

THE MUNICIPALITY OF NORTHERN BRUCE PENINSULA DOES NOT NEED TO CREATE ANOTHER HIGHLY PAID BEAUCRATIC POSITION

Submitted by St. Edmunds Property Owners, Inc.

Our Municipal Council passed, in a recorded vote, 3 in favour and 2 against, CAO Bill Jones' agenda item CAO 19-19, for "The Proposed Manager of Community Services Position". Deputy Mayor Debbie Myles opposed it on the basis that the next logical step should be public consultation and input; Councillor Laurie Golden was adamant that this position could be handled by existing staff. Originally, creation of this position was contingent on provincial funding.

In December 2018, this same Council wisely voted to postpone implementing this position pending confirmation of funding. In keeping with its mandate of lowering the Provincial Debt and spending deficit, the Province of Ontario withdrew funding for this and many other programs. Obviously, for our Council, the logical and fiscally responsible decision would have been to permanently cancel this initiative. Instead, at the July 8, 2019 Council meeting, the agenda included, item CAO 20-18, "One-time Provincial Funding, Manager of Community Services". It was proposed that it would be funded using money from funds received from a one-time payment from the province now that there was no grant available from the province. In the highly unlikely event that the grant is received, it would instead be used to fund this position.

Council opted to postpone passage of CAO 19-18 pending a more detailed job description with measureable outcomes. The proposal was revised and presented at the July 22, 2019 Council meeting as CAO 19-19, Proposed Manager of Community Services and costing \$100,000.00 essentially from the municipal coffers. Again, it was postponed pending further discussion. Following passage at the August 12 Council meeting, The Manager of Community Services position was passed; it is currently being advertised.

The somewhat elusive rationale and job description continues to present more questions than answers. What measurable benefits to the citizens and ratepayers (who pay 93% of the taxes) of this municipality are going to be achieved by creating this position that will clearly benefit the commercial sector? Not only is the proposed salary exorbitantly high, this role should be managed by the existing hard working and capable staff. Much of the job description is already skilfully managed by present staff, namely the Facilities Supervisor and front office receptionists. The CAO, should be working with staff, to effectively manage "Community Services".

In a letter dated March 20, 2019, from Steve Clarke, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and addressed to Mayor Milt McIver, regarding a \$638,624.00 one-time payment, Mr. Clarke clearly states that this money, *"although unconditional, it is intended to modernize service delivery and reduce costs through investments in projects such as: service delivery reviews, development of shared services agreements and capital investments"*. Directing this money towards increased staffing does not appear to fit Minister Clark's expectations. Premier Ford, regularly states that all levels of

government must find 5% savings through efficiencies. That implies that the talents and skills of existing staff should be utilized without hiring additional staff.

Tourism brings 238 Million dollars to Bruce County annually, 38% of tourists visit the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula which represents 90 million dollars. We are doing just fine attracting tourists in a variety of seasonal and weather conditions. Why do we need to overwhelm the resources of our community?

We need to sit back and determine what attractions that we have and where tourism is going in this municipality while acknowledging, that there are limitations to growth and the area can only handle a certain number. The Bruce Peninsula, is about a two season destination; there is little to attract people here in the winter when the highway is often closed and many permanent residents, including business owners, flee to warmer destinations.

Links to documents referenced in this article can be found at www.sepo.ca, on the "Council" page