

TOWN of PRESCOTT
ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Council has recognized, for some time, the need to conduct an organizational review of the entire corporation. A request for proposals was distributed to consultants throughout the province and Bill Winegard was hired to conduct the review in partnership with Brian Donaldson and Hans Muntz at a cost of \$20,610.

Quoting the consultants' report:

The Terms of Reference for this Review were clear: the Town is feeling the cumulative impact of many new legislative requirements, a straining tax base, the need to renew infrastructure, employees reaching retirement, a changing workforce and a recent salary escalation in the municipal sector. As in many smaller municipalities, the combination of these pressures can pose serious problems for the quality of municipal operations...

Choices about staffing levels are usually choices about service levels. Provincial requirements and public expectations have little respect for the size of the Town or its tax base.

The goal of this review, as stated by the consultants:

Our primary purpose in this report is to recommend the organization that you need - bearing in mind your financial limitations - to achieve what the Town needs to and wants to achieve. In other words, we are dealing with how you should build the capacity you need.

Methodology

The first part of the review was actually a review of six other municipalities: the Town of Arnprior, the Town of Carleton Place, the Town of Gananoque, the Town of Perth, the Town of St. Mary's and the Township of Stirling-Rawdon. These six were selected by the Prescott Council as fairly similar municipalities for comparing operations, services, costs, staffing, salaries, taxes and relevant demographics. The consultants conducted a review of documentation from each municipality and also conducted interviews with the CAO of each. Naturally, the same documentation was reviewed for Prescott as part of that study.

In the second portion of the review, the consultants conducted interviews with every member of Prescott Council and all members of our staff. Through these interviews, the consultants were able to gain greater detail than is available from the documentation alone, as well as gain deeper insight into operations and governance issues.

The Final Report

The final report addresses each department and each full-time position, recommending revised job descriptions for each. These recommendations address the immediate need to replace retiring employees, but more so speak to the principles of long term human resources and succession planning.

The report looks at the roles of the CAO and the Mayor and the relationship between the staff and the Council. A later chapter focuses on governance issues with recommendations looking at how Council sets its priorities and how they can best follow up on their goals with recommendations on how the organization can be more efficient and effective. The report wraps up with a review of human resource policies.

The consultants provided a separate document with recommendations for salaries and pay grades, but this portion has been withheld pending further Council review. Final decisions on salaries will be released at a later date in conjunction with a complete financial impact report on any recommendations being considered. Any references to specific salaries within the report have also been removed.

Recommendations

Some of the major recommendations of the report are:

- reorganization of the CAO/Clerk's position to remove administrative duties and allow a greater focus on corporate management and economic development
- introduction of a new Deputy Clerk position to assume many of the CAO/Clerk's administrative duties and also to serve as the planning and building permit administrator
- a redistribution of the tasks within the Finance Department
- realignment of economic development duties between the CAO and the Director of Community Services
- creation of a new part-time position of Tourism officer
- creation of a new full-time position of Chief Building Official/Property Standards Officer to replace currently contracted work
- replacement of the retiring Municipal Engineer and Public Works Superintendent with new P.W. Director and P.W. Supervisor respectively with a greater focus on management of the water/wastewater operations
- hiring of one additional water/wastewater operator to ensure staffing levels to meet all provincial requirements
- administrative support for the Fire Department

Implementation

While Council and staff met with the consultants throughout the review process, this Final Report is the report of the consultants, not the report of the Council or staff. Council will formally 'accept' the report from the consultants, but in doing so does not necessarily 'adopt' all of its recommendations.

The Council will continue to meet with the Senior Management Team to review one department at a time and to consider the recommendations from the report for each. The first priority will be on the Public Works Department to address the immediate and impending retirements followed by consideration of the Deputy Clerk position to replace the soon-to-be retiring administrative assistant. The schedule at this time is to complete a review of all departments and adopt any recommendations for salary ranges before the end of 2008.

As stated earlier, any consideration of staffing recommendations must be made in context of the financial impact on the overall budget. A financial impact report will be prepared for Council with any expected staffing cost increases offset by funds already established within existing budgets.