



TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON

REPORT

Item No.

REPORT TO: Reeve Vincent and Members of Council
PREPARED BY: Richard AI, Manager of Employee & Business Services / Sharon Chambers, CAO
DATE: 05/01/2017
SUBJECT: Human Resources and Health and Safety Systems Review
ATTACHMENTS: Quote 1-12-2016.PDF

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the Township of North Huron hereby receive the Manager of Employee and Business Services/Deputy Clerk and CAO's report regarding Human Resources and Health and Safety Systems Review for information purposes;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize pre-budget approval to contract Public Services Health and Safety Association to provide a review of current management systems as detailed in Phase 1 of Quote 1-12-2016 and a Self-Assessment Tool for a combined cost of \$5,500 plus HST, to be included in the 2017 Budget;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the hire, through a cooperative education program, of a post-secondary Human Resources student to assist with the review of the Township of North Huron's Human Resources and Health and Safety management systems, for an estimated cost of \$25,417.48, to be partially offset by redistributing budget funds traditionally allocated for student hires in the Economic Development department.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As regulations prescribed by the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (ESA), the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990* (OHSA) evolve over time, revisions to employer policies and procedures are often required. Compliance with these and other similar Acts is mandatory and North Huron as an employer with a significant number of staff, is expected to ensure that all prescribed requirements are met.

DISCUSSION

Currently the Township of North Huron and the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry both maintain separate Human Resources and Health and Safety Management Systems. With the introduction of Shared Services, these systems must be reviewed and adjustments made to enable a cohesive working environment with employees working side by side under the same set of policies and procedures.

Assembling documentation required for review, comparing each item belonging to the two organizations and working with staff in each department to create harmonized versions of policies and procedures that are not only suitable for shared services staff in both municipalities but also appropriate for non-shared staff is a daunting task to say the least. Staff have been working towards the harmonization of Health and Safety policies for a number of months however Health and Safety policies are only a fraction of the documentation requiring review and revision. We must also consider standard operating procedures and training requirements/documentation

under the Health and Safety review umbrella. From a Human Resources standpoint, we must ensure that our policies are appropriate to attract and retain employees and as much as possible attempt to create consistency in the application of our HR policies across both North Huron and Morris-Turnberry. To our benefit Huron County provides the lower tier municipalities with direction regarding AODA regulations however there are still a number of items in the area of accessibility standards which require review and updating to be consistent between both organizations.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the legislation which must be considered, however it does provide insight into the scope of the task ahead and provides background to the following requests.

On November 30, staff met with representatives from Public Services Health and Safety Association (PSHSA) to discuss tactics to effectively address the Health and Safety items. The PSHSA representatives provided useful direction, a roadmap of recommended action items to promote Health and Safety, and a quotation for various services to assist with moving the project forward. Phase 1 of the quotation is a documentation review in which PSHSA will review all relevant documentation from North Huron and Morris-Turnberry's Health and Safety Management Systems (HSMS), identify gaps, and provide an action plan to address areas of opportunity. The next item on the quotation is a self-assessment software tool that can be used to keep the HSMS up to date going forward. Staff were provided with a demo of this software and it was learnt that additional assessment templates could be created such as a template to allow monthly health and safety workplace inspections to be done digitally. As our facilities are spread over a wide area, this tool would be beneficial to allow supervisors to receive the report of identified workplace deficiencies in a timely fashion and provide feedback or resolution status updates that are tracked and followed up on. Phase 2 of the quotation consists of services at a daily or half day rate to assist staff with developing the action plan to close identified gaps, assist with determining appropriate training requirements and providing required training programs.

Despite PSHSA assisting with this project there will still be a large commitment of staff time required to assemble the documentation and keep momentum going. In addition, this does not address the HR or accessibility items previously discussed and as such we are recommending the hire of a post-secondary Human Resources student to assist with these tasks. A potential local candidate has been identified and, should Council approve, the student could begin work on January 9th 2017 for a duration of 8 months to coincide with the co-op term beginning in January 2017.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

As detailed in Quote 1-12-2016, Phase 1 of the PSHSA proposal includes the documentation audit at a cost of \$3,000 plus HST.

Also detailed on Quote 1-12-2016, the self-assessment software provides a tool to internally audit Health and Safety documentation as well as other custom items as needed, at a cost of \$2,500 for year one and \$1,500 annually thereafter.

The cost for Phase 2 of the PSHSA quotation is based on a pay per use rate of \$1,000 per day or \$550 per half day. At this time we would like to focus on Phase 1 and the self-assessment tool with

the assistance of an HR student and monitor progress prior to committing to engage PSHSA for a defined number of consulting days. That said, when a determination has been made of required consulting days, a follow up report with estimated costing will be presented to Council for authorization to proceed.

The cost to hire a Human Resources student from Georgian College for an 8 month term is estimated at \$25,000, including wages and benefits. If the student works on shared services initiatives, the 45% cost sharing arrangement with Morris-Turnberry would apply, upon approval of their Council. In 2016, there was \$6,000 included in the Economic Development Budget for a summer student and \$5,000 for an administration summer student. These positions would be eliminated in 2017 to offset the cost of the HR co-op student. In addition, there may be grant opportunities which staff will investigate and apply for if applicable, to further offset costs.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Staff will submit status update reports to Council, providing details as the project elements progress.

After the completion of Phase 1 of the PSHSA proposal, staff will work with PSHSA representatives to determine an estimate of Phase 2 consulting time required and present a report to Council for authorization.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal #3 – Our community is healthy and safe

Goal #4 – Our administration is fiscally responsible and strives for operational excellence



Richard Al, Manager of Employee and
Business Services/Deputy Clerk



Sharon Chambers, CAO