



City of Moose Jaw

COMMUNICATION # EC-2019-0205

TITLE: Review of Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions

TO: Executive Committee

FROM: City Clerk/Solicitor's Department

DATE: October 7, 2019

PUBLIC: PUBLIC DOCUMENT

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT the Murals Project Management Committee continue as a management committee for the City; and
2. THAT the Youth Advisory Committee continue as a City advisory committee with an updated Terms of Reference, substantially in the form as attached; and
3. THAT the Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee be established through the amalgamation of the Special Needs Advisory Committee and the Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee with an updated Terms of Reference, substantially in the form as attached; and
4. THAT the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Advisory Committee be established by the renaming of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee with an updated Terms of Reference, substantially in the form as attached; and
5. THAT the Public Works, Infrastructure & Environment Advisory Committee be established through the amalgamation of the Transportation Services Advisory Committee and the Environment Advisory Committee with an updated Terms of Reference, substantially in the form as attached; and
6. THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee be disbanded as a stand-alone committee and their functions be absorbed into the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Advisory Committee; the Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee; and the Murals Project Management Committee; and
7. THAT the Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) be disbanded with reports from the Department of Planning and Development Services going directly to City Council for review and approval; and

8. THAT the Economic Development Commission and Housing Advisory Committee be disbanded; and
9. THAT single purpose time limited Ad Hoc Committees including such matters as future housing concerns, as an example, be considered for establishment where Council seeks input in a specified area; and
10. THAT the term of appointments for the newly established Advisory Committees be January 1 of the calendar year; and
11. THAT Council appointments to committees be for one-year (or alternatively two-year) terms, with appointments rotating among committees.

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations as a result of a review of the City's current Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions.

BACKGROUND

At the June 24, 2019 Executive Committee meeting, considered was Communication #EC-2019-0056 respecting the City's boards, committees and commissions. Subsequently, at the July 8, 2019 regular meeting of City Council, in part, the following resolution was ratified:

"THAT Administration be directed to undertake a review of the City's Board, Committee and Commission structure and appointments with a view to rationalize; eliminating duplication with other community groups undertaking similar work; eliminating any that have lost clear need, or combining committees such that they function in a manner to optimize resource allocation and member time commitment; and

THAT the review include addressing alternative means of engaging public input on specific topics and/or creation of single purpose Ad Hoc Committees with a finite mandate; and

THAT a report be provided to Executive Committee by the end of October 2019."

It should be noted that many existing boards, committees and commissions structures have remained unchanged for many years. In addition, the City has adopted new approaches to public engagement practices facilitated by the creation of the Communications Manager position in 2015. These include public surveys to solicit input on select areas of interest.

The City of Moose Jaw's current Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions are listed below.

Advisory Committees:

- Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Commission
- Environment Advisory Committee
- Heritage Advisory Committee

- Housing Advisory Committee
- Municipal Planning Commission
- Murals Project Management Committee
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Special Needs Advisory Committee
- Transportation Services Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee

DISCUSSION

The City of Moose Jaw has historically had a robust practice of engaging with various stakeholders, community associations and other interested parties on a wide range of issues. The addition of new public engagement tools and options has broadened our ability to seek input beyond the traditional approach of seeking the views of a small committee. In a recent survey on the City's Trails Master Plan, 449 citizens took the time and effort to provide comments on City plans to upgrade this system.

Advisory boards, committees or commissions do not have authority to govern directly; rather, they serve to make recommendations and/or provide key information and materials to City Council. It is, therefore, important to ensure they remain relevant with a clear purpose and guidelines for membership and activities.

Stepping back to evaluate the effectiveness of our existing committees, the following points bear discussion:

- Advisory committees function best as sounding boards for achieving input on high-level concerns as opposed to being managers of specific issues, which are more properly handled by Administration.
- In many cases advisory committee members are not necessarily professional "experts" in their area of appointment. The experts are generally trained professionals within Administration whose advice is available to be tapped to inform committee deliberations.
- A common factor affecting past recruitment to committees has been the difficulty in attracting citizens to commit to a two-year term as opposed to just providing ad hoc advice on a specific matter.
- In reviewing the focus of existing committees, are there areas of commonality with other committees that make amalgamations feasible?
- Is the time and effort required from City staff to support specific committees resulting in an appropriate value add?
- Are there other organizations in the community who are better equipped to take leadership in an area previously assigned to a committee?
- Are there areas where a more effective form of public consultation might be used to elicit more timely or broader-based feedback?

A large number of committees currently requires, at minimum, the equivalent of one fulltime Committee Support Clerk position to manage the agenda, minutes and associated work related of the committees. There is also a requirement for other staff time, generally a Manager level or Director level staff to be the Administration advisor to the committees. Attending a large number of meetings takes them away from their core duties of managing their departments. For example, the Director of Planning and Development provides administrative advice to and attends (5) five of the City's committees. With the proposed amalgamation this would reduce that Director's required attendance to two (2) of the committees.

While there is certainly value to having advisory committees in place to provide advice, it is also important to ensure that the number of committees is manageable not only from a Council perspective, but also from a staffing perspective. Rather than disbanding all committees, boards and commissions, Administration's recommendation would be to reduce and combine the number of advisory boards, committees and commissions as follows:

1. To continue with the Murals Project Management Committee. Unlike the other advisory committees, the Murals Project Management Committee fulfills an operational role and is provided an annual budget. It monitors the condition of existing murals, negotiates for new locations, engages with artists to commission new murals and undertakes and ensures timely repairs where needed. The Murals Project Management Committee has undertaken this role for over thirty years. The Murals of Moose Jaw are among the several factors which foster community pride in our City.

2. Continue with the Youth Advisory Committee.

To provide a communication link between the youth of Moose Jaw and City Council that will enhance the quality of life, health and well-being of the youth in our community.

- To keep Council informed of important matters affecting youth.
- To occasionally conduct surveys to address concerns and needs that affect youth.
- To act as a positive advocate for youth.
- To actively seek input from youth on important matters.
- To support events created by the Committee that relate to the mandate.
- To provide leadership experience for youth.

3. Amalgamate the Special Needs Advisory Committee and the Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee to establish the Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee.

To provide recommendations to City Council on policy matters relating to:

- Diversity and inclusion of all citizens within the community.
- Emerging equity or diversity issues or trends arising in the community.
- Consideration of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in formulating City policies and initiatives.

- Explore barriers faced in accessing City services, information, programs and facilities.
 - Explore barriers to participation in public life and achievement of social, cultural and economic wellbeing of residents.
 - Employment and employee awareness policies, initiatives, and civic programs.
 - Provide advice and recommendations on the development and contents of a new Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Policy.
4. It is recommended to rename the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee as the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Advisory Committee.

To provide recommendations to City Council on policy matters relating to:

- Leisure
 - Recreation
 - Multifunctional parks and open space strategically located to provide convenient access and designed to accommodate diverse and changing needs and interests.
 - Cemeteries.
 - Minimize barriers to the use of municipal facilities, programs or services.
 - Community Services Master Plan.
 - Grant funding programming.
5. Amalgamate the Transportation Services Advisory Committee and the Environment Advisory Committee and establish the Public Works, Infrastructure & Environment Advisory Committee.
- Provide input and make policy recommendations to City Council regarding transit and municipal infrastructure involving roadways, water, watershed, drainage, wastewater and solid waste to meet regulatory requirements and community needs.
 - Provide input and make recommendations to Council regarding environmental issues, policies and programs.
6. It is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee be disbanded as a stand-alone Committee, with its previous duties distributed as follows:
- Providing recommendations on City-owned heritage assets, such as the town bell and entrance to Crescent Park, would be included as an additional responsibility of the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Advisory Committee.
 - Matters of contemporary cultural heritage concerns would be assigned to the Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee.
 - Celebration of the City's cultural heritage would be directed to the Murals Project Management Committee.

Further, staff in the Department of Planning and Development Services would review façade grant applications and would consult with and involve community groups on an ad hoc basis to assist in heritage-related matters. Existing members of the Heritage

Advisory Committee would be encouraged to continue their participation in one of the other committees.

7. With respect to the Municipal Planning Commission ("MPC"), it is recommended that the MPC be disbanded. A review of MPC minutes illustrates that in most cases the review input on applications rarely takes more than a few minutes. Yet, the MPC process necessitates longer timelines and the production of multiple reports. With its elimination, all matters relating to the Municipal Planning Commission would be placed on the City Council agenda under Committee of the Whole. This would reduce a procedural step and enable decisions to come to Council on a more timely basis. In those rare circumstances where additional background may be required, it would be appropriate to table that item to a subsequent Executive Committee meeting to obtain that information. Taking forward directly to Council most of the current MPC applications would also be seen as a reduction in "red tape".
8. The Housing Advisory Committee and Economic Development Commission would be disbanded. Creation of the Housing Committee was spawned in 2010 by a pressing shortage especially in lower income housing options. Although the City had few avenues to directly impact that area, it was certainly a focus of activity and considerable interaction particularly with the Province on addressing this pressing need. As a result, several new programs were brought on stream; the supply of housing increased and vacancy rates have eased considerably. The pressing need addressed, there has been minimal citizen applications to continue on the Committee and meetings have often not proceeded due to lack of quorum, underlining the absence of a need to continue the Committee.

Similarly, the Economic Development Commission was created in January 1970 as an attempt to engage community volunteers in promoting economic growth. The reality of most economic development projects is that they involve highly confidential matters and are not suitable for discussion in public venues. As such, matters of economic development are routed through Administration and vetted and recommended for public approval by Executive Committee. The Commission has not had a meeting in over a year and a half.

9. Ad Hoc Committees

There may be a need on occasion to develop an ad-hoc committee to advise Council on an issue. Any committee established for a specific issue, should include a Terms of Reference as well as a sunset clause. A sunset clause requires that the committee disbands once their work is completed.

In 2010, the City did create such an ad-hoc committee. That committee was named the Ad Hoc Youth Entrepreneur Business Incubator Mall Committee. The motion which created the Committee anticipated that such a committee would have administrative support from City staff. At the time, however, there were no dedicated staff supplying economic development services. Although the idea had merit, it failed to gain traction without appropriate resourcing. It is suggested that this dormant committee be referred to the City's internal economic development committee for further discussions around its potential viability.

10. For those committees which remain, the term of appointments should also be considered. In 2011, City Council passed a motion to have a number of advisory committees commence appointment September 1 annually. The Office of the City Clerk recommends that all appointments for advisory boards, committees and commissions be established for January 1 to December 31 of the calendar year. This would allow the Office of the City Clerk to advertise for the Library Boards and Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions all at once.
11. Nationally regarded governance expert, George Cuff, has commented on the role of elected members vis-à-vis boards and committees. He stresses that the role of elected members appointed to committees should be as liaison. He suggests that Council members rotate among committees so that all members have an opportunity to learn and interact with a number of groups. He also suggests that committee membership be revisited on a regular basis.¹

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION

Rather than creating an overlapping Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee, an option would be to disband the Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee and leave the Special Needs Advisory Committee in its existing form.

In order to continue a level of City involvement in this area, the City could approach other existing groups to consider the City appointing a Councillor or Administration staff to participate with each community-like group. (None have been canvassed to date.)

PUBLIC AND/OR STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The number of municipalities transitioning to online public engagement is rapidly expanding; the City of Moose Jaw is well on its way to making this transition as well.

As City Council is aware, in the recent Budget and City Services survey, one of the questions asked was "What methods should the City undertake to solicit input from Moose Jaw residents when major decisions are being contemplated?" Online surveys were the overwhelming choice, with 85% of respondents preferring that engagement method. Although the recommendation from City Administration is to continue with advisory committees it is suggested these committees also engage the City's Communication Department to assist in utilizing local media and social media to engage the general public at large. This would support the work of having a smaller group of advisory committees in conducting committee input. Public consultation can take many forms and can be tailored to those specific issues suited to broaden public input.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

On July 15, 2019, the Office of the City Clerk communicated to all advisory board, committee and commission members indicating that Administration had been directed to undertake a review of the City's boards, committees and commissions. A short survey was also forwarded to all current board, committee and commission members, which they were encouraged to complete. In total, 35 out of 36 people completed the

anonymous survey. This phenomenal response rate is testimony to the commitment of citizen appointees to our advisory committees. Their past and current service is most certainly appreciated.

Written responses covered a few different questions, but common themes were found within those responses, the most prevalent being:

- Lack of willingness of Council/Administration to take action from their recommendations.
- A feeling that their objectives didn't always line up with those of Council and/or Administration, due to lack of knowledge and communication.
- Lack of meetings.
- Lots of updates regarding relevant City issues and insightful discussion from committee members who are passionate about the issues but little output resulting.
- Difficulty having productive meetings due to lack of attendance or, in some cases, continuity of members.
- Lack of direction and project funding.

Attached to this report are copies of the survey responses received from those members who completed the survey.

Further, once the structure of the new boards, committees and commissions has been formally adopted by City Council the Office of the City Clerk will proceed with the next steps:

- Forward letters to all citizen-at-large committee members to thank them for their involvement on their respective boards, committees and commissions. The City of Moose Jaw has appreciated the volunteer time they have contributed. They will also be asked to indicate their interest in serving in the new committee structure.
- The Office of the City Clerk will proceed to advertise through print and social media the Call for Nominations in order to have all appointments in place by January 1, 2020.

BYLAW OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Bylaws for the affected boards, committees and commissions would require repealing. If Council is in support of these recommendations an umbrella Advisory Committee Bylaw and updated Terms of Reference for the new established Committees would be presented at a City Council meeting prior to the end of 2019.

It should also be noted that with respect to the disbanding of the Municipal Planning Commission amendments to the Official Community Plan and to the Zoning Bylaw would also be required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

With the reduction and the amalgamation of the City's advisory boards, committees and commissions the Office of the City Clerk would realize modest savings of approximately \$8,000.00 annually. These potential reductions in costs would be associated with the reduction in operating budget committee funding, a decrease in overtime staffing costs, and a decrease in advertising costs.

The time freed up would be re-directed to ensuring prompt posting of Bylaws as consolidated, implementing a City Policy information system and maintaining the City's records management system.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

As a result of the recommendations presented for City Council's consideration, the following implications are noted:

- Many members of the public appreciated the opportunity to participate on committees.
- The decision-making hierarchy of City Council, as final approver, is communicated.
- In their current form, some of the boards, committees and commissions were seen as having become more of an "independent advocacy group".
- The option to utilizing ad hoc committees in the future provides Council with the choice of establishing single-issue advisory committees when appropriate

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Policy is not required.

PRESENTATION

VERBAL: Tracy Wittke, Assistant City Clerk, will provide a brief overview of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- i. Youth Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.
- ii. Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.
- iii. Parks, Recreation and Facilities Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.
- iv. Public Works, Infrastructure and Environmental Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.
- v. Survey Results of Boards, Committees and Commissions Members.

¹ George Cuff, *Off the Cuff*. A collection of writings by George B. Cuff. Volume 2, p. 86.

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Tracy Wittke, Assistant City Clerk
Myron Gulka-Tiechko, City Clerk/Solicitor
Reviewed by: Jim Puffalt, City Manager
Approved by: Fraser Tolmie, Mayor

To be completed by the Clerk's Department only.


Presented to Regular Council or Executive Committee on _____.

No. _____ Resolution No. _____

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Review of Boards, Committees and Commissions - CC-2019-0205.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Youth Advisory Committee.terms of reference.doc- Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity.terms of reference.doc- Parks, Recreation and Facilities.terms of reference.doc- Public Works, Infrastructure and Environmental.terms of reference.doc- Committee Survey Results.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Oct 22, 2019

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Myron Gulka-Tiechko



Jim Puffalt



Fraser Tolmie