



# Committee Report

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## Council Compensation Review Committee

**Meeting Date:** October 28, 2021  
**Meeting Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Town Hall, Council Chambers  
32 Mill Street, Thornbury, ON

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### Council Compensation Review Committee Recommendations

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**NOTE:** The following are recommendations from the Council Compensation Review Committee to be considered for adoption by Council

- [Receive Minutes \(October 28 , 2021\)](#)

**Recommended** (Move, second)

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives the Council Compensation Review Committee Minutes dated October 28, 2021 as attached, for information purposes.



# Minutes

## The Blue Mountains, Council Compensation Review Committee

**Date:** October 28, 2021  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Town Hall, Council Chambers - Virtual Meeting  
32 Mill Street, Thornbury, ON  
**Prepared by:**  
Kyra Dunlop, Administrative Assistant Committees of Council

**Members Present:** Robert Turner, John White

**Staff Present:** Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt, Manager of Human Resources Sarah Traynor, Executive Assistant to Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield, Administrative Assistant to Committees of Council Kyra Dunlop

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### A. Call to Order

#### A.1 Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

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

Executive Assistant to Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield confirmed all members were present.

Town staff present included Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Shawn Everitt, Manager of Human Resources Sarah Traynor, Executive Assistant to Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield and Administrative Assistant to Committees of Council Kyra Dunlop.

### **A.3 Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Robert Turner

Seconded by: John White

THAT the Agenda of October 28, 2021 be approved as circulated, including any additions to the Agenda.

Yay (2): Robert Turner, and John White

**The motion is Carried (2 to 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 2021-76, Council Compensation Review 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**

Moved by: John White

Seconded by: Robert Turner

THAT the Minutes of September 1, 2021 be approved as circulated, including any revisions to be made.

Yay (2): Robert Turner, and John White

**The motion is Carried (2 to 0)**

## **B. Staff Reports and Deputations**

### **B.1 Deputations, if any**

None

### **B.2 Public Comment Period (each speaker is allotted three minutes)**

NOTE: In accordance with the Town Procedural By-law 2021-76 fifteen minutes is allotted at the Meeting to receive public comments regarding Council Compensation Advisory Committee matters included on the Agenda. The speaker shall provide their name and address and shall address their comments to the Chair. Comments shall not refer to personnel, litigation, or potential litigation matters, or matters that are a follow-up to a Public Meeting.

**NOTE:** Committee meetings are taking place virtually to assist with social distancing with respect to COVID-19. Comments received from the public that have not been included on the Agenda will be read at the meeting by the Executive Assistant.

Sarah Merrifield read the public comments received into the record.

**B.2.1 Hank Bouwman**

Mr. Bouwman noted he was glad to see that we are finally addressing the woefully low compensation for Council Members. Mr. Bouwman noted his comments and corrections to the Interim Draft Council Compensation Review Committee Report.

Mr. Bouwman noted that the report indicated that "it was deemed that having an Administrative Assistant help with the research would not be effective as Council members felt extra time would be required to validate the research leaving such research best done by the Member." Mr. Bouwman noted he felt that showed a lack of trust in our people and meant that we had hired the wrong Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Bouwman noted that the report indicated that "Administrative Support" was contradicted in the report and that we could not have it both ways.

Mr. Bouwman indicated that the report noted "Mayor to be provided with own Administrative Assistant (1:1 ratio) Deputy Mayor and Councillors to share two Administrative Assistants (3:1 ratio)." Mr. Bouwman noted that it made sense to him for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to share someone since the two needed to work very closely together.

Mr. Bouwman noted that the report indicated "That the Compensation Philosophy developed by the Committee in its 2019 compensation recommendation (Appendix "A") continue to inform the 2021 recommendations. This is a living document that had been updated for the 2021 report." Mr. Bouwman noted whether 'inform' should read as 'form' and if 'bee' should be 'been'.

Mr. Bouwman noted that the report indicated "That Councilors' salary increases from the current \$29,265.60 by COLA, effective January 1, 2020 (estimated at 1.5% to \$29,704) and then by 20% in each of the following four years (compounded) to reach \$61,595 by end of the 2023 term of office (2026)." Mr. Bouwman noted whether the 2020 year should be 2022.

Mr. Bouwman noted that he thought the salaries should be increased in one shot instead of spreading it out over a number of years as Council positions expired next fall. Mr. Bouwman noted his concern that we would not attract the type of qualified Councillors next year and would be stuck with them for 4 more years.

Mr. Bouwman noted that no more than a total of two (2) additional administrative assistants should be added.

**B.3 Staff reports, if any**

None

**C. Matters for Discussion**

**C.1 Interim, Draft 2021 TBM Mayor and Council Compensation Review  
Recommendations Report - Committee members John White and Robert  
Turner**

Committee member Robert Turner noted that the Committee members were dependent on the community for their feedback on the report. Robert noted that the Committee had to date received supportive comments towards the Committee's work on compensation and that the constituents clearly had a desire to move compensation towards a living wage. Committee Member John White thanked Mr. Bouwman for his comments and noted that the interim draft report would address typos. John noted that the draft report had been available for over a week and that the Committee had expected to receive more public engagement and feedback than it had.

Robert and John provided the following highlights from the draft report:

- Although the Committee's report identifies an increase in Councillor compensation to approximately \$60,000 that this increase would not meet the threshold of a living wage. Robert noted that the proposed increase was nearly double what Councillors were currently compensated and that the increase would be compounded over 4 years and addressed a 1.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Robert noted that if the COLA could be addressed in January 2022 that the Committee would consider adjusting the report to reflect that increase. Robert noted that if in a forthcoming budget it was identified that a 20% increase was not affordable that the report would suggest that COLA be increased. John noted that if Town staff have a COLA program that there should be uniformity with a COLA program for Council members.
- Through Council interviews it was noted that the Deputy Mayor was delegated work by the Mayor and as a result of the increased responsibilities and workload that the Committee would suggest the Deputy Mayor's compensation fall in between Mayor and Councillor compensation. John noted that the Deputy Mayor and Mayor had not experienced a decrease in meetings as a result of the pandemic, and noted that once the pandemic restrictions eased it was likely that there would be additional pressures on their time regarding travelling between meetings.

- Robert noted the draft report moves towards the Grey County Council Designate receiving a stipend to account for the additional workload required for preparation of County Council meetings. John noted that the County Council position for a designate was required by Grey County and that all council members had identified through their interviews the importance of 2 members being present at County Council meetings as well as the importance that the designate be up to date on County Council issues in the event they needed to step in for the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- The administrative assistant position being recommended would be to provide administrative support, such as assisting with email and phone correspondence and scheduling, and that the recommendation was not to provide research support. Robert noted that the council interviews had shown that Councillors preferred to conduct their own research.
- A training allowance was recommended for Councillors as people of different experiences are elected to Council and there may be areas of Town business that Council members could benefit from training sessions to understand their responsibilities or the background of the issues.

Robert noted that the Committee felt they could not address the gap between the proposed increase and a living wage given that the proposal is to double compensation which is felt to be extraordinary. Robert noted that one of the considerations given in the draft report was the ability to afford the increase and that the draft report contemplated that as Town revenue was increasing, Council compensation should also increase but remain less than 1% of Town expenses. Robert noted that the proposed increase addresses comments about attracting and retaining diverse candidates to Council.

Robert noted that the Committee considered research from Attainable Housing and United Way Report regarding benchmarks used to contemplate the definition of a living wage. Robert noted that the final United Way Report had not been released and requested staff to advise the Committee members once it was made available. John noted that the benchmark used through United Way was a convenient point of reference with respect to using 2 wage earners per home for a living wage to be achieved, and that the Committee recognized that their proposal was not based on the assumption that potential candidates should require a second income earner to achieve a living wage.

Robert noted that the Committee would consider a recommendation in the report that the Council Compensation Review Committee be brought back in 2025 to make recommendations in advance of the 2026 budget.

Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt thanked Committee members for their fantastic work and noted that bringing the Committee back in 2025 would be good. CAO Everitt noted that seeing the progression of this Committee had

been a great example of a committee that could take a concept from infancy and enhance it. CAO Everitt noted that it was critically important that members of the public understand that the draft report had had the benefit of information being provided directly by members of Council through their interviews as conducted by the Committee members. CAO Everitt noted his thanks to the Committee for providing clarity regarding their proposal of an administrative assistant to assist Council members and advised that the Municipal Act provides direction that as Council speaks as a group they can request more information and research from staff. CAO Everitt noted that he was currently working on a report that outlined training sessions for Council members throughout a Council term given that leadership training for community leaders was becoming more common.

CAO Everitt noted that COLA was a significant piece to consider and noted that the Town's COLA policy was based on the Consumer Price Index for September. CAO Everitt noted that the COLA increase for September 2021 was 0.5% and for September 2022 it was 4.4%. Robert asked if COLA for January 2022 would increase by 4.4%. Manager of Human Resources Sarah Traynor noted that Council was part of the COLA administration program and therefore Council COLA was established by By-Law 2020-18.

CAO Everitt noted that the time spent in Council and Committee of the Whole meetings over the last 4 years had increased, from 167.5 hours in 2018 to 310 hours in 2020, with 2021 projected to be 312.9 hours. CAO Everitt noted that these numbers did not include time spent in Committee of Council and Task Force meetings, and that it was important to note that at Council and Committee of the Whole meetings approximately 6-7 staff members were always in attendance to provide support. John noted that it would be likely that the number of staff reports had also increased given the complexity of the issues. Robert noted that often the amount of preparation time required for meetings was double the actual time of the meeting. CAO Everitt noted that reports could often be between 300 or 400 pages and that supplementary materials could be released throughout the week for Council members to review. Robert thanked CAO Everitt and noted that he would update the report to reflect those comments.

Robert noted whether the report should reflect that proper space should be designated in Town Hall for Council members to work, as that was a common comment heard during the interview process. CAO Everitt noted that staff could always look at how to effectively provide space for Council members to manage their research. CAO Everitt noted that this recommendation would be beneficial in the report to provide Council the opportunity to provide staff a direction. John noted that the report could also include the inclusion of a Contact Management System. CAO Everitt noted that it would be appropriate to identify that in the report. John noted that the report could also consider the possibility of including

home equipment given the requirements surrounding remote work during the pandemic. Robert asked if there was an intent to proceed with hybrid Council meetings in a pandemic environment. CAO Everitt noted that the Town's Procedural By-Law allowed for hybrid meetings to start in November and that he anticipated that hybrid meetings would continue beyond the pandemic.

The Committee discussed when to make the final report available to staff. It was identified that the Committee would release the report as soon as possible to provide the public time to provide feedback. John asked when the report would come forward to Council. CAO Everitt noted that the final report would come forward through the 2022 Budget deliberation in December during the Administration section, which would take place on the first day of deliberations.

Key themes included the importance of resident feedback on the report; the appreciation noted for staff time, public feedback received to date and members of Council participating in interviews; that a move towards a living wage for members of Council should continue to be explored and addressed; that the workload of members of Council has increased; the importance of a Council Compensation Review Committee and to continuously review and update Council compensation; that compensation should be resolved before incoming Council so that candidates know what to expect before deciding to run.

## **C.2 Generative Discussion (standing item)**

CAO Everitt noted that as the compensation review process concluded it would be beneficial to review the Terms of Reference to have the benefit of input from current Committee members who have worked through two review processes. Robert noted that that recommendation would be included in the draft report.

John asked if the draft report would be incorporated into a staff report. CAO Everitt noted that it was important that the Council Compensation Review Committee Report would stand on its own and not be brought forward through a staff report.

## **D. Correspondence**

### **D.1 Michael Caron, Resident Re: Letter to Council on Compensation**

Note: This item referred by Council at the September 20, 2021 Council meeting.

Moved by: John White

Seconded by: Robert Turner

THAT Council Compensation Review Committee receive Item D.1. for information.

Yay (2): Robert Turner, and John White



**The motion is Carried (2 to 0)**

**D.2 Roland and Rosemary Gosselin Re: Council Remuneration Public Comment**

John thanked the residents for providing their feedback to the Committee.

Moved by: Robert Turner

Seconded by: John White

THAT Council Compensation Review Committee receive Item D.2 for information.

Yay (2): Robert Turner, and John White

**The motion is Carried (2 to 0)**

**E. New and Unfinished Business**

**E.1 Additions to Agenda**

**E.1.1 Councillor Profile**

Robert noted that it had been identified through the interview process that anyone running for Council should be fully aware of the time commitments, the technical skill requirements, and the impact of maintaining public persona. Robert asked who would be responsible for getting this messaging out before the call for nominations in the 2022 Municipal Elections process. CAO Everitt noted that staff were working with the Town Clerk. CAO Everitt noted that previously there had been an opportunity for potential candidates to attend a Grey County information session called "So you want to be a member of Council". CAO Everitt noted that some of the training was outdated and that the Town would be looking to enhance that training and consider bringing that forward through its own newsletter to augment the in-person session.

Robert asked when the Councillor Profile would come forward and CAO Everitt noted that it was intended to be finalized for December 15, 2021. Robert noted that the Committee would like to review the Councillor Profile newsletter and CAO Everitt noted that would be beneficial. Committee members discussed the possibility of having a meeting in January 2022 to discuss the Councillor Profile.

## **E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at the Next Meeting**

- Final 2021 TBM Mayor and Council Compensation Review Recommendations Report
- Update on Budget Timing
- Existing Terms of Reference Review
- United Way Report Update, if available

## **F. Notice of Meeting Dates**

November 25, 2021

Town Hall, Council Chambers (virtual)

## **G. Adjournment**

Moved by: Robert Turner

Seconded by: John White

THAT the Council Compensation Review Committee does now adjourn at 11:45 a.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

Yay (2): Robert Turner, and John White

**The motion is Carried (2 to 0)**