



MINUTES
CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
CITY HALL - 808 2ND AVENUE EAST – BASEMENT BOARDROOM
FEBRUARY 25, 2021 - 5:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ian Boddy
Councillor Travis Dodd
Councillor Brock Hamley (via video)
Councillor Marion Koepke (via video)
Councillor John Tamming (via video)
Stephanie Sas (via video)
Bobb Todd (via video)

MEMBERS Jean Paul Caron
ABSENT/REGRETS: Adriana Londono

STAFF PRESENT: Tim Simmonds, City Manager
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services (via video)
Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk
Christine Gilbert, Manager of Revenue (via video)
Nelly Morrow, Deputy Treasurer (via video)
Kristen Van Alphen, Manager of Legislative Services (via video)
Sheyenne Hooghiem, Customer Service Facilitator

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

Chair Dodd welcomed new member Stephanie Sas to the Corporate Services Committee and the committee went through member introductions.

Councillor Hamley joined the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on January 28, 2021.

Moved by Councillor Koepke

CR-210225-001

“THAT the minutes of the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on January 28, 2021 be approved as presented.”

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- a. Presentation from the City Clerk Re: Corporate Services Committee Overview 2021

The City Clerk shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Committee's mandate, meeting calendar, pertinent by-laws relating to their role on the Committee and procedural matters, Code of Conduct, and Council-Staff Relations Policy.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions from the public.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There was no correspondence for direction.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

a. Taxes and Revenue

1. Report CR-21-005 from the Manager of Revenue Re: Assessment at Risk

The Manager of Revenue noted that the findings in the report are based on data prepared by Municipal Tax Equity Consultants Inc. (MTE) that is provided to Grey County each year. Ms. Gilbert highlighted a few changes in the current year report versus previous years, including: due to reassessment delays stemming from the pandemic, the data is still based on the 2016 base-year values; assessment appeals are taking longer to resolve, making it harder to estimate their outcome due to the multi-year retroactive impacts that must be considered; MTE has noted that the City's assessment losses have escalated in magnitude,

however, this is not just specific to Owen Sound but can be seen across the Province.

The Manager of Revenue advised that the current year's budgeted allocation should cover the current year's estimated revenue at risk.

The Manager of Revenue advised that assessment appeals are presented to the assessment appeal board and that the burden of proof lies with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to show that the value they have attributed to the property is correct.

Moved by Councillor Tamming

CR-210225-002

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-005 respecting Assessment at Risk, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."

Carried.

b. Clerks

1. Report CR-21-019 from the Manager of Legislative Services Re: FOI - 2020 Year in Review

The Manager of Legislative Services noted that this is the first time the City has reported to Committee on Freedom of Information (FOI) statistics. Ms. Van Alphen also advised that staff plan to track and record FOI data as well as staff time required to administrate requests in order to create a baseline from which comparisons can be drawn in the future.

The Manager of Legislative Services advised that the Committee of Simcoe Clerks provided a presentation to herself and the City Clerk regarding updates being initiated to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and how FOIs are handled by the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC). Ms. Van Alphen confirmed that City staff support this initiative and the changes that are being proposed.

The Manager of Legislative Services noted that while some people have been known to submit multiple FOI requests in a given year, in 2020 all FOI requests received were from unique requesters.

The Manager of Legislative Services advised that under the current legislation available to City staff, there is not an option to apply a fee for FOI inquiries. The fee for FOI requests is \$5. Ms. Van Alphen confirmed that FOI inquiries are generally able to be handled efficiently by staff and they do not take up a large amount of staff time.

The Manager of Legislative Services advised that staff do not have historic data regarding FOI requests at this point; however, Ms. Van Alphen noted that, from her experience, she believes FOI requests have become larger in the past few years as there could be 10 to 15 sub-requests inside one main request.

The Manager of Legislative Services noted that the City of Owen Sound has been fortunate to have overall respectful requesters; however, she also noted that under the current legislation, if staff were to be faced with an abusive requester, there are not many options available. Ms. Van Alphen confirmed that by endorsing the resolution presented in the report, the City would be taking a proactive approach so if abusive behaviours did occur in the future, there is legislation in place to handle these situations.

The Manager of Legislative Services highlighted some additional positive elements of the resolution that will benefit the City, including: setting a stakeholder advisory committee, routine disclosure policies, and updates to administrative practices.

The Manager of Legislative Services confirmed that the proposed resolution would not have any negative impact on a requester who has pure intentions with their request.

Moved by Mayor Boddy

CR-210225-003

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-019 respecting FOI-2020 Year in Review and Support for Legislative Reform, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council endorse the resolution attached to this report."

Carried.

c. Parking and By-law Enforcement

1. Report CR-21-014 from the City Clerk Re: 2020 By-law Enforcement Overview

The City Clerk advised that the City's by-law enforcement department acts on a complaint basis unless they observe an infraction which is a health and safety concern.

The City Clerk highlighted some key findings from the report, including: the City's By-law Enforcement department received approximately 1,200 calls in 2020; 830 investigations were initiated in 2020, with the most common violations relating to yard maintenance, property standards, noise, waste management and traffic. Ms. Bloomfield noted that the 2020 statistics were on par with, or slightly higher than, 2019 statistics.

The City Clerk advised that in late 2020, the City Manager introduced the idea of hotspot policing to City Council and declared a certain neighbourhood a hotspot. Council amended the By-law Enforcement Policy to include the definition of a hotspot and permitted proactive enforcement when hotspots are identified by Council.

The City Clerk reached out to four other municipalities in an attempt to compare by-law enforcement statistics. Ms. Bloomfield noted she only heard back from two municipalities. Both other municipalities used a partial or full complaint-based enforcement system and it was noted that the City of Owen Sound's by-law department received significantly more complaints than the other municipalities' by-law departments of similar size.

The City Clerk confirmed that most complaints come directly to the City, not through the Police Department. Ms. Bloomfield noted that with the enforcement of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, the police took more of a leading role.

The City Clerk advised that, from her experience, most municipalities have a complaint-driven by-law enforcement department. The City Manager added that, from his experience, by-law enforcement departments with more than 30 officers take more of a proactive approach; however, he noted that even in this proactive approach, the officers still do not go out looking for infractions, rather if they are out on a call and notice a property with an infraction, they would stop and talk to the property owner without waiting for a neighbour to call in a complaint.

Moved by Councillor Koepke

CR-210225-004

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-014 respecting By-law Enforcement 2020 review, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."

Carried.

9. MATTERS POSTPONED

There were no matters postponed.

10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

11. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

12. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

There was no correspondence provided for information.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Dodd adjourned the meeting at 6:11 p.m.