



Administrative Report

Office of the Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

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

Date: Wednesday, April 07, 2021

Subject: Approval of 2021 Conferences

Report #: 2021-0407-CCS-R004-MB

Purpose

To amend the Conference/Convention Attendance Policy 94-004 to reflect virtual attendance and to seek approval for the conferences which members of County Council may attend in 2021, in accordance with Conference/Convention Attendance Policy 94-004, as amended, attached as Appendix 1.

Background

Policy 94-004, which establishes a policy related to County Councillor attendance at conferences, recognizes the need for members of Council to enhance their knowledge and keep abreast of the changing technologies and legislative requirements affecting the Corporation's business. Annually, County Council identifies and approves Conferences which historically have provided information and resources which help County Councillors to better carry out the duties of their office.

Discussion

The report to approve annual Conferences for County Council is usually presented in the year prior, however, due to the uncertainty surrounding

what COVID-19 restrictions would be in 2021, the report on 2021 Approved Conferences was deferred. While most municipal conferences have now identified that they will be virtual again for 2021, there is one Annual General Meeting which has been identified as being an in person, socially distanced event.

The Conference/Convention Attendance Policy for Councillors 94-004 was last revised in 2008. At this time, the policy does not address attendance at virtual conferences. Proposed amendments to Policy 94-004, attached as Appendix 1, add wording to clarify eligible expenditures for virtual conferences. As well, in recent years, it has been noted that the maximum annual conference expenditure amount of \$3,000.00 (exclusive of registrations) was falling short of actual expenses for some of the larger Association conferences. A minimum increase of \$500.00 per year is proposed to address this shortfall. Some minor housekeeping amendments are also proposed.

Council should be aware that the responsibility for registering members of County Council for conferences, workshops, seminars, etc., as well as for making related travel arrangements (when that resumes) will now reside with the Council Services Administrative Assistant, Crystal Sylvestre. Crystal can be reached by email csylvestre@countyofessex.ca or by phone 519-776-6441 ext. 1323.

The following Conferences scheduled for 2021 are proposed for approval:

ROMA

Rural Ontario Municipal Association
January 25-26, 2021
Virtual

OGRA

Ontario Good Roads Association
February 22-24, 2021
Virtual

AMO – OSUM

Ontario Small Urban Municipalities
CANCELLED for 2021

FCM

Federation of Canadian Municipalities
June 1 to 4, 2021
Virtual

AMO

Association of Municipalities of Ontario
August 15-18, 2021
Virtual

GLSLCI

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
August 25 to 27, 2021
St. Catharines

TAC

Transportation Association of Canada
September 20 to October 1, 2021
Virtual

Financial Implications

Conference expenses for Council were approved in the 2021 budget, assuming that most would return to in person conferences in 2021. Even with the proposed annual conference expenditure increase from \$3,000 to \$3,500, there will be savings realized in the 2021 Council Services budget, since, as previously mentioned, most will once again be virtual attendance only in 2021.

Recommendation

THAT the Conference/Convention Attendance Policy 94-004 be amended as proposed in Report Number 2021-0407-CCS-R004-MB;

AND FURTHER THAT the conferences identified in Report Number 2021-04-07-CCS-004-MB, be approved for attendance by the members of Essex County Council for the year 2021, in accordance with Conference/Convention Attendance Policy 94-004, as amended.

Respectfully Submitted

Mary Birch

Mary Birch Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
Appendix 1	Conference/Convention Attendance Policy 94-004 Proposed Amendments