FROM: Village Festivals, Events & Animation **FILE:** 8100-20
SUBJECT: 2025 WHISTLER SUMMER CONCERT SERIES PRODUCER ROLE –
CONTRACT RENEWAL

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Community Engagement and Cultural Services be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council authorize the Resort Municipality of Whistler to enter into a contract with Kristen Robinson Productions (Contractor) for production of the 2025 Whistler Summer Concert Series (WSCS) in the amount of \$815,000 (exclusive of GST) in a form substantially similar to the sample producer contract attached as Appendix A to Administrative Report No. 24-114; and

That Council direct the corporate signatories for the RMOW to execute the WSCS contract with the Contractor.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to request Council's authorization for the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) to enter into a contract renewal over \$500,000 in value in accordance with *Administrative Procedure D-1: Procurement* (Procurement Procedure), to enable Kristen Robinson Productions (Contractor) to deliver the 2025 Whistler Summer Concert Series (WSCS) program.

Information Report Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

The RMOW Festivals, Events & Animation (FE&A) team invests in a variety of programs designed to benefit Whistler economically, socially and culturally. Through value-added experiences related to outdoor sport and recreation, arts and entertainment, natural history, and heritage, FE&A programs enhance the sense of community pride and belonging for residents as well as visitors. FE&A features programming that encourages visitors to stay longer and supports Whistler's need periods, including off-peak and mid-week visits. Further, the FE&A staff works closely with the RMOW's day-to-day operations team and community partners to seamlessly integrate programs into the RMOW which helps

to mitigate any potential negative impacts. The FE&A team is always mindful that the investments made locally not only provide opportunities for Whistler’s entertainment, arts, nature and heritage sectors to generate income, but also help achieve provincial tourism goals.

The WSCS program has been delivered by the FE&A program since the summer of 2011. The WSCS features a diversity of programming genres designed to appeal to different audiences for each performance. Since 2011, timing and days of the performances has evolved based on feedback received from community partners, concert attendees and WSCS producers. Concert timing is intended to help prolong visitation and allows for visitors to complete their daytime activities while also finishing early enough to comply with Whistler’s “Noise Regulation Bylaw No. 2362, 2022” (Noise Bylaw).

In January 2023, the FE&A team issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking proponents interested in the 2023 WSCS Producer role. The Contractor was selected through this process. The 2023 RFP document is attached as Appendix B.

2023 Procurement RFP Process

The 2023 WSCS Producer role was determined through an RFP posted publicly on January 6, 2023, on both the BC Bid and RMOW website and closed on January 23, 2023, with valid proposals received.

The 2023 proposals were assessed by FE&A staff according to the assessment criteria and weighting outlined in the RFP. After checking references to ensure the proponent was qualified to do the work, the RMOW awarded the 2023 WSCS Producer role to the Contractor.

The 2023 RFP included language that enabled contract extensions. Subsequently, the 2023 and the 2024 contracts signed with the Contractor indicated that the RMOW, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserved the right to renew the contract with the successful proponent on an annual basis beyond the term identified. Further, the 2024 WSCS contract (2024 Contract) indicated that if the RMOW elects to renew the contract for 2025, the RMOW reserves the right to modify it to reflect the goals, strategies, schedules, and budgets for the 2025 WSCS program.

Subject to an annual performance review, staff only consider a one-year renewal of the contract and will not renew it more than three times with the same Contractor before issuing another RFP for the Producer role. The final year of renewal is 2025 and regardless of the Contractor’s performance in 2025, the RMOW will issue an RFP for proponents interested in the 2026 WSCS Producer role.

Analysis

The 2024 WSCS was delivered on time and on budget. Tourism Whistler’s (TW) summer surveys indicated positive outcomes related to the WSCS program. Over 13 concert evenings, the lineup comprised 14 bands, 13 DJs and several special guests that over the course of the summer attracted over 50,000 concertgoers to the Whistler Olympic Plaza (WOP).

TW summer surveys that occurred during the WSCS indicated that:

- Pre-trip awareness of the concerts increased from 41% in 2023 to 48% in 2024.
- WSCS influence being of some importance, or a key deciding factor in visiting Whistler, rose from 41% in 2023 to 60% in 2024.
- Food and Beverage purchased in the Village - before, during, after concerts - increased from 68% in 2023 to 76% in 2024.
- Attendees staying in paid accommodation rose from 63% in 2023 to 81% in 2024.
- Attendee satisfaction level remained consistent averaging 94% being satisfied or very satisfied.

The 2025 WSCS budget allocation is included in the 2025 FE&A budget and aligns with the 2025-2029 Five-Year Financial Plan being considered by Council and expected to be adopted in January 2025. The WSCS is funded entirely through provincial Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT).

The Contractor will report to both the Manager of Village Animation & Events and the Supervisor of FE&A, and will work with a total budget of up to \$815,000 (approximately a 1.2 per cent increase over the 2024 budget to address increased cost of insurance due to increased audience size) to deliver free, all ages-friendly, outdoor live music including, but not limited to, the following services:

- a) Programming
- b) Performer Services
- c) Administration
- d) Technical & Production Services

Like 2024, the 2025 WSCS will feature approximately 13 show dates with the first show on or around Canada Day and the last performance just before Labour Day. The shows will include a DJ opener at 6:30 p.m. and will run between 90 and 150 minutes (whether one act or more than one act). The shows will conclude no later than 10:00 p.m. (including encore) in compliance with the Noise Bylaw.

Currently, the specific show dates are yet to be confirmed to allow the Contractor and FE&A staff greater flexibility in terms of exploring and leveraging opportunities (i.e., securing an amazing performer only available on a specific date). The concert show dates will be communicated as soon as possible to enable local businesses sufficient time to plan for, and leverage, the concerts. The performer lineup will be announced in the spring.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

In accordance with the Procurement Procedure, Council's authorization is required for the RMOW to enter into a contract over \$500,000 in value.

[February 7, 2023, Administrative Report No. 23-017](#) – 2023 WSCS Producer – Contract Award: Council authorized the RMOW to enter into a Contract with the Contractor (2023 Contract) for the 2023 WSCS.

[January 23, 2024, Administrative Report No. 24-007](#) – 2024 WSCS Producer Role – Contract Renewal: Council authorized the RMOW to renew the 2023 Contract for the 2024 WSCS.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Priorities

- Housing

Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing.

- Climate Action

Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan by supporting the safe and enjoyable use of the Whistler Transit System.

- Community Engagement

Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW.

Smart Tourism

Preserve and protect Whistler’s unique culture, natural assets, and infrastructure.

Not Applicable

Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs.

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

Chapter 2 – Community Vision

The WSCS adds to a vibrant and lively pedestrian Village by featuring performances in WOP, helping to create a “Sense of Place”. Further, WSCS supports the tourism economy by featuring high-quality, live free entertainment to give diverse and authentic experiences that sustain visitation.

Chapter 3 – Reconciliation with the Lil’wat Nation and Squamish Nation

The FE&A program, supports Reconciliation and relationship building by exploring opportunities to showcase local and other Indigenous artists in WSCS programming; provides opportunities to share each Nation’s history and culture through events and gatherings in Whistler that draw residents and visitors alike; supports Indigenous cultural presence throughout Whistler; and lastly, by exploring opportunities for both Nations’ involvement in events and activities to add to the experience of Whistler.

Chapter 6 – Economic Viability

WSCS is a popular annual program that helps to attract visitors and enhance the visitor’s experience which plays a key role in Whistler’s tourism economy. The WSCS program supports increased cultural, education and learning, arts, entertainment, events, sport tourism and health and wellness opportunities that helps diversify our tourism-based economy using existing infrastructure.

Chapter 9 - Learning Culture and Recreation

The WSCS programming, where appropriate, supports local performers and local Indigenous content by leveraging various partnerships and venues to further develop Whistler’s Arts, Nature and Heritage (ANH) sector and helps promote ANH programming and venues for residents and visitors.

Chapter 10 – Climate Action and Energy

WSCS helps promote active transportation by featuring Whistler Bike Valet services during concerts which supports the policy of using every reasonable opportunity to further the use of preferred modes of transportation. Also, the WSCS 2025 program will implement solid waste mitigation strategies in WOP during concerts supporting Whistler in meeting its zero waste goals.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The WSCS is funded entirely through the MRDT and allocation was included in the FE&A budget which is included within the proposed Budget Guidelines and 2025-2029 Five Year Financial Plan.

LÍL’WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lil’wat People, known in their language as *L’il’wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw*, to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler’s resort economy.

FE&A explores opportunities to showcase both local and other Indigenous artists in WSCS programming. Each evening begins with a welcome by the Squamish Lílwat Cultural Centre Ambassadors, providing an opportunity for each Nation to share history, culture and context with residents and visitors.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

The 2023 RFP for the WSCS Producer role and associated contract award process complied with all RMOW procurement rules and policies.

FE&A staff consulted with staff from TW and the Whistler Chamber of Commerce to hear feedback about the 2024 WSCS. The Restaurant Association of Whistler has an interest in the 2025 concert dates and FE&A staff will continue to release the dates for the 2025 concert series as early as possible to allow for effective staff planning and to maximize the opportunities presented by the concerts.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – Sample 2025 WSCS Producer Contract
Appendix B – 2023 RFP WSCS Producer Role

SUMMARY

Following a positive staff review and evaluation of the WSCS 2024 services provided by the current Contractor, it is the recommendation of the General Manager of Community Engagement and Cultural Services that Council approve renewing the current WSCS contract in the amount of \$815,000 (exclusive of GST) with the Contractor in accordance with the renewal option indicated both in the 2023 RFP for WSCS Producer role and in the 2024 Contract. This is the last year in which the current Contract can be renewed and an RFP will be issued for the 2026 WSCS. The value of the Contract is within the FE&A program budget and is included in the proposed 2025-2029 Five Year Financial plan.

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Bob Andrea,
Manager of Village Animation and Events

Reviewed by:

Karen Elliott,
General Manager of Community Engagement
and Cultural Services

Virginia Cullen,
Chief Administrative Officer