



Subject: Council and Committee Travel Expense Policy

To: Council

From: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Report Number: 2023-17

Meeting Date: April 11, 2023

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office Report 2023-17 be received; and

That By-Law 4896/121/06 and any amendments thereto be repealed.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of an updated policy to administer the reimbursement of travel costs incurred by Council and Committee Members in Port Colborne in the completion of their duties.

Background:

The City has a by-law, By-Law 4896/121/06 that was passed in 2006, that governs reimbursement of expenditures incurred when Council members attend conferences and seminars on behalf of the City.

Discussion:

As professional development and part of the fulfillment of the duties of an elected official, the Mayor, City Councillors, and members of Committees and Boards (delegates) of the City attend conferences and undertake other travel on behalf of the City.

In principle, the cost of travel should be reimbursed to the delegate and there should not be a cost incurred by the delegate to represent the City at events of this type. Likewise, the City should not be required to reimburse expenses of a personal nature that

delegates choose to expend while travelling. In order to ensure fairness and equitable application of these principles, a reimbursement policy should be in place to administer the program.

Typically, a policy of this type is a part of the City's Corporate Administrative Policy manual and is administered by Human Resources and management staff. In Port Colborne, however, this program has been administered through a by-law. Staff believe the by-law is antiquated and recommend updating the policy and migrating from a by-law to a Corporate Administrative Policy.

An updated policy is presented as an appendix to this report in draft form. The main differences between the existing by-law and the draft policy include:

- A definition section that outlines the terms and individuals used throughout the policy
- Provisions to ensure that adequate funds are budgeted each year to administer the program – in the past, some delegates had to 'request' to use other Council or Committee member's allowance
- No requirement for delegates to report conference activities to Council or Committee meetings
- Removal of the requirement for the annual budget to be approved before permitting delegates to use the full amount of their travel allowance
- Removal of the requirement for delegates to personally pay for expenses that would normally be reimbursed by the City when the annual budget has been depleted
- Defining the events that the City would typically send delegates to and providing discretion to attend other appropriate events
- Clarifying ineligible expenses
- Clarifying eligible expenses for accommodations, transportation, and meals as well as incidental expenses

Staff believe that the new Corporate Administrative Policy will be a more appropriate way of administering the program and will allow staff to keep the policy current and up to date.

Internal Consultations:

This report was prepared with input from the Clerk's Division, Human Resources, and Corporate Services.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications, the City budgets an appropriate amount for training and development of staff, committee members, and Council members on an annual basis.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
 - People: Supporting and Investing in Human Capital
 - Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making
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Conclusion:

The City's existing Council Conference Policy is a by-law from 2006. Staff believe the policy is out of date and would be more easily administered as a Corporate Administrative Policy. Staff have drafted a new policy and recommend repealing the existing by-law and plan to implement the new Corporate Administrative Policy.

Appendices:

- a. CAPXX - Mayor & Council Travel, Conference, and Education

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Luey
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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.