Date: 2020-10-07

From: Kassie Rocca, Interim CAO/Director of Finance

Subject: Establishing a Climate Change Committee

Report: FIN2020-13

Recommendation

That Council of the Township of Georgian Bluffs hereby supports establishing the Georgian Bluffs Climate Change Committee, and

That the Committee be formed of five members of the Climate Change Action Team, and

That ___________ and ______________ are hereby appointed to the Committee as representatives of Council, and

That By-law 2020-098, being a By-law to establish the Committee and approve the associated Terms of Reference, be adopted.

Background

Georgian Bluffs staff have been approached by the Georgian Bluffs Climate Change Action Team who would like to work with the Township to identify climate change issues and build resiliency in our Township. The Team is made up of approximately 75 community members who have been working to raise public awareness about climate change. These community members come from a variety of backgrounds and hold a wealth of knowledge about climate change and steps that can be taken to mitigate the effects our Township operations have on climate change. The group can also provide expertise on how to protect Township operations and ratepayers from climate change as well. Information about the existing Climate Change Action Team is attached to this report.
Analysis

Climate change is being felt in communities throughout Canada, and Georgian Bluffs is no different. Recently, Georgian Bluffs has been dealing with rising water levels and more frequent weather related events such as strong storms and flooding. All levels of government throughout Canada have been working to take appropriate actions to prepare for and adapt to climate change, and for Georgian Bluffs, this was included as an action item within our strategic plan.

The Climate Action team would like to assist Township Council and staff by providing recommendations on how the Township could adapt to climate change. Staff recommend forming the Georgian Bluffs Climate action committee, composed of two members of Council and five representatives from the Climate Action team. The committee would research what other municipalities are doing and use their expertise to make recommendations on bylaws and policies for things such as land use planning, building requirements, maintenance requirements, etc. These recommendations would be presented to council for approval. The team would also research climate action plans and the funding opportunities that could be available should the Township develop such a plan. By forming this committee, the Township gains access to individuals who have been educated and trained in environmental issues and have expertise that we simply do not currently have on staff. Their knowledge will allow Council and staff to make informed decisions on climate change.

Terms of reference have been developed for this committee and are attached to this report.

Financial Impact

Remuneration would not be paid to Community members of the committee. Council representatives assigned to the committee would receive the applicable meeting rate and mileage.

Strategic Priorities

Demonstrate and Enhance Environmental Stewardship

The Township of Georgian Bluffs strives to become a leader in Environmental Stewardship by reducing energy consumption, reducing solid waste, increasing diversion rates of recyclable materials, and lessening the environmental impact of existing and future infrastructure through innovation and upgrading.
Conclusion

Staff recommend establishing the Georgian Bluffs Climate Change Committee to provide recommendations to Council in developing a Climate Action Plan for the Township.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kassandra Rocca, Treasurer / Interim CAO