



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee MINUTES

Date: August 12, 2019
Time: 12:00 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Clifford - Chair Presiding, Councillor Gaffney - Vice Chair, Councillor Bunting, Councillor Ritsma

Regrets: Councillor Beatty

Staff Present: Michael Humble - Director of Corporate Services, Jodi Akins - Council Clerk Secretary, Mike Beitz - Corporate Communications Lead, Tatiana Dafoe – Acting Clerk, Ed Dujlovic – Director of Infrastructure and Development Services, John Paradis – Fire Chief, Kim McElroy – Director of Social Services, Jacqueline Mockler – Director of Human Resources, Julia Merritt – CEO of Stratford Public Library

Also present: Linda Becker (Item 3.1), Joani Gerber (Item 4.1), Paul Shaw (Item 5.1), Lori DeGraw (Item 6.1)

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to Order.

Councillor Beatty provided regrets for this meeting.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by a Member at the August 12, 2019 Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting.

3. Delegations

3.1 Presentation by Provincial Offences Administration Court Services

Further to a request by Sub-committee at the July 23, 2019 Sub-committee meeting, the Manager of Court Services Linda Becker was in attendance to provide information on provincial offences charges laid and fines collected for the City of Stratford.

Motion by Councillor Gaffney

THAT the presentation by Linda Becker, Manager of Court Services, regarding provincial offences charges laid and fines collected for the City of Stratford, be heard.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Ms. Becker advised that POA revenue is comparable to other municipalities at a 65% collection rate, although she noted those are largely smaller fines. The process for collection of fines was explained from listing on the docket, to extension processes, revocation of licences then referral to a collection agency. Collection agencies take all legal action permitted to collect outstanding fines. Fines are not written off unless a death certificate is received or the collection agency advises the person can't be found. At this time, there is \$6 million outstanding.

In response to whether there has been a decline in tickets issued, Ms. Becker confirmed there has been. Number of tickets issued in Stratford, Perth South and St. Marys were reviewed. It was noted revenue for tickets issued in a municipality goes to that municipality.

It was asked whether there was opportunity for discussion with the Justice of the Peace regarding payment extensions. Ms. Becker advised that they have judicial independence and explained the process for providing background to them. She noted that most careless driving fines are plead down in court, as it is not always the most appropriate penalty.

In response to whether there is an opportunity for red light cameras or photo radar in Stratford, Ms. Becker advised that red light cameras are around \$500K each and the framework is in place for sending the notices to the owners of the vehicles. It is her understanding that Oxford County has looked into this item under the community safety umbrella rather than revenue generation.

The Chair thanked Ms. Becker for attending and explained that decreasing revenue is concerning. Ms. Becker stated that a lot of what she collects in fines goes to the Province in the form of victim fine surcharges and administration and court fees.

4. Report of the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEED Co.)

4.1 Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (investStratford) – 2019 Quarterly Report 2 (FIN19-029)

Staff Recommendation: That the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (investStratford) 2019 quarterly update and 2018 annual report dated August 12, 2019, be received as information.

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

THAT Joani Gerber be heard regarding the 2019 2nd quarter update for investStratford.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Joani Gerber, CEO of investStratford, referred to a PowerPoint presentation regarding their 2018 Annual Report and 2019 2nd quarter report, both of which were presented to their board in June.

2018 highlights were reviewed, including \$400k in land sales and 50k sq ft new industrial development, 150 new jobs, promotion of Stratford as a keynote speaker at 13+ provincial or international events and assistance to 220 small businesses. Land sale revenue is down a bit from previous years and entrepreneurship activity remains consistent.

City staff were thanked as their support is critical to investStratford and the success of local businesses. investStratford collaborated with City transit to promote the Industrial #7 transit route to businesses and their employees.

With respect to finances, revenue is \$104k over budget and expenses \$5k under budget largely due to the overlap between the Province's fiscal year end of March 31 and the City's' which is December 31st.

In response to a question regarding the Main Street Revitalization Program, the CEO advised that 10 out of 12 grants are complete and \$20k of the grant is out in the community. Some examples are front entrance updates or façade improvements.

Referring to the 2019 2nd quarter update investment attraction, the CEO stated that missions to the U.K. and Germany were completed with 8-10 leads coming out of that with companies looking to expand to Canada.

With regard to retention and expansion, there are 2 available lots in the Wright Business Park and construction is underway on Crane Avenue. They will be bringing a marketing plan to Council soon. A goal for 2019 is to participate in pre and post consultation with development services as a concierge service for companies.

In response to a question regarding land development, the CEO clarified that the 175+ acres referenced in the update is the amount of land companies interested in Stratford would potentially develop. At the current absorption rate, Crane Avenue will be fully developed within 3 years.

Highlights were provided on Summer Company entrepreneurs and Workforce Development projects and marketing and communication priorities were reviewed.

Discussion took place regarding partnerships with organizations such as the Technical Training Group.

Motion by Councillor Gaffney

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (investStratford) 2019 quarterly update and 2018 annual report dated August 12, 2019, be received as information.

Carried

5. Delegations - continued

5.1 Presentation by Stratford Festival Guthrie Awards Committee

Motion by Councillor Bunting

THAT the presentation by Paul Shaw, on behalf of the Stratford Festival Guthrie Awards Committee, be heard regarding a 2019 grant request.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Paul Shaw, Company Manager for the Stratford Festival Guthrie Award Committee was present to request a 2019 community grant of \$500 to support the City of Stratford Guthrie Fund. Mr. Shaw advised that as the deadline was not met for a 2019 community grant, they are requesting a grant from the contingency fund.

History was provided on the Guthrie Award and what the grant funds, noting that this grant request has been approved by the City for 40 years.

Motion by Councillor Bunting

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT a community grant in the sum of \$500 be given to the Guthrie Awards Committee, to be funded from the 2019 contingency fund.

Carried

6. Report of the Stratford Tourism Alliance

6.1 Stratford Tourism Alliance – Q2 Update - 2019 (FIN19-028)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Tourism Alliance reported dated August 12, 2019 be received for information.

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

THAT the presentation by Lori DeGraw, Executive Director regarding the Stratford Tourism Alliance 2nd Quarter update be heard.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Lori DeGraw, Executive Director of the Stratford Tourism Alliance, referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided highlights of their 2nd quarter update.

Revenue is tracking at 89.4% of budget and expenses at 63%. Details on both were provided in the report. They have 200 current active partners, down from 204 last year.

With respect to digital performance, past metrics were only tracking volume. They are now looking at quality to ensure they are targeting the rights markets with the right type of engagement. They are tracking well, particularly with the younger audience. They are actively working with Google to ensure they are the most desirable search result for specific things.

Media campaigns and coverage and other initiatives such as a Little Shop of Horrors garden sign campaign and participation in the 25th anniversary edition of the Culinary Guide launch event were reviewed. Regional partner alignment was highlighted as outlined in the report.

In response to whether they are able to discern age of online social media visits, the Executive Director advised they can and it is a broad cross-section. Historically it has been an older demographic but they are having success bringing in a younger demographic.

As to why partner businesses have left the program, the Executive Director advised that they always ask. Reasons include business closing, shifted marketing priorities or infrequently, fiscal challenges.

In response to why destination marketing fund income is down, the Executive Director explained that it is a hotel tax. There is a two month delay for those fees to be collected. Typically that number increases closer to budget. It was noted that the fund is voluntary and is 3% at this time.

In response to whether there is any interaction with school boards, the Executive Director advised that they interact with the University of Waterloo and some high schools but more in a career development sense.

It was asked whether there has been discussion around making the destination marketing fund mandatory. The Executive Director confirmed there was and Stratford is one of the only municipalities in the Destination Marketing Fund Association that hasn't made it a mandatory tax. She suggested that there are some best practices that could be collected and learned from.

Motion by Councillor Bunting

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Tourism Alliance report dated August 12, 2019 be received for information.

Carried

A request was made to refer back to Item 3.1.

Motion by Councillor Gaffney

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the matter of implementing red light cameras at stop lights and photo radar be referred to staff for a report.

Carried

7. Report of the Director of Corporate Services

7.1 Preliminary 2020 Budget Discussions (FIN19-030)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding the financial impact of reduced provincial grant funding on the City's 2020 budgets be received for information.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Director of Corporate Services advised that there are a series of three reports listed on this agenda intended to generate budget discussion for 2020.

The purpose of this report is to set the groundwork for where staff are right now and what challenges they are facing. Much of this information is from the Shared Services Committee.

Land ambulance and Health Unit numbers were reviewed.

*Councillor Gaffney left the meeting [12:52 p.m.].

The Deputy Police Chief is anticipating a provincial funding cut of \$40k and the Library CEO is attending Council this evening to review the loss of inter-library loan funding.

Social Services budget impacts were reviewed, totalling over a million dollars in budget impacts, cost shared between the three

municipalities. Another \$1.5 million dollars is identified as at risk until more information is received.

*Councillor Gaffney returned to the meeting [12:53 p.m.].

In response to a question on how the dollars correlate to percentage of budget increase, the Director stated that known cuts are 1%, at risk is another 2% plus impacts of shared service and smaller cuts for a total of a 3-5% impact.

It was requested that staff look into making the Destination Marketing Fund tax mandatory, suggesting that there is hundreds of thousands of dollars that could be collected.

Motion by Councillor Bunting

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the matter of making the Destination Marketing Fund tax mandatory in the City of Stratford be referred to staff for a report.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding the financial impact of reduced provincial grant funding on the City's 2020 budgets be received for information.

Carried

7.2 Preliminary 2020 Budget Discussions – Provincial Grant to Improve Service Delivery and Efficiency (FIN19-031)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding the Provincial Grant to Improve Service Delivery and Efficiency, be received for information;

AND THAT Council indicate other priorities for staff to investigate operationally and financially.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Director of Corporate Services advised that this report relates to the provincial grant received 4-5 months ago in the sum of \$498k to "improve service delivery".

The report outlines capital initiatives staff have considered. Staff are

asking whether there is anything Council would like to see included in the 2020 budget using this funding to look for operational efficiencies.

In response to a question, the Director confirmed that the discussions are underway with the Police Chief. The electronic delivery of bills and invoices is a simple project as we already own the software. The third option has been discussed by staff for a number of years.

It was emphasized that as part of the staff recommendation that Council consider other priorities for staff to investigate.

Discussion took place regarding efficiencies that could be gained from additional partnerships with other municipalities, including the County of Perth.

It was suggested that option 3 may not be in the right place with regard to whether it would create efficiencies. The Director reiterated that it has been requested by previous Councils.

It was suggested that there could be cost savings found in partnering with other municipalities for the purchases of equipment. Some examples of current buying groups were provided by staff such as procurement of transit buses, purchase of salt and IT equipment and provision of AODA services. Staff continue to look for opportunities where they can.

In response to what other municipalities were doing with this grant, it was noted that the CAO's office has coordinated this funding. It was suggested that it would be discussed at AMO. The possibility of combining fire and police dispatch was discussed.

In response to whether there is an opportunity for outside help or whether staff and Council would complete the review, the Director stated that there is no timeframe attached to the grant but if there is anything efficiency or service-delivery related Council would like included in the 2020 budget, there is a tight timeframe.

It was noted that there are often complaints about not being able to find things on the City's website and that it needs a refresh.

Motion by Councillor Gaffney

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding the Provincial Grant to Improve Service Delivery and Efficiency, be received for information;

AND THAT Council indicate other priorities for staff to investigate operationally and financially.

Carried

7.3 Preliminary 2020 Budget Discussions (FIN19-032)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding new initiatives and services level changes for inclusion in the 2020 budget, be received for information;

THAT two meetings of the Finance and Labour Relations Committee be convened for 27th August 2019 and 11th September 2019 for pre-budget discussions with Staff;

AND THAT Finance and Labour Relations Committee provide input to identify initiatives that they wish to see included in the 2020 draft budget proposal.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Director of Corporate Services stated that the 2020 budget is not going to be a simple continuation of existing levels of service. The City is facing changes in provincial funding models, ongoing infrastructure debt, a significant amount of capital replacement costs and Strategic Priorities that require implementation.

Members were advised staff need to know what Council would like to see as new initiatives to support the strategic priorities or service levels to be investigated. These items will not be included in the base budget and staff require sufficient time to review and cost properly.

It was suggested staff review broadening parking payment and enforcement in the City, including charging for parking at the Cooper site.

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated 12th August 2019, regarding new initiatives and services level changes for inclusion in the 2020 budget, be received for information;

THAT two meetings of the Finance and Labour Relations Committee be convened for 27th August 2019 and a date to be determined for pre-budget discussions with Staff;

AND THAT Finance and Labour Relations Committee provide input to identify initiatives that they wish to see included in the 2020 draft budget proposal.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Sub-committee Decision: THAT staff prepare a report reviewing options to expand paid parking and enforcement throughout the City, including the Cooper Site.

Carried

8. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

There were no Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes to be provided to Sub-committee.

9. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting is September 17, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Gaffney

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 12:00 p.m.

Meeting End Time: 1:20 p.m.