



Administrative Report

Office of the Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

To: Robert Maisonville, Chief Administrative Officer

**From: Mary Birch
Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk**

Date: Thursday, November 28, 2019

**Subject: Proposed Council Services and Communications
Departmental Reorganization**

Report #: N/A

Purpose

To propose a reorganization for the Council Services Department including Communications services.

Background

The Council Services Department was originally created in 1999 with the formal appointment of a County Clerk, separate from the previously combined position of CAO/Clerk. At that time the Department consisted of the Clerk and a Recording Secretary with some part of the duties of the CAO's Executive Secretary continuing to support the Clerk's department with Agenda preparation.

With the constant change in legislation, combined with the advancement of technology, the role of the Clerk has grown to encompass a far broader scope of responsibility over the past 20 years. Records and information management, privacy, accessibility, the frequency of litigation and the constant advancement of technology have made it impossible for the Clerk to effectively manage the workload involved in carrying out all the duties associated with this position.

In addition to the duties of the Clerk, this Director's position is also responsible for the oversight of the Corporate Communications division (added in 1996) and Community Services/Housing with Supports program for the County, which was an addition to the position in 2018.

Discussion

Creation of Deputy Clerk Position

The position of a Clerk is a mandatory position, created by the Municipal Act and many of the duties of the Clerk cannot legally be carried out by anyone not appointed by Council as the Clerk, or anyone delegated the Clerk's authority through the appointment of a Deputy Clerk. Council is not even legally able to hold a Council meeting without the Clerk or designate being in attendance. That is a major consideration in the decision to appoint a Deputy Clerk. Currently, the Chief Administrative Officer has been appointed to act as the Deputy Clerk. That delegation of authority has provided a legal backup to allow the continuation of Council meetings if the Clerk were to be absent from a meeting, but it does not assist with backfilling the position to assume the duties of the Clerk, should an extended absence be necessary.

Additionally, with a mind to embarking on succession planning for the Corporation, the Clerk's position is one which clearly is suited to the development of a plan to begin training a possible successor to the position which would ideally allow for a smooth transition upon retirement of the Clerk.

Taking into consideration the current duties and workload of the role of the Clerk, it is the opinion of the Director of Council and Community Services that it is the appropriate time to create a permanent, full-time Deputy Clerk position. A proposed Job Description is set out in **Appendix "I-A"**.

A substantial portion of the Deputy Clerk role would involve providing support and administering all aspects of the corporate records management functions. Electronic Records Management was introduced in 2000, however, there are still departments within the Corporation who continue with their own records management practices, creating a massive amount of duplication and inefficiency in addition to putting the Corporation at risk for a number of legal actions for either having records which should no longer be held or for not being able to locate records which should be readily available. Over the past, almost 20 years, the legislation related to records has created

Confidential Administrative Report

Page 3

November 28, 2019

Council Services and Communications Proposed Re-organization

the need for a much more regulated environment in which we work in. Legal penalties are now in place for violations of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and the Personal Health Information Protection of Privacy Act (PHIPPA).

In addition to the risks, there is also the inefficiency of wasted physical storage space and electronic storage. Changes in the workforce are also making it abundantly clear that with the loss of corporate knowledge of long term employees, there is a need to have a good records management system for new employees to be able to access historical records. It's been the experience of the Director of Council and Community Services/Clerk within the past year that an extensive amount of her time, as well as others, is being spent searching for information for new employees in order to assist them in doing their jobs. As well, through the process of relocating offices to newly renovated spaces within the facility, it brought to light that for decades, records were not subject to any type of retention schedules and thousands of files require reviewing for determination of destruction. The recent approval to fund a Records Management Needs Assessment will assist in identifying the gaps in the current records management system and recommendations for improvement, but a substantial amount of staff time will need to be dedicated to the function of records management to enact change and sustainable improvement in records management.

The Deputy Clerk position would also take over the duties of the Accessibility Coordinator which are currently incorporated into the role of the Manager of Corporate Communications. That position, too, is proposed for a modification of duties, discussed later in this report.

Council Services Administrative Assistant

With the creation of the position of the Deputy Clerk, some of the duties of the Council Services Administrative Assistant would be modified as well and that position would report directly to the Deputy Clerk. Currently the CAO's Executive Secretary is providing support with the Council Agenda preparation, as well as post meeting disposition of matters related to agreements and by-laws approved at the meeting. Consolidation of all support duties related to the Council Services department would allow for better coordination and efficient use of resources, allowing the position of the CAO's Executive Secretary to be dedicated entirely to the CAO's support.

The Council Services Administrative Assistant would also provide support to the Community Services Section and the Communications Section, particularly in the area of records management and coordination.

Manager, Corporate Communication and Organizational Development

The current position of the Manager, Corporate Communications and Accessibility was created in 1996. While it was recognized at the time that there was a need for assisting with communication through the website and on social media, since that time, the role has grown to meet the demand for increased internal communications through employee engagement initiatives. Further, through the results of the employee engagement surveys, there have been identified needs for other employee engagement programs. The need for someone to take ownership of these corporate programs and manage them is critical to their success.

Additionally, there is a need for a manager of such initiatives as strategic planning and corporate development to be managed and maintained on an ongoing basis. Within the Corporation there is a propensity for new software to be purchased, but never utilized to its full advantage or across the entire Corporation. Training programs for staff related to implementing new software, business processes and assisting with orientations would also be included in the new duties of this position to be renamed Manager, Corporate Communications and Organizational Development.

As previously indicated, the Accessibility Coordinator duties, originally assigned to this position would be transferred to the Deputy Clerk position. The following is a summary of the additional responsibilities designated for this position:

- Completes administrative projects by identifying and implementing new technology and resources; redesigning systems; recommending re-deployment of designated resources.
- Maintains continuity of work operations by documenting and communicating needed actions to management; discovering irregularities; determining continuing needs.
- Maintains administrative workflow by studying methods; implementing efficiencies; developing reporting procedures.
- Creates and revises systems and procedures by analyzing operating practices; studying utilization of computer and software technologies; evaluating personnel and technological requirements;
- Resolves administrative problems by analyzing information; identifying and communication solutions.

Confidential Administrative Report

Page 5

November 28, 2019

Council Services and Communications Proposed Re-organization

- Develop project plans, business cases, timelines, budgets and spending forecasts for Strategic Initiatives.
- Train staff on appropriate processes, tools, orientation, etc.
- Manage the implementation of multiple concurrent projects and initiatives of varying complexity in a time efficient, cost and risk mitigating manner. Monitor and control project activities according to plan, schedule and budget

Financial Implications

The Deputy Clerk Position, being new, would require an evaluation to determine placement on the grid. For budgeting purposes, the Deputy Clerk position is estimated to fall within Band 5. It is proposed that the Deputy Clerk position could reasonably be filled by March 2020.

Recommendation

That the proposed reorganization for the Council Services department be approved including the creation of the Deputy Clerk position.

Respectfully Submitted

Mary Birch

Originally Signed by

Mary Birch Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

Appendix No.	Title of Appendix
Appendix I-A	Job Description – Deputy Clerk