



Staff Report

Administration – Town Clerk

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: March 18, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.036
Title: Follow-up to Public Meeting Regarding the Establishment of a Lobbyist Registry
Prepared by: Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.036, entitled “Follow-up to Public Meeting Regarding the Establishment of a Lobbyist Registry”

AND THAT Council direct the Town Clerk, in coordination with the Accountability and Transparency Committee, to provide a recommendation to Council for the development of a Lobbyist Registry for the Town of The Blue Mountains.

B. Overview

This report provides a summary of the comments received at the April 18, 2023 Public Meeting regarding the potential establishment of a lobbyist registry for the Town of The Blue Mountains.

C. Background

Further to the February 13, 2023 Council direction in response to Staff Report “[FAF.23.021 Potential Establishment of a Lobbyist Registry](#)” a [Public Meeting Re: Potential Establishment of a Lobbyist Registry](#) was held on April 18, 2023 to receive comments from Council and the Public. The link to the [April 18, 2023 Public Meeting Minutes](#) are provided for reference. Staff confirm that no written comments were received in advance of the Public Meeting. The following is an excerpt of the verbal comments received from members of the public at the Public Meeting:

B.4 Public Meeting: Potential Establishment of Lobbyist Registry

Rosemary Gosselin, who resides on Napier Street provided a public comment. Ms. Gosselin noted that transparency and accountability and communication have been identified by the public, over the past few years as being of vital importance. She noted a lobby registry is part of that. She thanked staff for the effort put into this and thanked CAO Everitt for the work he put into this. Ms. Gosselin asked how the public can be best

made aware of the people who are working with staff to discuss the nitty gritty of what goes on in our town. She further noted a newsletter goes out, so would there be a weekly update on who spoke to who, or would one have to look at the website to find out. CAO Everitt noted that will be taken into consideration on when a report should be brought forward, maybe a yearly report is not enough and maybe a quarterly report is more appropriate. CAO Everitt noted that report would not give a lot of information except for who met and a generalized reason as to why. CAO Everitt noted that maybe through this process it can be identified more reports that come forward to Council and that he will take that into consideration and will be brought back in the follow-up report. Ms. Gosselin asked how much staff time is used by lobbyists and should there be a limit on how much time someone can take from staff. CAO Everitt noted a benefit to the registry to help identify who in the staff are being asked to meet with different individuals and groups. He further noted that it will be interesting to understand if there are groups that ask to meet different staff without other staff knowing that they are meeting. CAO Everitt noted he does not see there being a problem, but it would be nice to have the ability to track that information and understand the time commitments around some meetings with staff.

Alar Soever who resides at 203 Sunset, provided public comments noting that definitions are key and when reading the definitions of lobbying and lobbyist there is a lot of interaction that can happen that is not considered in the bylaw to be considered to be lobbying or lobbyist, particularly people acting on behalf of community groups and things. He noted having concrete real life examples would be helpful if it was brought forward in the staff report. He noted that unless people understand what is outside of this there could be confusion within the community.

Roland Gosselin, who resides on Napier Street provided public comments. He noted his thanks to those bringing this together for the notion of the code of conduct and the lobbyist registry. He noted that lobbying is primarily, influence peddling. Mr. Gosselin noted the word lobbying is generalized but it has to do with the fact that people are trying to influence the way in which legislation or expenditures are directed. He noted for the public, it goes to the matter of trust. He further noted whether trust can be put in the people that we put in the position of spending our tax funds or making decisions in regard to what is happening. He noted how important these matters are and that it is important that we are recognizing them. He noted his pleasure with the Town looking at this matter, doing research and pointing the concerns in the right direction.

D. Analysis

At the October 30, 2023 Council Meeting, Council appointed three members of Council to the Accountability and Transparency Committee, and at the February 20, 2024 Council Meeting, Council appointed two public members to the Committee. The [Accountability & Transparency Committee Terms of Reference](#) was adopted by Council at the October 30, 2023 Council Meeting. The mandate of the Accountability and Transparency Committee specifically includes “providing recommendations on the establishment of the Lobbyist Registry and its ongoing effectiveness”.

With Council direction, the Town Clerk will provide the Accountability and Transparency Committee with the background materials regarding the establishment of a Lobbyist Registry, and will work with the Committee to provide a recommendation to Council.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

F. Environmental Impacts

None

G. Financial Impacts

None

H. In Consultation With

Shawn Everitt, CAO

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has been the subject of a Public Meeting which took place on **April 18, 2023**. Those who provided comments at the Public Meeting, including anyone who has asked to receive notice regarding this matter, has been provided notice of this Staff Report. Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Corrina Giles, Town Clerk, townclerk@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,
Corrina Giles
Town Clerk

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.24.036 Follow-up to Public Meeting regarding the Lobbyist Registry.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 4, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Shawn Everitt - Mar 4, 2024 - 8:01 AM