

## Report to Council

<b>Report Title:</b>	Committees of Council Review		
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Fiona Hamilton, Clerk		
<b>Department:</b>	Clerk's		
<b>Date:</b>	October 27, 2020		
<b>Report Number:</b>	CLK2020-37	<b>File Number:</b>	C11CL, C12
<b>Attachments:</b>	Summary of Committee Budget and Estimated Staffing Costs Summary of Recommendations for Specific Committees		

### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2020-37 – Committee of Council Review, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Clerk for information purposes and further approves the general recommendations in the report and the specific recommendations for each committee to be implemented as of January 1, 2021 with an amended Committee Appointment By-law coming forward.

### Report:

#### Background:

During the budget meetings for the 2020 Municipal Budget, Council directed staff to bring forward a review of the Committees of Council in response to financial pressures at the time. This was also outlined in the 2016 Municipal Services Review and priority for staff to complete a thorough review. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that many Committee meetings were delayed during the Spring months. When Committee meetings resumed, staff were busy setting up remote meetings and were able to use that time to consult directly with the members on the Committees about topics that will be discussed in more detail below.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has also exacerbated financial pressures and highlighted the importance of finding efficiencies and streamlining processes for minimal effect on residents. With this background context in mind, staff have reviewed the number of Committees of Council with a view towards consolidating or eliminating some Committees to reduce staff overtime, and find efficiencies and cost savings.

As noted above, municipal staff have been meeting with Committees of Council to discuss topics such as the needs for clear Terms of Reference and mandates, satisfaction with the municipal budgeting process and the allocation of funds, level of staff support and recruitment/retention issues. During this consultation, municipal staff remained cognizant of some of the recommendations contained in the Municipal Services Review, such as:

- The transfer of the CIC mandate to the BIA and the EDC for greater clarity of roles and reduce overlapping responsibilities and to make best use of limited resources;
- Each Committee of Council needs to establish goals and measures of success;
- Develop a plan to help all of Brockton's Committees pool resources and work together;
- Review the Committee Appointment Process, applying consistent terms and limits throughout Brockton Committees; and
- Use sub-committees that could function without a Council or staff representative, reporting back to the main Committee.

As of March 10, 2020, the Municipality of Brockton has more than fifteen (15) Committees of Council as per By-Law 2020-107. Each Committee-of-Council should be producing regular minutes to be included on Council Agendas. Most of these Committees also have at least one Council representative and at least one staff representative on the Committee.

When staff met with the Committees-of-Council, the following are some of the topics that were addressed:

- Committee Mandate;
- Committee Meeting Schedule;
- Number and qualifications for Committee Members;
- Approximate Staff Time Required for Committee; and
- Level of engagement from Committee Members.

A summary of the budget for each Committee and the estimated average yearly hours of staff time required has been included as an attachment to this report. This does not include the Council Member time required for each Committee. The topics outlined above in relation to the specific Committees as well as the individual recommendations for each Committee have been summarized in an attachment to this report. Overall, the estimated cost of staff attending the Committee meetings is roughly estimated at \$16,945.44 - \$19,998.76.

### **Analysis:**

Overall, there were observations and suggestions that were shared across a number of the Committees.

### **Challenges**

Firstly, Members expressed some confusion surrounding the overall Committee appointment and recruitment process. For some Committees, expressions of interest were collected at the beginning of the Term of Council and all volunteers who expressed an interest were appointed to the Committee. Subsequently, when recruiting for new members, Brockton would place an advertisement in the newspaper or on social media seeking applications which would be reviewed by the Committee and a recommendation made to Council. There were some Committees that sought representatives with particular backgrounds (such as the Economic Development Committee seeking an Industry Representative), but generally speaking all individuals who applied were then appointed to the Committee.

The challenge with this approach is that the mandate of some Committees of Council was to act as an advisory Committee to Council where some relevant background experience or qualification should be required. It also

resulted in some Committees that become unduly large and more difficult to manage. Also, it was noted by some individuals that on larger Committees, some individual members become less invested in maintaining regular attendance or preparation for meetings, while other members carried more of the load of the Committee.

At times, the voice of a few stronger, more dedicated members of the Committee came to dominate such that the recommendations of the committee may not reflect a true plurality of voices. In other occasions, long-standing members were the individuals most often tasked with carrying action items forward, such that there was no succession planning for the work performed by the Committee.

#### Recommendations:

In order to avoid some of the challenges identified above, staff recommend that the overall size of each Committee be reduced to seven (7) individuals to ensure that each member feels heard, remains engaged and is able to fairly participate in the meetings. Reducing the number of individuals would also encourage members to attend more regularly as they know they will be needed for a quorum, and would provide the Committee with the ability to be flexible and change a meeting date more easily if required.

Reducing the number of Committee members also allows for increased training, as each Member of all Committees-of-Council is required to abide by the Council Code of Conduct and could consult with the Integrity Commissioner (or face an investigation) and is also required to abide by the municipal finance rules (such as purchasing and procurement, etc.).

The proposal would be that any Committees with larger members continue as is until a member resigns or the next term of Council. At that time, all members would need to submit expressions in interest and a maximum of seven (7) individuals would be appointed. The members would then elect a new chair at the first regular meeting of the Committee.

It is also recommended that each Committee consider the qualifications and background that would be helpful in fulfilling the mandate of the Committee and ensure that those requirements are communicated when undergoing recruitment to ensure the greatest degree of transparency for the public.

All vacancies should be filled by soliciting applications through social media and/or other avenues to allow all residents have an equal opportunity to apply.

There were some Committees that would also at times struggle to meet quorum requirements, such that no business could be decided and therefore not making best use of the time for those in attendance or the staff member having prepared an agenda, etc. Implementing a minimum attendance requirement also ensures that the appointed members are engaged and are offering thoughtful contributions that can assist council and staff in making informed decisions.

Finally, the Municipal Services Review recommended that term limits be imposed for all Committees. By extension, staff recommend that there be limits on an individual acting as the Chair of a Committee for more than one term unless through a nomination and re-appointment process as well to ensure proper succession planning, promote appropriate innovation and flexibility, and to avoid volunteer burn-out (noting that two Chairpeople have resigned in the past three (3) months).

While some Committees have started the process of reviewing the core mandate and the Terms of Reference, there are other Committees who have not yet started this process. Staff recommend streamlining the overall number of Committees such that clear mandates and Terms of Reference can be finalized in the upcoming year. Streamlining the overall number would also provide staff with an opportunity to set-up all the Committees using the e-scribe software for consistent, transparent and accessible Agendas and Minutes that can be easily integrated with the municipal website.

It should also be noted that most Committees tended to meet monthly, with some breaking in the summer or for the Christmas holidays. At times, some Agendas may be repetitive or the Chairperson may not know what topics to bring forward on the Agenda. Staff recommend reducing the number of times that many Committees meet to ensure maximum efficiency and reduce staff overtime costs.

It should be noted that Brockton is rich with dedicated, talented and passionate volunteers who demonstrate a high level of civic engagement. The goal of this report is not to undermine or gloss over the monumental achievements of these volunteers, but rather to adapt to financial pressures and streamline processes. To that end, the Municipality of Brockton has implemented the Build Your Brockton engagement website that could be more fully leveraged to maintain the same level of civic engagement through an alternate forum. The Build Your Brockton website would still allow residents to remain informed about projects, offer suggestions, and provide meaningful experiences without the administrative burden associated with creating and circulating Agendas and Minutes, attending meetings and waiting on the next meeting cycle, etc.

There are also some Committees that feel as though the constraints of the legislative and financial rules required through the Municipal Act, 2001 are not conducive to the kind of community involvement the members find fulfilling. For example, some Committees view themselves as more fundraising Committees that would like the freedom to turn their sights on overall beautification projects and program of local importance. Others see their role as more conceiving of and implementing projects rather than advising Council. For these Committees, serious thought should be given to becoming separate not-for-profit entities that have less regulatory restrictions in place. In other words, the future for some Committees may be more akin to an independent service club than an arm of the Municipality of Brockton via the Committee-of-Council structure.

#### Additional Committees

While generally speaking the recommendation is to reduce the number of Committees-of-Council, there are two Committees that staff recommend Council consider establishing in the future. The *Building Code Act, 1992*, R.S.O. 1992, c. 24 sets out a procedure by which an individual that has been served with a Property Standards Order can bring an appeal to the Property Standards Committee. The by-law currently in place in relation to the Property Standards Committee is from 2007 and it may be difficult to locate the named members. As a result, staff recommend reconvening a new Property Standards Committee with experience relevant to adjudicating Property Standards matters for the purposes of s. 15 of the Act. A governance By-law outlining the process and procedure of this committee will also be brought forward.

Finally, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* S.O. 2005, c. 11 requires that each municipality with a population of 10,000 people or more establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee. The legislated mandate of the Accessibility Advisor Committee is to provide advice about the implementation of the accessibility standards and review Site Plans for accessibility concerns. The legislation requires that the

majority of the members on the Accessibility Advisory Committee be people with disabilities. The 2016 census indicated that Brockton's population was 9,460 residents and the next census is scheduled for May of 2021. Given the number of residential developments currently underway in Brockton, staff expect that the 10,000 person threshold will be reached in the near future and are therefore recommending that an Accessibility Advisory Committee be established in 2021 with also a clear mandate and Council approved Terms of Reference.

### **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?                 | Yes |

### **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:**

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

The proposal to reduce some Committees and limit the frequency of meetings will result in direct cost savings by reducing staff overtime and allowing other administrative tools to be used to their maximum benefit.

**Reviewed By:**



**Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer**

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**Respectfully Submitted by:**



**Fiona Hamilton, Clerk**

**Reviewed By:**



**Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer**