

HARMONY CENTRE OWEN SOUND

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Grey County Council and Staff
595 9th Ave East, Owen Sound, ON

May 20, 2020

Dear Warden McQueen, Council Members, and Staff,

Harmony Centre Owen Sound provides our region with spaces to share, create, educate, and perform, and has repurposed a significant piece of Owen Sound's built heritage to serve as the home for social service and arts groups. Since our incorporation in 2012 we have:

- served over 350,000 community members
- supported many start-ups and social enterprises, most notably serving as the home of OSHaRE from its inception until December 2019
- hosted numerous community events including concerts, receptions for dignitaries such as the Governor General of Canada, conferences, rallies, all-candidates meetings, open public meetings, and many others
- invested almost \$300,000.00 in accessibility and other improvements

Harmony Centre has enjoyed strong community support ever since answering the call to find a suitable place for a soup kitchen to feed our most vulnerable citizens. With the help of over 100 volunteers, we operate this registered charity as a social enterprise by using rents and user fees to pay operating costs that are associated with maintaining and offering -

- a 700-seat auditorium with world-class acoustics
- a 190-seat gathering hall with attached approved kitchen
- a 160-seat common area with stage
- numerous offices, meeting rooms, and storage spaces

The Covid-19 shutdown has cost Harmony Centre most of our revenue, and we expect this situation to persist until restrictions are fully lifted and the public is once again comfortable meeting in large numbers. Our volunteer-run organization would appreciate the County's support in this unprecedented situation, and we simply ask Council and Staff to **consider using Harmony Centre spaces whenever needs arise that our facility can accommodate.**

Harmony Centre is central, accessible, affordable, and here to serve.

We hope that Grey County Council recognizes the valuable role Harmony Centre plays in the daily life of so many citizens, and understands the highly unusual situation that compels our Board to make this request. Thank you very much for your consideration, and thank you for all you do for the people of our region.

Sincerely,
Colleen Trask-Seaman
Chair, Harmony Centre Owen Sound

Leigh Greaves
Harmony Centre Coordinator

preserve • share • create • perform

Harmony Centre Owen Sound is registered charitable organization No. 83996 2040 RR0001.