



Minutes

The Blue Mountains, Accountability and Transparency Committee

Date: Monday, March 4, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Virtual Meeting, Teams
Prepared By:
Carrie Fairley, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

Members Present: June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock and Robert Turner
Members Absent: Paula Hope
Staff Present: Connia Giles, Town Clerk

A. Call to Order

A.1 Traditional Territory Acknowledgement and Moment of Reflection

We would like to begin our meeting by recognizing the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples of Canada as traditional stewards of the land. The municipality is located within the boundary of Treaty 18 region of 1818 which is the traditional land of the Anishnaabek, Haudenosaunee and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples.

A.2 Committee Member Attendance

A.3 Approval of Agenda

Moved By: Gail Ardiel
Seconded By: Connie Craddock

THAT the Agenda of March 4, 2024, be approved as circulated, including the addition at F.1 regarding meeting types, to the Agenda.

Yay (4): June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock, and Robert Turner

Absent: (1): Paula hope

The motion is Carried (4-0)

A.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the Town Procedural By-law 2023-62, Council or Committee Members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

A.5 Previous Minutes

None

B. Staff Reports and Deputation

None

C. Public Comment Period

None

D. Matters for Discussion

D.1 Follow-up Direction from Council

None

D.2 Review of the Accountability and Transparency Committee's Terms of Reference

Chair Porter led the committee through the Terms of Reference for this committee, approved by Council last year and outlines the mandate of the committee. Chair Porter further spoke to item D in the Terms of Reference noting that it involves an initiation of a work plan.

The Committee discussed the decision making of staff and Council are to be supportive of the corporate strategic objectives of the Town and the other mandates noted in the Terms of Reference.

D.3 Review of the Corporate Policy COR.07.01 Accountability and Transparency of Town Actions of the Public

The Committee reviewed the current Corporate Policy POL.COR.07.01 and discussed updating same. Chair Porter noted the last time it was updated which was in 2009. The Committee felt it would be helpful to see other municipalities Accountability and Transparency policies to compare.

Member Turner noted the importance of spending time on the definitions of accountability and transparency and noted that accountability is a higher order than responsibility when you are accountable for the outcomes and responsibly is an obligation to perform a task that gives you an outcome. Member Turner spoke further regarding responsibility for actions and accountability to the public noting that the

definition lacks focus on key strategic priorities. Member Craddock questioned if there are definitions set out in legislation regarding accountability and transparency. Town Clerk, Corrina Giles noted that there is governing legislation and noted the current Town policy is due for a refresh and further noted that to met legislative requirements, and other Town policies, the accountability and transparency reference can be updated, as the committee deems appropriate. Corrina further noted that it would go to Council for their consideration. Member Turner noted that he did refer to Section 270 of *Municipal Act, 2001* and found nothing to preclude him from bringing the definitions forward. Corrina noted that when the Act was updated last, it required municipalities to create a number of policies that were not previously in effect and Corrina noted this was one of those policies.

Chair Porter noted that once the copies of other municipalities who have updated their policies within the last five years, are received from the Town Clerk, she will pull the definitions out and highlight the similarities and differences, to facilitate the discussion in advance of the following meeting.

Moved By: Robert Turner

Seconded By: Connie Craddock

THAT the Accountability and Transparency Committee requests the Town Clerk to reach out to her Clerks network to seek copies of Accountability and Transparency policies, that have been updated within the last 5 years.

Yay (4): June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock, and Robert Turner

Absent: (1): Paula Hope

The motion is Carried (4-0)

D.4 Initiate the development of a work plan for the Accountability and Transparency Committee

The Committee discussed the work plan and the various items identified in the Terms of Reference as the mandate of the committee, including timelines for the work plan. Member Gail Ardiel noted that the work plan could need to be updated as the committee works. The Town Clerk noted that the Terms of Reference states the items identified for the committee to work on, and she suggested looking at the items that will be easiest to tackle, to start with. The Town Clerk further noted that she will be bringing a report to Committee of the Whole on March 18, 2024, regarding the lobbyist registry and in her report, she is recommending to Council that this committee work on the lobbyist registry. Member Craddock noted four items in the mandate that are specific, concrete and are objectives that can be clearly achieved and is work that is on-going at the Council.

The Committee agreed that the workplan to start will consist of these items:

1. Updating Accountability and Transparency Policy
2. Staff Report Template
3. Code of Conduct
4. The Lobbyist Registry

The Committee discussed accountability when communicating about the lobbyist registry and the items this committee will work on noted there is an opportunity to put in place measurable objectives.

Chair Porter noted her intention to draft a work plan that identifies the elements and timelines, for the next meeting.

The Committee discussed their concerns regarding bullet points one and three noted in the mandate noted in the Terms of Reference around educating the public and staff. The Committee agreed that bullet points one and three noted in the mandate should be combined and Member Turner suggested the following in place: *“Recommending strategies that will ensure staff, Council, residents, stakeholders and visitors continue to be educated on all Town directions and activities, including a shared understanding and meaning about the Town's corporate strategic plan, while also building a culture of learning and providing evidence for change”*.

Chair Porter noted that since the Strategic Plan is being revised there is an opportunity to provide recommendations on how everyone is communicated with to ensure a shared understanding.

The Committee discussed the importance of communicating in a transparent and accountable way and collaborating with staff regarding communications to the public and staff. Member Craddock suggested a meeting with staff in the Communications Department so they can advise the committee on the ways they currently communicate, so the committee has a better understanding what is currently being done and how it is working. Chair Porter noted that the when the Committee works on the Staff Report Template, having communications staff input would be helpful since it is a communication vehicle.

Moved By: Gail Ardiel

Seconded By: Robert Turner

THAT the Accountability and Transparency Committee requests Communications Staff to attend a future Accountability and Transparency Committee meeting to collaborate how elements of accountability and transparency is and/or could be engrained in all Town communications.

Yay (4): June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock, and Robert Turner

Absent: (1): Paula Hope

The motion is Carried (4-0)

E. Correspondence

None

F. New and Unfinished Business

F.1 Additions to Agenda

F.1.1 Meeting Formats

Member Robert Turner noted his opinion with the committee meetings being held virtually. The Committee discussed why all the committee meetings are virtual. The Town Clerk noted that the Procedural By-law as approved by Council notes that all Committee meetings are to be held virtually.

Moved By: Connie Craddock

Seconded By: Robert Turner

THAT the Accountability and Transparency Committee request Council to allow this Committee to have a future Special meeting of the Accountability and Transparency Committee, in person.

Yay (4): June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock, and Robert Turner

Absent: (1): Paula Hope

The motion is Carried (4-0)

F.2 Items Identified for Discussion at the Next Meeting

The committee noted the items for the next meeting are the items the committee noted in the workplan.

G. Notice of Meeting Dates

Accountability and Transparency Committee, April 11, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., Virtual
Accountability and Transparency Committee, May 9, 2024, 10:00 a.m., Virtual
Accountability and Transparency Committee, June 13, 2024, 10:00 a.m., Virtual

H. Adjournment

Moved By: Gail Ardiel

Seconded By: Connie Craddock

THAT this Accountability and Transparency Committee Meeting does now adjourn at 10:54 a.m. to meet again Virtually, at the call of the Chair.

Yay (4): June Porter, Gail Ardiel, Connie Craddock, and Robert Turner

Absent: (1): Paula Hope

The motion is Carried (4-0)