

Report to Council

Report Title: Broadcasting Council Meetings

Prepared By: Fiona Hamilton, Clerk

Department: Clerk's

Date: January 14, 2020

Report Number: CLK2020-03

File Number: C11CL

Attachments: Quote from E-scribe

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives for information Report Number CLK2020-03 – Broadcasting Council Meetings, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Clerk and further grants pre-budget approval to accept the quote from E-scribe Software Ltd. for \$14,825.00 and an additional \$12,150.00 for Live Closed Captioning and authorizes Fiona Hamilton, Clerk to sign the attached quote, and further that the June 16, 2020 and September 10, 2020 Council meetings be held in the Bruce County Administration Building.

Report:

Background:

Last year, Council discussed potentially broadcasting the Council Meetings. Staff have now had an opportunity to review some of the practical considerations involved in doing so.

The *Municipal Act, 2001* is clear in its direction to municipalities that decisions must be made in an accountable and transparent manner. Justice Charron of the Supreme of Canada wrote, “The democratic legitimacy of municipal decisions does not spring solely from periodic elections, but also from a decision-making process that is transparent, accessible to the public, and mandated by law”. Broadcasting the Council meetings would ensure that the municipal decision-making process in Brockton was accessible to residents in rural areas who may not always be able to travel into Walkerton (especially in the winter months), residents with child care obligations and/or residents with mobility challenges or other disabilities.

The County of Bruce currently live streams the County Council meetings and makes the recordings available on the [website](#). This live streaming is facilitated using an additional module of the e-scribe agenda management software used by both Brockton and the County of Bruce. Given how the Council Agendas are currently prepared and the fact that most Brockton Council meetings are held at the Bruce County Administration Building, this e-scribe module is the recommended method of live streaming meetings.

Analysis:

The e-scribe video-streaming software corresponds directly to the agenda, such that an individual can click on an agenda item and see the video that corresponds only to that item. These feature is particularly helpful in the context of a request for information, would could otherwise result in large amounts of staff time spent viewing old video footage to isolate a particular topic.

The cost for the additional e-scribe module would be \$14,825.00 (\$11,450.00 annually with an additional \$3,375.00 in the first year for set-up and training fees). While there is a less expensive module offered by e-scribe, Brockton would need the more expensive option which comes with an “encoder” to allow the use of the cameras and hardware at the Bruce County Administration Building.

In the event that Council would like to move ahead with broadcasting the Council meetings, the Live Closed Captioning Module would be recommended as well to ensure compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* that requires in s. 80.46 of O.Reg. 165/16:

“The provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities must be integrated with the provision of goods, services or facilities to others, unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities.”

The Live Closed Captioning would allow any individuals with a hearing impairment to follow the Council meetings. The annual cost of the Live Closed Captioning is \$9,450.00 with a one-time set-up fee of \$2,700.00.

It should be noted that this plan would currently not allow the Council meetings scheduled in Cargill, Elmwood or anywhere that may be scheduled from time-to-time through the year to be broadcast given the need for the hardware at the Bruce County Administration Building. Staff would recommend that the June 16, 2020 and September 8, 2020 meetings scheduled to be held in Cargill and Elmwood instead be held at the Bruce County Administration Building so that those meeting could be broadcast as well.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

Although there is significant cost associated with broadcasting the Council meetings, \$26,975.00, ensuring that the decision-making process is accessible to all residents is fundamental to increasing the public's trust and confidence in their elected officials.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Fiona Hamilton, Clerk

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer