



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

November 21, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Lowry, Chair
P. Sweetnam, Vice-Chair
J. Mason
B. King
E. El-Chantiry

MEMBERS ABSENT: P. Kehoe
A. Tennant
J. Atkinson

STAFF PRESENT: S. McIntyre, General Manager
S. Millard, Treasurer
T. Fragnito, Finance Assistant
M. Craig, Planning and Regulations Manager
S. Lawryk, Property Manager
A. Broadbent, IC&T Manager
P. Tapley, Recording Secretary

C. Lowry called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

FAAC11/21/22-1

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: B. King

Resolved, That the Agenda for the November 21, 2022 Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes from Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting held October 11, 2022.

FAAC11/21/22-2

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: B. King

Resolved, That the Minutes of the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting held October 11, 2022 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Alternate Work Arrangements Policies, Report 3261/22

S. McIntyre presented two policies: Work from Home Policy and Compressed Work Week Policy. These policies were developed in accordance with the 2021 *Workforce Plan* to improve work life balance. Both were trialed during the pandemic and although there were challenges implementing a hybrid approach, there were also many benefits. For employees who cannot work from home (i.e. field crews and front desk staff), a compressed work week approach was developed. Both forms of work arrangements were well received by staff.

A staff working group discussed issues and specific needs. The attached policies were circulated to all employees and no comments were received.

P. Sweetnam asked if staff were satisfied with these alternate work arrangements? S. McIntyre confirmed that they are supportive of these alternative work arrangements.

FAAC11/21/22-3

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Committee recommend that the Board approve amendment of section 2.3.1 of the Employee Manual as set out in this report; and add Attachment 1 to the Employee Manual as Appendix 13.5 and Attachment 2 as Appendix 13.6.

“CARRIED”

3. Cell Phone Policy, Report 3262/22

S. McIntyre presented the new cell phone policy that was developed because most employees use personal cell phones for work or while working from home. The lack of a cell phone policy has led to inconsistencies and confusion in compensation and became a greater issue during COVID. She explained that a working group was established to consider options and a cost analysis was undertaken. The proposed policy provides for three levels of cellular cost support and is not expected to have a significant cost impact.

J. Mason asked if there was a Level 0, meaning are there any employees not eligible for the plan. S. McIntyre stated that there was only one position that may not require a cell phone, but in the spirit of fairness and the potential to work from home in the future, it would be beneficial for all employees to be under this Policy.

E. El-Chantiry asked if staff checked with Ottawa, Carleton Place, or other larger municipalities to determine if there was a possibility of joining or bundling with their plans for potential cost savings. S. McIntyre responded the current plan is very cost effective and no change is recommended at this time, but that option would be investigated if things change.

P. Sweetnam asked if the current plan was shared? S. McIntyre explained that the current plan provides each individual with 6 GB of data and unlimited calling and texting in Canada at a cost of \$25/month/person.

B. King raised concerns with respect to Freedom of Information and privacy issues due to mixing of company and personal information on the same phone; and questioned what problems could arise if an employee is terminated. He stated that if a cell phone is required for work it should be supplied by the employer. S. McIntyre stated that consideration was given to the use of shared corporate phones for field use but that was impractical for work from home situations. She acknowledged that the policy does not address confidentiality and that staff could revisit the policy if desired by the Committee.

FAAC11/21/22-4

MOVED BY: E. El-Chantiry

SECONDED BY: B. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Committee recommend that the Board approve amendment of Section 2.7 Technology – Internet, E-Mail, Cell Phones as set out in this report and addition of Attachment 1 to the Employee Manual as Appendix 13.7.

“CARRIED”

4. Fee Policy and Schedule, Report 3263/22

S. McIntyre outlined that new regulations require update of MVCA's Fee Policy, which is proposed to replace them in its entirety as it is very dated. She explained that the recommended policy is based upon three key principles: recover full-costs where feasible; balance user-pay principle with maintaining affordable access for all; and harmonized fees with neighboring conservation authorities in shared municipalities where feasible.

M. Craig tabled the 2023 Fee Schedule for approval and confirmed that the fees align with the new regulations. He highlighted the following key changes: Stewardship Program fees for supplies; the addition of septic program fees due to implementation of the expanded program; addition of a \$30 fee for providing written technical responses to a map queries; and a fee for 'Shoreline alteration/protection, channelization permits' that had accidentally been deleted from 2022 Fee Schedule.

S. McIntyre noted that Fee Appeals will be submitted to the GM and not to the Board of Directors. Given the 30-day appeal period, she stated that a special meeting late in December would be required if there were any major objections to the Policy.

P. Sweetnam asked if fees would be fully cost recovered in 2023 and could they be raised via this Policy. S. McIntyre responded that full cost recovery would not be achieved in 2023.

J. Mason asked for clarification on the scope of what was being approved as the Board already approved the 2023 fees in October. S. McIntyre confirmed that the Board is only approving the specific changes identified by M. Craig, and the new Fee Policy as required by regulation.

FAAC11/21/22-5

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Committee recommend that the Board:

- a) approve in principle the Fee Policy and additions to the 2023 Fee Schedule as presented herein.**
- b) authorize enactment of the Fee Policy and 2023 Fee Schedule upon completion of the 30-day notification period if no major concerns are raised by stakeholders.**
- c) Direct staff to return to the Board upon completion of the 30-day review period if any major concerns are raised by stakeholders.**

"CARRIED"

5. Draft 2023 Budget, Report 3264/22

S. McIntyre reviewed proposed expenditures and revenues as set out in the Draft 2023 Budget. She outlined that the proposed municipal levy increase aligns with direction received from the Board in October:

- 3% to the operating budget for inflation;
- 4.5% to the capital budget to implement the 10-year Capital Plan;
- 1.5% increase to both to provide for assessment growth;

and, previous Board decisions to hire/retain staff to meet workload demands, and to phase those costs onto the levy over a period of years while maintaining the Operating Reserve balance in a target range.

S. McIntyre explained that the base budget pressure equals a combined increase of 4.5%; and, that the levy pressure increases to 7.66% when a third (1/3) of payroll costs are moved from the Operating Reserve onto the levy, as previously approved.

S. McIntyre outlined specific pressures on the operating and capital programs; and as directed by the Board in October, she tabled several options to reduce pressures on municipal levies.

P. Sweetnam requested that the “Glen Cairn Reserve” be included under ‘Reserve Investments’. S. McIntyre explained that it had been renamed to “Category 1 Priority Projects” during review of reserve funds earlier in the year. The change was made to reflect how monies in that restricted reserve can be used rather than how the original funds were obtained.

J. Mason asked how draft budgets of RVCA and South Nation compare to MVCA’s draft budget. S. McIntyre reported that they had tabled a 2.5-3.0% cost of living increase plus growth. She added that MVCA has significantly higher capital requirements; and that the other two CAs have larger baseline operating budgets and staff complement.

A discussion took place on the budget, the options, and the pros and cons of establishing a new upset limit to the municipal levy. As the Board had already given sign off on the budget envelope, members agreed to elevate the budget as proposed along with the options to reduce operating and capital levies.

B. King stated that he would like to have seen more options to reduce the Operating budget. Further, he requested a tally of all MVCA salaries and wages from 2022 and 2023. S. McIntyre will provide to the Board with the next version of the Budget.

P. Sweetnam raised the point that J. Karau had identified previously regarding the need for a Communications person for outreach and related organizational activities. S. McIntyre acknowledged the need and stated that MVCA has an agreement with RVCA to provide social media support, that their role is being expanded to include other communications services, and the arrangement is working well.

E. El-Chantiry mentioned there is an upcoming meeting on flood plain mapping where a federally funded group are speaking on the subject of Property Evaluations and wondered if members were aware. S. McIntyre asked to have the details forwarded to her attention and will follow up.

FAAC10/11/22-6

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Committee recommend that the Board:

- a) Direct staff to adjust the Draft 2023 Budget by reducing the capital levy by \$120,000 and reducing the operating levy by \$56,000.**
- b) Recommend the revised Draft 2023 Budget be presented to the Board for consideration and circulation to member Municipalities.**
- c) Direct staff to continue to identify alternative cost savings options for operating and capital levies.**

“CARRIED”

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

P. Tapley, Recording Secretary

C. Lowry, Chair