

Policy Statement

1. The City recognizes that council members will incur expenses as part of their roles and responsibilities. This policy will establish a baseline budget for Council expenditures and ensure that Council members do not personally incur the costs of conducting Council business. It will also safeguard the appropriate use and accounting of municipal funds based on the principles of accountability, integrity, and transparency.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for Members of City Council who incur expenses, including expenses incurred when travelling on authorized City business and to ensure members are not personally responsible for expenses related to Council business.

Scope

3. This policy applies to all currently elected members of City Council.

Definitions

4. For the purposes of this policy,
 - "City" means the City of Owen Sound, and a reference to the City is a reference to the geographical area or The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound as the context requires;
 - "Council" means the Council of the City;
 - "Council business" refers to activities conducted by Council in keeping with the provisions of the Municipal Act. Examples of Council business may include attendance at conferences, educational forums and other municipally-sanctioned functions;
 - "Per diem" means an amount paid in addition to base remuneration, provided for the purposes of covering meals and incidentals, as specified by the requirements outlined in the Policy;
 - "Reimbursable expenses" means expenses incurred by a Member of Council that are eligible for reimbursement under this policy, provided they are directly related to municipal business and are supported by appropriate

documentation (e.g., itemized receipts, registration confirmation, mileage logs). Reimbursable expenses may also include costs such as business cards, registration for municipal functions, or other approved expenditures directly related to Council business;

“Ineligible expenses” means expenses that are personal in nature or not directly related to municipal business and therefore not eligible for reimbursement. Examples include, but are not limited to, alcohol, personal entertainment, expenses for accompanying persons, traffic or parking violations, and upgrades for travel or accommodations without justification.

Policy

Legislation

5. The guiding legislation for the Council Expense Policy is the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Annual Expense Allocation and Limitations

6. Each Member of Council is allocated **\$3,750 per calendar year** for the purposes of conducting Council business.
7. This approved amount per this policy shall be included as a standing amount in the City’s operating budget each year.
8. The Mayor’s conference expenses are not subject to the \$3,750 annual allocation, but all other Mayor expenses for conducting Council business are subject to the same limitations as those of all other Council members.
9. Any member of Council appointed or elected by Council to an Association or Local Board representing City Council (such as the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority or the Owen Sound Police Services Board) will have those costs paid over and above this policy.
10. Any reimbursable expenses resulting in an over-expenditure over and above the allocation are the personal responsibility of the member of Council and shall be paid personally by the member.
11. Any ineligible expenses are the personal responsibility of the member of Council and shall not be reimbursed under this policy.
12. There is no carry-over of deficits or surpluses from year to year.
13. Should any member of Council wish to exceed the standing annual expenditure amount, the member of Council must seek Council’s approval to exceed the amount before the annual limit is exceeded.

14. Following each Municipal Election, all Elected Council members (including incumbents) must attend an orientation workshop. Any costs related to this orientation will be in addition to the annual expenditure limit identified within the Policy as they are included as part of the City's annual operating budget.
15. Where unique circumstances arise, Council may, by resolution, approve reimbursement outside the standard provisions of this policy.

Spending Guidelines and Accounting Procedures

16. Expenses must relate to Council business for the City of Owen Sound.
17. Expenses must be charged in the year they are incurred. Expenses may not be carried forward to future years.
18. Members of Council must incur the expenses. Expenses incurred by third parties cannot be claimed.
19. Individual Members of Council shall not use City funds to make individual grants or donations to organizations or persons for any form of sponsorship, fundraising or for providing a personal benefit to specific individual ratepayers or businesses.
20. Members of Council must provide proper documentation for all expense claims, including detailed original receipts showing a breakdown of taxes, in order to be reimbursed.

Travel Expenses

21. Travel expenses incurred travelling within the City of Owen Sound will be assumed by the individual member of Council as part of their overall remuneration and is not subject to reimbursement under this policy.
22. Council members required to use their personal motor vehicle for Council business outside of the City of Owen Sound boundaries shall be reimbursed for such use. The submission and reimbursement will follow the current approved Canada Revenue Agency rate as stated in the City's Mileage and Vehicle Policy (HR006).

Conferences/Educational Opportunities

23. Reimbursable expenses incurred by Council members attending an approved convention, conference, seminar, or workshop shall be reimbursed up to the budgetary limit in this policy. These expenses include registration, accommodation, travel expenses (mileage or out-of-pocket travel expenses), and parking.
24. Wherever possible, a City Corporate credit card will be used to complete registrations and secure overnight accommodations, utilizing a credit card authorization form to avoid out-of-pocket expenses for Council members. Upon check-in, the Council member may be required to provide a valid credit card for potential incidentals incurred during the stay.
25. It is the responsibility of the member of Council to pay for all expenses that are not included in the registration or accommodation amounts by their own means and submit all eligible expenses for reimbursement.
26. Any costs associated with the attendance of a Council member's accompanying companion shall be paid for by the member of Council and are not subject to expense reimbursement.
27. Per diem meal allowances shall be provided for all meals not covered by registration. Per diem expense allocations are to be submitted and reimbursed in accordance with the Training Policy (HR007).
28. Council members are encouraged to practice fiscal and environmental responsibility to utilize group or government rates wherever possible and travel together utilizing sustainable transportation methods.
29. Any cancellation fees that cannot be refunded shall form part of the annual expenditures allowed for the member of the Council.

Expense Claim Requirements and Approval Process

30. A detailed statement of expenses and all required supporting documentation must be submitted to the City Manager for approval by the 15 of the month for all expenses incurred in the previous month. Late submissions may not be reimbursed unless the delay is justified and approved by the City Manager.

31. Invoices must include a description of the goods purchased or services rendered, including the cost, applicable taxes and HST registration number if applicable. Any refundable HST paid to vendors shall not be included in the amount charged to the Council member's annual allocation.
32. In the event a receipt is lost or illegible, a signed personal declaration will be required. The associated claim may or may not be approved based upon the type and magnitude of the expense involved.

Reporting on Annual Expenditures

33. Prior to March 31 of each calendar year, the City Clerk must provide to Council a statement of all remuneration and expenses paid to each member of Council and members of appointed boards and committees for approval on a public Council agenda, to meet legislative requirements.

Policy review

34. The Deputy Treasurer will review this policy:
 - a. every five (5) years to ensure effectiveness and compliance with current business processes; or
 - b. sooner, if required, based on legislative changes.
35. The Deputy Treasurer is authorized to make such administrative changes to this policy as appropriate to keep the policy current. Any revision to the policy's intent must be presented to Council for consideration.

Related Information and Resources

Internal

36. [HR007 Training Policy](#)
37. [HR006 Mileage and Vehicle Rental Policy](#)

External

38. [Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 | ontario.ca](#)

Appendices

39. None

Revision History

Authority	Date	Approval	Description of Amendment
Council	2004-04-09	Resolution	
Council	2007-03-02	Resolution	
Council	2010-11-22	Resolution	

Authority	Date	Approval	Description of Amendment
Council			formerly CrS-HR40; revised to new template with new name