Date: 2020-10-07

From: Acting Clerk, Brittany Drury

Subject Committee of the Whole Structure

Report LEG2020-17

**Recommendation**

That Council hereby approves dissolution of the Operations Committee and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committee, effective immediately, and

That all future informational and routine staff and departmental reports be included as items for consideration on bi-weekly Council Consent Agendas.

**Background**

At its meeting on September 4, 2019, Council passed resolution number RES2019-301, to dissolve the former Operations and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committees, in favour of a strictly Council and Committee of the Whole structure.

Further, Council passed resolution number RES2019-309 at their meeting on September 18, 2019, approving an amended agenda structure applicable to Committee of the Whole meetings, to include consideration of statistical reports formerly considered by the dissolved standing committees. Said structure included a ‘Reports and Recommendations’ section, divided into subcategories tailored to each department.

Council commenced this amended structure and schedule on October 1, 2019 for a one year trial period.

**Analysis**

Effective October 1, 2020, the formerly approved trial period concluded. At this time, staff are seeking feedback from Council regarding the Council and Committee of the Whole structure. Council Committee appointments will expire in the New Year,
therefore, should Council resume Operations Committee and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committee meetings, new appointments will require formalizing.

As discussed in 2019, the former Operations Committee and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committee averaged meeting times of 1 hour and 26 minutes for the former and 39 minutes for the latter. In most circumstances, both committees strictly considered statistical reports presented on a monthly basis by Township departments, which have been presented at Committee of the Whole since October 2019. Said reports include, facilities updates, building and by-law updates and financial reports.

In considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, financial impacts of dissolving the Operations and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committees are difficult to materialize. In 2019, it was estimated that dissolution of said committees would result in an annual savings of $12,712.00, assuming full attendance at each monthly meeting. Administrative impacts, however, are clear, as staff are no longer creating and circulating meeting agendas for two additional meetings on a monthly basis. Dissolving committees has also improved communication to Council. Reports are now brought to all members of Council, allowing each Council member to remain informed on all issues going on in the Township. Staff recommend finalizing dissolution of the Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committee and Operations Committee in favour of maintaining the Council and Committee of the Whole structure. In dissolving said Committees, staff will continue to prioritize community involvement in the Committee structure, via specific participation forums, including the Climate Action Committee.

The true intention of Committee of Whole is to create a less formal forum for open discussion, over that of Council. Whereas Council is to enact policies and formalize decisions, Committee of the Whole is to enable detailed discussions regarding Council matters, and further allow for a period of contemplation prior to enacting said decisions. Should Council move to retain the Council and Committee of the Whole structure, staff recommend moving monthly statistical reports from Committee of the Whole agendas to bi-weekly Consent Agendas, considered in meetings of Council. This modification will further clear Committee of the Whole agendas for large, detailed discussions, leaving Council agendas for enacting decisions.

Further to Roberts Rules of Order, the Consent Agenda or Consent Calendar, serves to group routine meeting discussion points into a single agenda item, therefore approving all points in one action, rather than through the filing of multiple motions. Additionally, items which require no action of Council, being informational reports, are also most appropriately considered via the Consent Agenda. In moving forward, staff recommend that all informational reports, including statistical reports and monthly updates be included as matters of Consent. As per Township Procedure By-law 2019-125, all matters included as Consent, may be pulled for further discussion at the request of Council.
Financial Impact

Assuming full attendance at all meetings, annual savings by eliminating the two standing committees, which meet monthly, twelve (12) times per year, is estimated to be $12,712.00 plus the mileage expense for each member.

Strategic Priorities

This report supports the fifth strategic priority, Deliver Effective and Cost-Efficient Services, as included in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

Conclusion

As the one year trial period has ceased, staff recommend formalizing dissolution of the Operations Committee and Corporate Services, Finance and Building Committee.

Respectfully Submitted: Acting Clerk, Brittany Drury
Reviewed by: Interim CAO / Treasurer
Kassandra Rocca