

## Report to Council

<b>Report Title:</b>	Broadcasting Council Meetings - Update		
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Fiona Hamilton, Clerk and Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk		
<b>Department:</b>	Clerk's		
<b>Date:</b>	May 12, 2020		
<b>Report Number:</b>	CLK2020-15	<b>File Number:</b>	C11CL
<b>Attachments:</b>	N/A		

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### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number CLK2020-15 – Broadcasting Council Meetings – Update, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Clerk and Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk and in doing so directs staff to proceed with Option \_\_\_\_\_ for broadcasting meetings and Option \_\_\_\_\_ for the location of Council Meetings.

### Report:

#### Background:

The Clerk's Department have been thoroughly investigating options for broadcasting Council Meetings for several months. Report Number CLK2020-03 was presented to Council on January 14, 2020, and Report Number CLK2020-08 on March 10, 2020 reviewing the available options.

On March 10, 2020 Council approved proceeding to arrange Council Meetings to be broadcast by Wightman Telecom as part of its residential television service. Unfortunately, upon consultation with Wightman following the Council decision, staff were informed that Wightman's services previously provided to the Municipality of West Grey would no longer be available to Brockton. Wightman informed staff that Brockton would not be permitted to publish the footage on our YouTube channel if Wightman owned the recording equipment and came to record the meetings. Unfortunately, without using the YouTube channel, Brockton would need to pay additional funds for closed captioning.

Staff began inquiring with three local audio visual companies regarding the approximate equipment that would be required to record the meetings, and the associated costs. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic began and altered staff's process of moving forward on this matter. At least one local supplier noted that they were only interested in quoting the project if equipment could be hardwired in, which posed a problem given the use of the County Council Chambers.

Report Number CLK2020-10 was then presented at the April 7, 2020 Special Council Meeting informing Council that staff had researched a number of electronic meeting software providers, and purchased a monthly license with Zoom Video Communications to conduct electronic Council Meetings, and livestream the meetings to the Municipality's YouTube channel. The license also allows for remote interviews for human resources and for training for the fire department. The meetings will also be recorded and saved in the Municipality's records. The Procedural By-Law was also amended to allow for electronic meetings.

### **Analysis:**

Staff are recommending the following options in order for Council to continue broadcasting Council Meetings following the completion of the COVID-19 pandemic:

### **Broadcasting**

#### **Option 1:**

Continue using Zoom Video Conferencing to broadcast all Council Meetings and livestream them to the Municipality's YouTube Channel. As Council has now become familiar with the Zoom platform, the proposal would be to continue to log-in to Zoom for Council meetings on the laptops, even if Council is all in the same room as per normal. This proposal is a low cost method using technology and equipment the Municipality of Brockton already owns to broadcast Council meetings and ensure the accessibility of the meetings. This option would allow the Council meetings to be broadcast from any location, such as the Cargill Community Centre or the Elmwood Community Centre.

#### **Option 2:**

Investigate and purchase additional equipment such as a video camera, SD cards, microphones, sound board, tripod, and video editing software in order to record the meetings internally.

Although the costs vary, there would be significant costs in purchasing the equipment required to record the meetings, providing staff with training on the equipment, and identifying available options for livestreaming based on the equipment purchased, whereas Zoom is fully functioning, has livestreaming built-in, and staff have already been trained on the software.

#### **Option 3:**

Council could also still consider using the escribe lite webcasting, which would involve the use of a hardwired camera. The benefit to this system is that it would allow users to link on specific Agenda items, and produces a high quality product. While staff still support the additional closed captioning module, the Municipality of Brockton could continue to use YouTube's closed captioning. The Bruce County IT staff clarified with e-scribe that the webcasting lite option would be available to us, such that the annual cost without closed captioning would be approximately \$9,500.00.

### **Location**

As Council is aware, the closure of the Bruce County Administration Building due to COVID-19 meant the Council meetings had to be held in an alternate location. Depending on the option chosen above, Council

could consider permanently choosing a different location for the Council Meeting. If Council agreed to continue using Zoom, the meetings could be broadcast from any venue.

### **Option 1: Cargill Community Centre**

Over the past few years, Council has held one meeting in Cargill, one in Elmwood and the remainder at the Bruce County Council Chambers at the Bruce County Administration in Walkerton. When this practice started, the Municipality of Brockton did not have an accessible facility that was suitable for Council meetings. Now that the Cargill Community Centre renovations are complete, this site be adopted as the permanent site for Council meetings (keeping the yearly meeting in Elmwood). The site is fully accessible and already has the technology to display the screen, etc. The smaller space and windows would allow for those in the audience to hear more clearly. Holding the Council meetings at a municipal facility would also reduce the cost of renting from the County of Bruce.

For the most part, the smaller meeting room at the Cargill Community Centre would be sufficient for most meetings. For larger public meetings (such as for planning matters, etc.) the doors into the hallway could be opened, or the larger area used. An additional television screen could be installed to allow viewing of the smaller room (which would be an additional improvement of a municipally owned facility).

### **Option 2: Bruce County Administration Building**

The final option is to continue meeting in the Bruce County Administration Building when permitted to do so again when COVID-19 restrictions are eased. The Bruce County Council Chambers is familiar and the procedures already established. However, staff have received a number of complaints from residents and the media that it is difficult to hear the Members of Council and the screen is not very visible to those at the back of the room.

### **Sustainability Checklist:**

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

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|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy?       | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity?     | Yes |
| • 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

Only \$5,000 is budgeted in the 2020 Municipal Budget to broadcast Council Meetings. Currently, approximately \$500.00 of that budget has been spent purchasing the Zoom Video Conferencing software and the annual license would likely be less than the \$5,000.00.

**Reviewed By:**



**Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer**

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**Respectfully Submitted by:**



Fiona Hamilton, Clerk



Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk

**Reviewed By:**



**Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer**