



Municipality of Port Hope
56 Queen Street
Port Hope, ON
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REPORT TO: Works and Engineering Committee

FROM: Jeanette Davidson, Director, Works and Engineering

SUBJECT: Organizational Update - MPS

DATE: November 2, 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Receive as information

BACKGROUND:

The 2001 Legal Agreement that established the PHAI, signed between Canada and the Municipalities of Port Hope (MPH) and Clarington, provides that the Municipality will undertake necessary actions to “expedite and facilitate” the completion of the Project. It also stipulates that Canada will pay the cost of the cleanup work, and that Canada will reimburse the Municipality for reasonable future expenses for the duration of the PHAI, including the establishment of offices or programs that may be necessary to defer undue hardship or expense to the MPH regarding the Port Hope Project.

In order to meet MPH’s obligations under the Legal Agreement and to meet the needs of the Municipality and PHAI, MPH created of a self-contained department formally known as Municipal Project Staff (MPS) which was to consist of contract and/or Municipal staff who specialize in water and sewer, roads, planning and building, building inspection, budgets and invoicing, and project management.

By-law 50-2014 established the MPS and provided the framework in which the newly formed department would operate through the adoption of Standard Operating Procedures and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOP/SOG). MPS responsibilities were to include processing PHAI-related permit requests, reviewing PHAI documentation and activities on behalf of MPH, as well as facilitating coordination between MPH staff and PHAI. The process recognizes that certain more complicated matters require dialogue and direction from the relevant department heads and/or staff.

Recognizing the complexity and the fluidity of the Project, several lessons have been learned resulting in opportunities to increase efficiencies from what was originally envisioned in 2014. A recently completed review of the MPH activities illustrated the need to refocus on expediting and facilitating to assist the project in reaching

completion. For example, the SOP/SOGs were intended to be a living document that were to be updated annually as lessons were learned. Unfortunately, these updates did not occur and the SOP/SOGs have become a hinderance over time, resulting in the need to complete a comprehensive update, which is currently underway and almost complete. There is further opportunity to evaluate workflows and processes currently in place.

To improve coordination and collaboration between MPH and the PHAI, a revised organizational structure is being proposed, that consists of integrating MPS staff into the Works and Engineering Department for the technical review of remediation designs for municipal property. An engineering-oriented management position is intended to be created to facilitate the technical review, which will allow for a significant reduction in contracted services through the Peer Review Team, a team of external consultants regularly engaged to assist with project review.

To accommodate the integration of current staff into the Works and Engineering Department, office renovations are proposed to the Joint Operations Centre on Victoria Street North, and the existing office space at Town Hall will become available for much needed use coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The integration of the current MPS staff positions into the Works and Engineering Department is not intended to facilitate discussions on end use planning of major sites, communications, changes to clean up criteria and policy considerations or legal agreements. To facilitate these elements of the cleanup a leadership position reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer is being considered.

A revised By-law to formally disband MPS and amend the SOPs/SOGs is anticipated to be brought forward to Council in December 2021. Staff intend on proceeding with the recruitment of the revised positions in advance of the amending By-law as to not cause undue hardship on municipal staff and to ensure the project does not suffer any delays.

Further updates to Council and the community will be forthcoming.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

In accordance with the Legal Agreement, all transition costs are being borne by the PHAI including the staff positions noted in this report.

CONCLUSION:

Staff are in the process of reviewing and updating policies and procedures associated with the MPH involvement of the PHAI project. An amending By-law is anticipated to be brought back to Committee to formally approve the revised policies once finalized.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Davidson
Director, Works and Engineering