

Subject: Truth and Reconciliation Education for Public Servants Policy

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2022-0180 Truth and Reconciliation Education for Public Servants Policy, for information;

AND THAT Council approve the Truth and Reconciliation Education for Public Servants Policy.

Background:

As part of a class-action settlement, the Canadian Federal Government established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2007. This Commission travelled the country interviewing thousands of witnesses and survivors, telling their stories and educating the public on the history of the residential school system. In 2015 the Commission presented a final report which included 94 Calls to Action. These Calls to Action or recommendations urge all sectors of government to do their part in furthering reconciliation with Indigenous Canadians and rectifying the lasting effects of colonialism and residential schools.

Council will recall that the federal government passed legislation last year to make September 30th a federal statutory holiday called the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This was in response to the Commission's 80th recommendation to ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.

Analysis:

Although local governments are unable to address many of these Calls to Action, as they are addressed primarily to the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, municipal leaders do have a role to play in the reconciliation process. Recommendation #57 under Professional Development and Training for Public Servants, reads as follows:

"We call upon federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal

peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

The Town has taken steps to deliver on this recommendation. In 2021 all staff were enrolled in a course through the First Nations University of Canada titled ‘4 Seasons of Reconciliation’. This training opportunity was also offered to Council and committee members. The course offers a series of online resources which promote a renewed relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians, through transformative and engaging learning towards anti-racism education. This initiative provides diversity and inclusion awareness through self-paced online material featuring films, slideshows, videos, quizzes and a completion certificate. All permanent staff have completed the course and new staff are required to take this training as part of their orientation.

In an effort to meet full compliance with this particular Call to Action, Human Resources has prepared a policy which will require that all employees, members of Council, and all members of the Committee of Adjustment receive training on the history of Indigenous persons of Canada. Further, Town staff have educational videos and other resources prepared for the week leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and plan to use this day for educational purposes each year moving forward.

Financial Considerations:

The cost of this course is \$80 per person. There are still a number of licenses available until September 24, 2022, so there has been no financial impact to the Town to enroll new employees this year. Future costs (which will be minimal and will vary depending on the number of enrollments required) will be built into the Human Resources training budget.

Alternatives Reviewed:

Council could elect to keep this training optional rather than mandatory for elected officials and members of the committee of adjustment. That being said, the course takes 3 hours to complete and the cost is minimal.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Strong Organization

The Town has the means to make a substantial impact on this Call to Action. As Niagara exists on treaty lands, specifically the lands of the Hattiwendaronk, Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the

Town of Pelham has an obligation to educate those who represent the municipality on this history. This Council has an opportunity to set the tone and be part of the constructive societal changes that are necessary to support the Indigenous community who live and work in Pelham.

Consultation:

This report references several resources including the Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report and the First Nations University of Canada's 4 Seasons of Reconciliation training program details.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Appendix "A" – Truth and Reconciliation Education for Public Servants Policy

Prepared and Submitted by:

Brianna Langohr, BA, CHRL
Human Resources/Health and Safety Coordinator

David Cribbs, BA, MA, JD, MPA
Chief Administrative Officer