



# REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, September 27, 2011  
11:45 a.m.  
Regional Council Chamber  
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

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Present were: Vice-Chair C. Zehr, L. Armstrong, J. Brewer, T. Cowan, D. Craig, \*R. Deutschmann, J. Haalboom, \*B. Halloran, R. Kelterborn, C. Millar, \*J. Mitchell, K. Seiling, S. Strickland, and J. Wideman

Members absent: T. Galloway, G. Lorentz

## **MOTION TO RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION**

MOVED by S. Strickland  
SECONDED by J. Mitchell

THAT the meeting reconvene into Open Session.

CARRIED

## **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT**

None declared.

## **DELEGATIONS**

- a) Michael Druker, Open Data Waterloo Region, re: CR-CLK-11-017, Open Data Investigation and Proposal

M. Druker indicated support for the staff recommendation in the report. He cited numerous benefits to the provision of open data, to the public as well as to the organization providing the data.

\*R. Deutschmann, B. Halloran and J. Mitchell entered the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

M. Druker emphasized the potential for new applications of data, allowing the intellectual resources of the public to create new benefits from existing data and resources. He also emphasized that similar benefits can be realized by staff within the Regional organization. He spoke to the proposed license for data use, the appropriateness of the license, and the considerations to be made in considering whether to release data.

The Committee obtained examples from M. Druker on valuable applications of the release of open data.

**REPORTS – Corporate Resources**

## a) CR-CLK-11-017, Open Data Investigation and Proposal

Gary Sosnoski, Commissioner, Corporate Resources, introduced the report, outlining the staff recommendation and noting the phased approach to implementation with planned periodic evaluations of the initiative. He observed that the Region would be the first regional municipality to undertake such an initiative. He thanked the Open Data Project Team, lead by Oriana Sharp, Manager, Information Management and Archives.

Members of the Committee expressed their support for the initiative, citing the useful applications and benefits of open data.

MOVED by J. Wideman  
SECONDED by T. Cowan

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo establish an open data catalogue and webpage(s) for the purposes of making data available to the public under an Open Data Model;

AND THAT staff conduct an evaluation of this initiative within one year of its commencement.

CARRIED

**REPORTS – Finance**

## b) F-11-062, Periodic Financial Reporting January – August 2011

Vice-Chair C. Zehr brought to the Committee's attention that it is last day of work for Larry Ryan, Chief Financial Officer. He acknowledged his immense contribution to the Region, and the Committee applauded him.

L. Ryan provided an overview of the report, observing that the Region in the year to date has generated a modest surplus of \$1.8 million, or approximately 0.7% of the Regional levy, with half of the surplus coming from supplementary taxes and the remaining amount from operations. He also pointed out the section of the report related to the light rail transit project, indicating that the item will become a fixture in future periodic financial reporting.

The Committee obtained clarification from Rob Horne, Commissioner, Planning, Housing and Community Services, with regard to the purpose and nature of the EcoMobility grant. The Committee highlighted that transit ridership revenue is 3.2% higher than budgeted, as well as fuel cost impacts on transit operations.

The Committee discussed the impact and timing of supplementary taxes. L. Ryan noted that the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation is making efforts at addressing its assessment backlog, which is decreasing.

## c) F-11-063, Reserve and Reserve Funds Review

Angela Hinchberger, Director, Treasury & Tax Policy, provided an overview of the report, noting that the last review of reserves and reserve funds was during the 2010 budget process, and that the report provides a comparison of reserves with similar municipalities. She provided a detailed review of the Region's use of reserves and reserves funds, and observed that the

Region is entering a period of capital expansion and so the balances of reserves and reserve funds can be expected to decline during that time. She explained the rationale for the consolidation of various reserves and reserve funds and their balances.

The Committee obtained clarification from L. Ryan on the use of the working funds reserve.

The Committee confirmed with A. Hinchberger that the Brownfield Incentive Program will be reviewed during the development charges review anticipated in 2012, and that sources of funding for projects under the program are found on a case-by-case basis.

The Committee took item #2 of the recommendation separately.

MOVED by J. Wideman  
SECONDED by T. Cowan

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action related to its Reserves and Reserve Funds:

1. Eliminate the Environmental Insurance Reserve Fund and transfer the balance in the following manner: Brownfield Incentive Program (\$2.5 million), the Capital Levy Reserve Fund (\$3.0 million) and the remainder to the Insurance Reserve Fund (\$500,000);
3. Eliminate the Pay Equity Reserve and transfer the funds to the following existing Human Resources capital projects: Attracting and Retaining Employees (\$47,000), Recruitment and Retention Strategy (\$207,937) and Strategy for Employee Engagement (\$223,530);
4. Eliminate the GIS Maintenance Reserve Fund (\$77,502) and transfer the balance to the Computer Reserve to be used to offset one-time costs from the Information Technology Program Review.

CARRIED

Some members of the Committee expressed apprehension at eliminating the Cycling Path Reserve Fund, stating its importance in helping to link the various existing bicycle paths throughout the Region. L. Ryan noted that the cycling funds would continue to be earmarked for their present purpose within a consolidated reserve fund, and that if the Committee saw fit that it would cause no operational difficulties to maintain the separate reserve fund.

The Committee expressed that the Region should examine a more active approach to using the funds within the Cycling Path Reserve Fund, and R. Horne responded that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) is increasing its efforts to make use of the funds for their intended purpose; he indicated that the Committee's observation would be related back to ATAC.

MOVED by J. Mitchell  
SECONDED by S. Strickland

THAT item #2 of the main motion be amended to maintain the Cycling Path Reserve Fund as a separate reserve fund.

CARRIED

MOVED by J. Wideman  
SECONDED by T. Cowan

2. Eliminate the Land Servicing Reserve Fund (\$34,788) and the Highway Servicing Reserve Fund (\$10,316), and transfer the balances to the Roads Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund;

CARRIED, as amended

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking Sheet was received for information.

#### **NEXT MEETING – October 18, 2011**

#### **MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION**

MOVED by L. Armstrong  
SECONDED by C. Millar

THAT a closed meeting of the Planning & Works Committee be held on Tuesday, September 27, 2011 immediately following the Administration and Finance Committee meeting in the Waterloo County Room in accordance with Section 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001, for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

- a) proposed or pending litigation related to a matter before an administrative tribunal
- b) proposed or pending litigation related to a matter before an administrative tribunal
- c) proposed or pending acquisition of land in the City of Kitchener

CARRIED

The Committee entered into closed session at 12:26 p.m.

**COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIR, *C. Zehr***

**COMMITTEE CLERK, *M. Grivicic***