

TOWN OF BAULINE

Tuesday August 16th, 2022

MOTION 083/2022 Appendix

WHEREAS

- in the last two years, written and oral requests to the Town of Bauline for information, explanation about decisions made and details of procedures followed have increased incrementally,
- several of these requests comprise formal applications through the Office of the Privacy and Information Commissioner (OPIC) via the Access to Information (ATIPP) process,
- all requests require Town staff to assign time and resources to find, copy documents and correspondence, compile materials and despatch responses in order to respond to residents' inquiries,
- the ATIPP process often stipulates tight deadlines for Council to respond,
- many informational requests, especially ATIPP applications, entail follow-up on behalf of Council and staff to clarify actions taken by Council,
- many requests to Council for information or explanation are considered to be "trivial, frivolous or vexatious",
- while staff take time to respond to informational requests by residents, the routine actions of Council necessarily slow down,
- with only the Town Manager on staff presently, requests for information may take 10, 15 or more hours of her time each week to the detriment of routine Council business, and
- in no way does this motion detract from residents' right to access information about Council activities - the Town encourages residents to ask questions and understand better our decisions and we strongly uphold that right,

I propose the following motion at Council's August 16th, 2022 meeting:

"That Council authorise

(a) the hiring of a clerical / professional person to compile documents, materials, and correspondence in response to requests from residents and other parties for information on Council deliberations with payment to this person at the appropriate salary rate,

(b) the hiring of this staff person for a trial 6-month period with options to renew thereafter, if required. and

(c) that because the cost of hiring an additional professional person to compile materials in response to residents' informational requests will be unbudgeted and unexpected, residents / taxpayers in Bauline be advised in writing of the strong likelihood that their taxation mil rate will increase for the 2023 fiscal year to cover these expenses - an unforeseen expenditure by Council of \$20,000 roughly equates to 0.5 mil in the tax rate, thus to cover the additional staffing cost to handle informational requests could lead to an increased mil rate in Bauline for 2023 of 0.5 to 1 mil."

Chris Palmer

Councillor