

Monday, September 16, 2019

Subject: Bylaw staffing

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2019-0058-Fire; and THAT Council considers approving the salary increases to the 2020 Bylaw operating budget to accommodate requested staffing compliment.

Background :

In 2013 the Bylaw Division was transferred to the Fire Department at which time, the Division was comprised of one full time officer and seasonal student.

The Bylaw Division was then revamped by the Fire Chief, mainly to provide better customer service to residents. Bylaw officers are now required to wear uniforms and drive marked vehicles so residents can identify them during the performance of their duties.

Since 2013 the Bylaw Division has experienced a number of changes in daily duties and responsibilities, including but not limited to:

1. 2013 Sign permit responsibilities including; receiving applications, processing and inspection.
2. 2013 Pool permit responsibilities including, receiving applications, processing and inspection.
3. 2014 Weed inspector duties including training and certification as inspectors.
4. 2015 Crossing Guards responsibilities were assumed including, recruiting, training, scheduling and supervision.

5. 2015 Security and parking for Town events was assumed by bylaw including, planning, organizing, scheduling, and supervising of hired security staff.
6. 2015 An environmental By-law is developed and implemented in the town, an application, inspection and approval process are added to their duties.
7. 2015 the province down loaded prosecution and administrative of parking infractions from the POA Courts to municipalities. The Town then began to offer a hearing process under the new AMP program (Administrative Municipal Penalty) this is administered by the By-Law Department.
8. 2015 By-law student was permanently removed from the budget, leaving the department with one staff member.
9. 2016 By-law adds a part time officer to assist in the daily operations, this position works flex hours to a maximum of 20 hours per week.
10. 2017 commercial Cannabis operations start production within the Town, resulting in numerous complaints regarding odor and light.
11. A By-law amendment resulted in a prohibition on parking on any Town, road during sanding, salting or plowing operations. This change requires the By-law officers to patrol when the plows are working.
12. 2018 the Province down loads the Property Standards portion of the *Residential Tenancies Act*, 2006 to municipalities. By-law now received, investigates complaints related to property standards in rental situations.

Analysis:

Since 2013 the By-law Departments' responsibilities and work load has increased exponentially with zero increase in staffing. In 2013 the By-law Department had a compliment of 1 full time and 1 part time By-law Officer. In 2019 the staffing is the same as it was in 2013 in spite of a growing population resulting in the more than doubling of yearly By-law complaints and significant increases in parking citations, pool permits, sign permits and environmental fill permits. With the increase in population comes the growth of the urban areas, which will be continuing for a number of years to come, resulting in an increase of housing and roads. This increase will require more time spent on patrols for parking violations as well as a further increase to the complaints, and permit applications received. With such a large increase in the number of complaints, permit applications and parking violations, the administrative duties to process these issues has increased correspondingly. Outside of normal business hours, the By-law Department

responsibilities include Security Management at all Town events, Emergency Parking Enforcement for winter storm plowing operations, and School Crossing Guard Management, which results in excessive banking of days off in lieu time which can total up to several weeks of the year and leaves the By-law Department short staffed and in some cases unstaffed.

Add to this, a large number of the Town's By-laws are outdated and require updating, replacing or repealing, some being transferred to the AMP program as was completed for parking violations. This added work will require a significant number of hours in research, writing, review and editing for each by-law. With the updating of by-laws, the Officers would be in a better position for enforcement of such by-laws, which would be a benefit to the residents of the Town and the overall enjoyment of the community.

The current work load for the Department has reached a critical level. There is no other Municipality in Niagara which has such a small number of By-law Officers in relation to its population. The Department also handles tasks which in other municipalities are administered in their Public Works Department or Clerk's Department. These added responsibilities include the processing of Pool Permits, Sign Permits, Environmental Fill Permits, Security Management for Town events, and Crossing Guard Management. These added responsibilities are all above the normal day to day responsibilities of dealing with By-law complaints and parking issues.

By-law Complaints increasing exponentially :

<u>Year</u>	<u># of complaints</u>
2016	68
2017	77
2018	133
2019	120 Y-T-D (as of August 16/19)

Increased Parking Violations

<u>Year</u>	<u>Citations Issued</u>
2016	76
2017	71
2018	120
2019	104 Y-T-D- (as of August 16/19)

Proposed By-Law Student

The draft 2020 By-Law Department budget is requesting a student position. The student would work full time hours during the summer months, primarily on evenings and weekends, when call volumes are at their highest. The idea is that the student will provide backup to whichever full time officer is working evenings and weekends for both better coverage and safety issues. It is anticipated that each year the Department would hire a student from the Niagara College Police Foundations Program.

Financial Considerations:

Increasing the second Bylaw officer position from part time to full time will require an increase of 50,000 dollars, inclusive of benefit costs.

Adding a summer student from May 1st until august 31st will require an additional 11,000 dollars.

Alternatives Reviewed:

None

Strategic Plan Relationship: Strong Organization

The much needed staffing increase will allow the Department to provide the customer service expected by the residents of the Town, adding staffing will increase park patrols which will result in a decrease of vandalism, staff will be available on a broader schedule to respond to complaints and provide better customer service.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

None

Consultation:

Senior Leadership Team

Local Municipalities similar in size and population

Bylaw Staff

Legal Consultation, If Applicable:

None

Prepared and Recommended by:

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Approved and Submitted by:

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