

Subject: Nomination of Pelham Elected Official to Regional Transit Commission

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2022-0100 – Nomination of Pelham Elected Official to Regional Transit Commission;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Council recommend _____ to represent the Town of Pelham, on the transitional Niagara Transit Commission Board, for an appointment ending January 31, 2023.

Background:

After the triple majority was achieved over the period of time between December, 2021 and January, 2022, the creation of a truly integrated transit system for all of Niagara became realized. The new transit system will fully replace all existing systems on January 1, 2023. A transitional board will oversee the complex process of amalgamating the various existing systems and achieving high quality service.

The candidate recommended by Pelham Town Council will be put forth to Regional Council, along with their equivalents from the other local municipalities, on May 5, 2022. As a legal technicality, Regional Council must make the appointment, accordingly at this time Pelham is merely “recommending” its candidate. The appointment thereafter will merely be a formality.

Analysis:

This opportunity must be filled by one of the Town of Pelham’s elected officials: any member of Town Council, or Diana Huson, Regional Representative. Councillor Huson has indicated that she is not seeking the position, which leaves each member of Pelham Town Council as potential candidates.

As with any other vote, majority support of those in attendance is required to confirm a candidate.

The Commission's Board will have to make a very large number of critically important decisions, particularly during the balance of 2022. Issues that will have to be addressed include hiring a General Manager, dealing with the asset transfer from local municipalities to the Commission, labour and employment issues as staff are molded into one team (and standardization of terms of employment). The Region has suggested that candidates with strong backgrounds in strategic planning, finance, business operations or transit operations would be good candidates.

Because loss of seat on the transitional board is automatic if a candidate ceases to be an elected official, it is suggested that only members of Town Council who plan to run for re-election allow their names to be put forward. While this of course is no guarantee of re-election, it is at least a theoretical possibility. If the candidate is defeated in October's general election, a replacement candidate will need to be recommended by Pelham Council. In any event, the term of office for this transitional board is only until January 31, 2023.

Regional Council will appoint a new board to commence on February 1, 2023. That Board will sit until the next municipal elections in 2026.

Financial Considerations:

There are no financial considerations associated with this report. The position is unpaid. At time of writing it is unknown if the Transit Commission will be paying mileage (such has been recommended by Regional staff) or if the meetings will be physical, hybrid or online. Presumably meeting format and/or location(s) will be dictated by public health conditions.

Alternatives Reviewed:

There are no options available. If Council declines to identify a representative, the Town will simply not have a voice on the transition board.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Communication and Engagement

This is an excellent opportunity to ensure that Pelham residents continue to derive value for their transit (tax) dollars. Furthermore, all members of Council are familiar with rural and small community issues, which will be an important perspective for the new commission. The multi-year duration of the appointment should allow for the appointed individual to achieve a high level of engagement.

Consultation:

The Town Clerk and the Director of Recreation, Culture and Wellness were both consulted in the drafting of this report.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Niagara Region formal communication, dated March 25, 2022.

Prepared and Submitted by:

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