

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT 3-2007

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Wednesday, February 21, 2007, commencing at 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Martin, Co-Chair; Collins, Co-Chair; Partington, Regional Chair; Augustyn; Badawey; Bentley; Burroughs; Bylsma; Casselman; D'Angela; Greenwood; Heit; Puttick; Saracino; Zimmerman.

Staff: Messrs. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Mr. Bergsma, Commissioner, Corporate Services; Mr. Nicol, Commissioner, Human Resources; Mr. Lockyer, Treasurer/Director, Financial Management & Planning; Ms. Gilroy, Regional Clerk; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

Staff

Others: Administration: Mr. Weaver, Manager, Special Initiatives.
Corporate Services: Mr. Bernard, Manager, Court Services, Mr. Diakow, Director, Information Services; Ms. Foley, Collections Coordinator; Mr. Kyne, Director, Legal Services.

PRESENTATIONS

50. United Way Incentive Prize Presentations
Ms. Ellen Wodchis, Co-Chair, Corporate United Way Campaign, apprised Committee of the successful 2006 United Way Campaign. A goal of \$115,000 was set and over \$130,000 was raised through the generosity of employees. Ms. Wodchis introduced the following employee group representatives and winners of the incentive prizes donated by each employee group:

Renu:

Anne Hepplewhite presented the prize to Bob Diakow, Corporate Services.

CUPE 1263:

Chris Wiley presented the prize to Doug Smith, Niagara Housing.

CUPE 1757:

Tina Rose presented the prize to Christine Cook, Community Services.

CUPE 1019:

Larry Butters presented the prize to Carol Patterson, Public Works.

CUPE 1287:

Rhonda McCabe accepted the prize on behalf of Ray Waters, Public Works who was not in attendance.

Mr. Trojan, C.A.O. congratulated Ms. Wodchis and Ms. St. John, Co-Chairs of the United Way Campaign, commenting that through their efforts, the 2006 campaign was the most successful yet, noting that in the last few years, employee contributions have increased over 100%.

51. Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)
2006 Annual Report

Mr. Nicol, Commissioner, Human Resources, provided background information on the Employee and Family Assistance Program. This program was introduced at Niagara in 1988 at which time, he commented, Niagara was on the leading edge in bringing this type of program to its employees and their families. The Commissioner advised that Homewood Employee Health has been the Niagara Region's EFAP service provider since January 1, 2005 and their representatives have participated on several Corporate committees to help identify new measures to improve overall employee health and increase the benefits of utilizing their services.

Mr. Nicol introduced Adrienne Crowder, Manager, Homewood Employee Health, who attended to provide an overview of the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 2006 Annual Report.

Ms. Crowder advised that Homewood Employee Health (HEH) provides confidential counselling for employees and family members on a broad range of issues such as mental health, relationship and parenting issues. Other services highlighted were Wellness Sessions for employees and family members on a variety of health and wellness topics such as parenting, stress management and change management.

Ms. Crowder presented a breakdown of EFAP utilization within the Region from July to December 2006. 28.5% of use came from Public Health and EMS employees, 22.7% from Community Services (non-seniors), 16.8% from Corporate/Admin/HR/Planning, 11.33% from Community Services (seniors), 10.9% from Public Works, 9.37% from family members and 0.4% from Boards and Agencies.

Notable EFAP Achievements for 2006 were presented as follows:

- Measured improvements in mental health functioning and workplace functioning among clients.
- A utilization rate that reflects confidence and trust in the service.
- Excellent operational partnership between the Region and HEH.
- Alignment of proactive programming to better address depression, anxiety and parenting.
- Successful integration of new EFAP committee members.

- HEH's expert contribution to overall effectiveness of the Region's Corporate Wellness, Quality of Worklife and Disability Management programs.

Moved by Councillor Heit
Seconded by Councillor Bentley

That the presentation on the Employee and Family Assistance Program services provided by Adrienne Crowder, Homewood Employee Health, be received.

Carried.

(Refer to staff directions.)

52. 2006 Municipal Tax Study

Mr. Jim Bruzzese, BMA Consulting, attended to provide an overview of the 2006 Municipal Tax Study. He advised that the study incorporated 80 municipalities and that the presentation today focuses on 19 municipalities. Mr. Bruzzese's presentation included a municipal profile, municipal financial indicators, comparison of relative taxes, water and sewer comparisons and taxes as a % of income.

Following the presentation, Niagara was summarized as follows:

- The Region is growing at a slower pace than the survey average.
 - But the Region as a whole experienced greater population increase between 2001-2005 than between 1996-2001
- Niagara municipalities typically have a lower assessment base upon which to raise taxes.
 - But change in assessment typically exceeded the survey average between 2005-2006
- Wide range in levy per capita across the Region (7 of 12 higher than survey average).
- Debt costs (excluding water/sewer) are higher in the Region compared to other Regions surveyed.
 - Total debt charges as a % of expenditures is average
- Region's reserves levels are lower than other Regions surveyed.
- Debt to reserve ratio is in good position for the Region as well as the majority of the Niagara municipalities.
- For most Niagara municipalities:
 - Residential tax burden tends to be in the mid range
 - Multi-residential tax burden tends to be in the low-mid range
 - Commercial tax burden for shopping and office tends to be low-mid
 - Industrial tax burden tends to be in the low-mid range
- Water/Sewer costs vary but tend to be mid-high in the majority of Niagara municipalities.
 - Costly system to operate
- Typically higher property tax burden on average resident in Niagara relative to their income levels.
 - Lower than average incomes is a factor
 - Higher than average municipal levy per capita also a factor

(A copy of the BMA presentation is attached to the minutes.)

53. OMBI 2005 Performance Benchmarking Report

Mr. Trojan, CAO, apprised Committee of the first Performance Benchmarking Report produced by the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI) which he commented is presented in conjunction with the BMA competitiveness study. He advised that the purpose of the OMBI report is to serve as a tool to provide municipalities with comparative results and context as they make decisions about local service delivery. Mr. Trojan advised that more detailed discussion of Niagara's Performance Measurement Framework, which includes information from the BMA Study and OMBI as well as Quality of Work Life and Quality of Life information, will take place as part of Council's Business Planning Session.

Mr. Weaver, Manager, Special Initiatives, provided background information on the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI). OMBI is a partnership among 15 Ontario Municipalities, led by the CAO's and City Managers. OMBI is developing measures to track performance in more than 30 municipal service areas. Measures are developed using consistent definitions to facilitate data consistency.

Mr. Weaver provided highlights of the OMBI report which presents information on 12 municipal service areas. It provides a snapshot of relative performance across: cost perspective, service effectiveness, and level of service. It also provides context for local analysis and review. (OMBI information regularly appears in departmental budget presentations.)

Niagara's performance measurement framework consists of:

- BMA Work – highlights taxpayer affordability issues
- OMBI Data – highlights service specific performance (efficiency and effectiveness)
- Other Elements – Quality of Life for residents (receive input from public) and Quality of Work Life

Viewed together, impacts of service changes across these elements can be assessed.

Mr. Weaver outlined the next steps:

- Review of performance measurement information at regular Business planning sessions.
- Consideration of service changes from the perspective of affordability and impact on service objectives.
- Reflect performance information regularly in budget and business planning efforts.

(A copy of the OMBI report is available to Councillors upon request.)

Moved by Councillor Heit
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That the presentations from Mr. Jim Bruzzese, BMA Consulting on the 2006 Municipal Study and the presentations from Mr. Trojan and Mr. Weaver on the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI), be received.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

54. **Regional Council Remuneration**
HR 13-2007

Conflicts of Interest

Regional Chair Partington declared a conflict of interest with respect to the report on Regional Council Remuneration as the Regional Chair's remuneration was being considered, and he therefore vacated the Committee Room and took no part in the discussion of, or voting on, this matter.

Councillor Bentley declared a conflict of interest with respect to the report on Regional Council Remuneration with respect to the remuneration of Police Board appointees as he is a member of the Police Services Board, and he therefore took no part in the discussion of, or voting on, this matter.

Moved by Councillor Collins
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That Report HR 13-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Regional Council Remuneration, be received; and

That the remuneration for the Regional Chair be adjusted annually on the same basis as the annual adjustment of remuneration for Regional Councillors effective December 1, 2006 and further, that the December 1, 2006 adjusted salary be \$101,260.61.

Carried.

Moved by Councillor Puttick
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That the matter of Remuneration with respect to the Appointees to the Police Services Board be referred to the next Committee meeting of March 14, 2007.

Carried.

55. Recovery of Collection Agency Costs
CSD 30-2007

Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Badawey

That Report CSD 30-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Recovery of Collection Agency Costs, be received.

That Niagara Region's Fees and Charges by-law be amended to permit recovery of the collection agency fees outlined in Appendix "A" to this report; and

That on behalf of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the Chair be directed to write the Attorney General of Ontario requesting the Attorney General's consent to immediately permit Niagara Region to commence recovery of collection agency fees in relation to Provincial Offences Act ("POA") collections.

Carried.

56. Capital Budget Allocation for
Storm Sewer Cost Sharing Program
Project ID ZRC0603
CSD 37-2007 (PWA 32-2007)

Moved by Councillor Bentley
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That Report CSD 37-2007 (PWA 32-2007), February 21, 2007, respecting Capital Budget Allocation for Storm Sewer Cost Sharing Program Project ID ZRC0603, be received.

That capital levy financing in the gross and net amount of \$200,000 be approved for Project ZRC0603 Storm Sewer Cost Sharing Program from the 2006 Roads Capital Budget;

That approval be given to pay the City of Niagara Falls for the Region's portion of the storm sewer cost sharing for the estimated amount of \$180,000; and

That the Regional Clerk be directed to ensure that the appropriate by-law(s) are prepared for presentation to Regional Council.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

57. Summary of Quotations, Tenders and Authorizations
Fourth Quarter 2006 According to Purchasing Policy C3.P02
CSD 31-2007

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That Report CSD 31-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Summary of Quotations, Tenders and Authorizations Fourth Quarter 2006 According to Purchasing Policy C3.P02, be received for information.

Carried.

58. Municipal Act Amendments
CSD 32-2007

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That Report CSD 32-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Municipal Act Amendments, be received.

Carried.

59. 2006 Human Resources Department Annual Report
HR 07-2007

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That Report HR 07-2007, January 31, 2007, regarding the 2006 Human Resources Department Annual Report, be received for information.

Carried.

60. Corporate-wide Training and Development Budget
HR 10-2007

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Heit

That Report HR 10-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Corporate-wide Training & Development Budget, be received for information as requested by the Corporate Services Committee at their meeting of January 31, 2007 (CS 2-2007).

Carried.

61. Encumbrance Reserve Status at December 31, 2007
CSD 33-2007

Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That Report CSD 33-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Encumbrance Reserve Status at December 31, 2006, be deferred pending further information and clarification on the encumbrance requests.

Carried.

62. Employee and Family Assistance Program
(EFAP) 2006 Annual Report
HR 11-2007

Moved by Councillor Heit
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That Report HR 11-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 2006 Annual Report, be received for information.

Carried.

CLOSED SESSION

63. Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Bentley

That this Committee do now meet in Closed Session for purposes of receiving information of a confidential nature relating to personnel, property and legal matters.

Carried.

64. A Matter of Solicitor and Client Advice
- POA Prosecution Guidelines
Confidential CSD 34-2007

Moved by Councillor Puttick
Seconded by Councillor Collins

That Confidential Report CSD 34-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting A Matter of Solicitor and Client Advice – POA Prosecution Guidelines, be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Carried.

(Refer to staff directions.)

65. License Agreement with Ministry
City of Niagara Falls
Confidential CSD 35-2007 (PWA 30-2007)

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That Confidential Report CSD 35-2007 (PWA 30-2007), February 21, 2007, respecting License Agreement with Ministry, City of Niagara Falls, be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Carried.

66. License Extension Agreement
Town of Fort Erie
Confidential Report CSD 36-2007 (PWA 31-2007)

Moved by Councillor Badawey
Seconded by Councillor Greenwood

That Confidential Report CSD 36-2007 (PWA 31-2007), February 21, 2007, respecting License Extension Agreement, Town of Fort Erie, be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Carried.

67. Corporate Labour Relations Strategy: 2007-2010
Confidential Report HR 12-2007

Moved by Councillor Heit
Seconded by Councillor Zimmerman

That Confidential Report HR 12-2007, February 21, 2007, respecting Corporate Labour Relations Strategy: 2007-2010, be referred to the next Committee meeting of March 14, 2007.

Carried.

68. Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That this Committee do now rise with report.

Carried.

STAFF DIRECTIONS

That staff be directed to:

- (i) Provide a further report on the effects of EFAP on the work environment and how outcomes are measured. (Refer to minute item 51.)
- (ii) Request a letter from area CAOs indicating their support for the POA Prosecution Guidelines. (Refer to minute item 64.)

ADJOURNMENT

Committee adjourned at 11:10 p.m. to meet again on Wednesday, March 14, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Headquarters.

Doug Martin
Co-Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Michael Collins
Co-Chair

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk