



Administrative Report

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Subject: Staffing Requests – 2024 Budget

Report #: 2024-0221-CAO-R03-SZ

Purpose

To seek approval to proceed to recruitment for the following seven (7) staff positions, as included in the approved 2024 Budget:

1. Essex Windsor EMS – Shift Scheduling Clerk
2. Infrastructure & Planning Services – Senior Planner
3. Information Technology – Director, Information Technology
4. Sun Parlor Home – Assistant Director of Nursing
5. Legislative & Community Services – Community Services Coordinator
6. Legislative & Community Services – Clerk
7. Legislative & Community Services – Customer Service Representative

Note: Positions with the Essex County Library Board are approved at the Library Board level and therefore have not been included in this report.

Background

Corporate Policy 91-001, Employment/Hiring, provides the process for considering and approving new positions to be added to the existing staffing complement. Section 6.0 of the Employment/Hiring policy requires:

- The request to be presented to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for review. Such presentation is to include the Department Head's written business case for adding the position;
- The CAO is to present a recommendation to County Council for approval;

- Once the position is approved by Council, the hiring manager and Director, Human Resources will establish the appropriate recruitment strategy.

At the January 17, 2024 Budget meeting of County Council, the overall budget was approved which included funding for the addition of the seven above referenced positions. The Financial Implications section of this report provides more detail on the budget funds available to support the recruitment of these positions in 2024.

Discussion

Essex Windsor EMS - Shift Scheduling Clerk

Over the past two years, the scheduling department has witnessed a consistent rise in the workload of Shift Scheduling Clerks due to various factors including additional provisions in the new Collective Agreement and Letters of Understanding. Compounding this surge in demand is the increase in scheduled absences, the introduction of new roles such as Field Training Officers, and a higher complement of Community Paramedics. Recognizing the need for extended coverage, the scheduling department currently operates with two clerks working 8-hour shifts on weekdays. However, as a 24-hour service with varying shift start and end times, scheduling demands of a dynamic workforce persist beyond these core hours, currently managed by District Chiefs, placing additional strain on an already busy operational department. The addition of a shift scheduling clerk will add to the existing scheduling team and support scheduling services beyond the standard work week. Augmenting shift scheduling services will improve adaptability and flexibility as the service responds to operating pressures outside the control of EMS.

Infrastructure & Planning Services – Senior Planner

The addition of a Senior Planner will support review services and take on a leadership role for advancing climate change and policy, including the Regional Energy Plan, and Natural Heritage and Water Resources policy. The Planning Services Division currently serves as the approval authority for the Province on planning matters, and is a resource to local municipalities, agencies and the general public. With changes to provincial legislation, Planning Services is now responsible for additional duties of preparing terms of reference for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), reviewing the EIAs, and consulting on mitigation measures. A second Senior Planner with environmental expertise will support the additional workload arising from unprecedented growth, and allow the Manager, Planning Services, to support

Council's initiatives, focus on strategic tasks, mentor and lead the development of professional planners.

Information Technology – Director, Information Technology

The Financial and IT Services Department recently underwent a comprehensive Service Delivery Review by Blackline Consulting in 2023, shedding light on opportunities for enhancement within our existing structure. The IT division is currently overseen by a Manager with over 30 years of service to the Corporation. The Manager reports in to the Director of Financial Services/Treasurer. In preparation for the Manager's future retirement, and to support a more strategic governance model for information technology to match the structure of IT services in municipalities of similar size and scale to the County, a Director position is being recommended, separate from Financial Services. Information Technology permeates every aspect of municipal service provision. The complexity and security of IT services has grown to a level warranting its own department structure. The addition of a dedicated Director of IT presents numerous advantages, including specialized expertise, enhanced alignment of IT with business goals, greater risk management and a higher level of integration into the senior leadership team.

Sun Parlor Home - Assistant Director of Nursing (ADON)

SPH must comply with numerous regulations and pieces of legislation from the Province. The existing complement of assistant directors are responsible for a growing list of mandated programs including, but not limited to:

- Falls Prevention and Management Program and committee (O.Reg. 246/22 s.54)
- Skin and Wound Care Program and committee (O.Reg. 246/22 s.55)
- Continence and Bowel Management Program and committee (O.Reg. 246/22 s.56)
- Pain Management Program and committee (O.Reg. 246/22 s.57)
- Responsive Behaviour Program (O.Reg. 246/22 s.58)
- Palliative Care Program and committee (O.Reg. 246/22 s.61)
- Medication Administration Management (O.Reg. 246/22 s.123)
- Continuous Quality Improvement Program, committee with designated lead (O.Reg. 246/22 s.168)
- Training and Orientation with designated lead (O.Reg. 246/22 s.257)

The additional requirements and responsibilities created by new statutory regulations, regular duties and the 4 hours of care mandate has created significant impact on the Nursing leadership team. Existing capacity

constraints within the Nursing department challenge SPH's ability to meet the legislative requirements, compliance and ongoing improvements to resident care. The addition of a fifth ADON will address key service gaps, support a more manageable workload across the team of assistant directors and provide more meaningful operational and administrative support to the Nursing and Personal Care Team.

Legislative & Community Services – Coordinator, Community Services

The Community Services Department's scope of work has significantly grown over the past few years. In addition to providing direct oversight to the Residential Services Homes (RSH) Program, (formerly called the Housing with Supports Program), the Community Services Manager has taken a leadership and collaborative role in working closely with the region's Consolidated Service Manager to advocate for homelessness services to be located in the County.

The Community Services Manager has been supporting some community service providers with affordable housing projects that are receiving funding from the regional Consolidated Service Manager, the Provincial Government and/or the Federal Government. It is anticipated that the Community Services Manager's involvement with these types of projects will increase with the development of the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy. A Regional Affordable Housing Strategy has been launched and a consultant has been assigned to complete a fulsome evaluation of the current housing landscape in the region and will provide a report with recommendations on how to address the affordable housing crisis in Windsor-Essex County. The Community Services Manager will be a key member of the Steering Committee to help inform the work. This work will continue far beyond the development of the strategy and the Community Services Manager will be actively involved in leading the implementation of the strategy in the County and in the development of affordable housing projects in the County.

In addition, there are changes in both the funding model and delivery of services of the RSH Program and other homelessness programs within the County, which County Administration and the Consolidated Service Manager have agreed to. Many of these changes will take effect on April 1st, 2024. The regional Consolidated Services Manager obtained a consultant to review the Residential Services Homes Program in 2022. The final report is expected to be released imminently. The consultant provided a preliminary list of recommendations in 2023, that will require implementation. In order to successfully implement the recommendations, additional support to the

Residential Services Homes, as well as to the front-line workers will be essential.

County Council has also previously committed to funding operational support in the form of case management support to an affordable housing project that is in progress at Augustine Villas. With the addition of a Community Services Coordinator, this person will take an active role in the preparation of statistics and reports which will free up the Housing Workers to be able to provide case management support to the residents that will occupy the 6 affordable units at Augustine Villas. The Housing Workers will continue participating in the administrative functions by gathering the information and the Coordinator will analyze and summarize the information to include in reports.

With the expansion of the duties assigned to the Community Services Manager, the addition of a Community Services Coordinator is necessary to provide capacity for the Manager to adequately oversee the Residential Services Homes Program, while meeting County Council's expectations related to advocacy, guidance and support to affordable housing projects and homelessness solutions in within the County.

Legislative & Community Services – Clerk

The Legislative & Community Services Department is a department that has evolved over the past 25 years in response to ever-changing service level requirements and need to implement frequent new legislation. The current Director, Legislative & Community Services will be retiring in 2024. As such, it is the opportune time to review the organizational structure of this department and look to address changes that will ensure a continuity of knowledge within the department, a better alignment of roles with statutory requirements and industry norms for similar positions and adequate support for Council and Administration into the future.

A proposed separation of the Clerk's position from the Director of Legislative & Community Services position would see the statutory duties under the Municipal Act assigned to the Clerk's position, as well as other related legislation and regulations. That position would be responsible for overseeing Council Services, corporate-wide records management, municipal freedom of information and protection of privacy and accessibility programs.

County Council made the decision to create a position for an in-house County Solicitor in 2022. Since that time, the benefits of having in-house legal expertise, not only in financial savings, but in having the ability to effectively manage contracts, claims, and risk in a timely manner has been demonstrated consistently. The demands on the time of the County

Solicitor, however, are increasing. This year is expected to bring about an array of challenges for Legal Services, including ongoing property acquisitions for capacity expansion projects, matters pertaining to the Ontario Land Tribunal, claims administration, and the review of procurement contracts. Removing the duties of the Clerk from the Director of Legislative & Community Services position and revising the requirements of that position to have a law degree will assist in meeting the increasing demands in this area. The suggested adjustment is aimed at effectively addressing the rising demand on internal legal services and will provide a dedicated Clerk position to focus on the statutory duties required of that position.

Legislative & Community Services – Customer Service Representative

The design of the Essex County Civic Centre is not conducive to restricting public access to staff spaces by the general public. Most municipal administration buildings have a central point of entry and require guests to sign-in by acknowledging their name and the purpose for their visit.

During 2023, after a meeting where the Civic Centre was attended by members of the public that exceeded a safe capacity for the facility, policies were developed to address protocols for visitors to the Civic Centre to follow, including the requirement for attendees at Council and other meetings to pre-register. Consultants with expertise in building security were engaged to provide recommendations on ways to improve the safety and security of staff within the Civic Centre, as well as for guests utilizing the meeting areas.

The central reception desk at the base of the spiral staircase in the lobby was equipped with hardware and software for guests to register and print a guest label to identify themselves while in the facility. Administration has attempted to staff this desk with employees on modified work assignments. There has been some success with this, however, there are long periods of time when there is no one available under that program and it is recognized that when there is no one physically staffing that reception desk, the majority of guests to the building simply ignore the registration requirement. This negates all the security protocols which have been recommended for the Civic Centre.

A Customer Service Representative position was approved in the 2024 budget to fulfil the need recognized in 2023, to ensure the safety of people entering and working in the Civic Centre. In addition, this position would also assist the RIM team in supporting records management needs of various departments.

Specifically, some of the responsibilities of this position would include greeting and welcoming all guests, including Council Members, County of Essex employees, tenants, and the public to the Essex County Civic Centre and managing the guest sign-in procedures, issuing guest badges, and ensuring compliance with security protocols. This individual would monitor access to the Civic Centre and enforce security protocols including reporting any security concerns or suspicious activities to the appropriate authorities. Providing responses to inquiries regarding the facility, scheduled meetings and events, occupants’ services and directing guests to their destinations, as well as notifying the appropriate individuals of the arrival of their guests would also be duties of the Customer Service Representative.

In addition to acting as a concierge for mail and courier services, in-person inquiries, general correspondence, telephone calls and email communication for the Essex County Civic Centre occupants, this individual would act as a backup and assist in scheduling appointments, meetings, and conference room reservations for the facility and maintain and update the Civic Centre's events calendar and distribute information as needed.

As previously indicated, this position would also include some support responsibilities for the Records and Information Management (RIM) team. It was identified in the Records Management Service Delivery Review in 2021, that three positions were required to sustain the corporate-wide records management program that is being implemented. To date, two dedicated positions for the RIM program have been implemented. The addition of some of the RIM duties to the Customer Service Representative position would assist in ensuring the RIM responsibilities are sustained across the Corporation.

Financial Implications

The chart below details the available funding in the 2024 Budget for these seven (7) positions.

Department	Position	Annual Cost (Wages & Benefits)	# of Months in Budget	Approved Funding in 2024 Budget
EMS	Shift Scheduling Clerk	\$93,279	12	\$93,279
IPS	Senior Planner	\$129,232	9	\$96,924

Department	Position	Annual Cost (Wages & Benefits)	# of Months in Budget	Approved Funding in 2024 Budget
FIN	Director, Information Technology	\$241,204	9	\$180,903
SPH	Assistant Director of Nursing	\$147,681	12	\$147,681
LCS	Community Services Coordinator	\$118,813	9	\$89,110
LCS	Clerk	\$192,095	12	\$192,095
LCS	Customer Service Representative	\$69,123	9	\$51,842

Consultations

Senior Leadership Team
 Human Resources Department

Recommendation

It is the recommendation of the Chief Administrative Officer that County Council:

Approve the hiring of the following positions:

1. Essex Windsor EMS – Shift Scheduling Clerk
2. Infrastructure & Planning Services – Senior Planner
3. Financial Services – Director, Information Technology
4. Sun Parlor Home – Assistant Director of Nursing
5. Legislative & Community Services – Community Services Coordinator
6. Legislative & Community Services – Clerk
7. Legislative & Community Services – Customer Service Representative

And authorize the development of a recruitment strategy to fill the new positions.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
1	Job Description– EMS Shift Scheduling Clerk
2	Org Chart – EMS
3	Job Description - Senior Planner
4	Org Chart – Infrastructure & Planning Services
5	Job Description - Director, Information Technology
6	Org Chart – Information Technology
7	Job Description - Assistant Director of Nursing
8	Org Chart – Sun Parlor Home
9	Job Description – Coordinator, Community Services
10	Job Description – Clerk
11	Job Description – Customer Service Representative
12	Org Chart – Legislative & Community Services