

Request for Decision		Type of Decision							
Meeting Date	Friday, March 27, 2009				Report Date	Friday, March 6, 2009			
Decision Required	x	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction Only		Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed
REPORT TITLE									
Succession Planning and Adding a New Position									

**Subject:** Proposal to support the hiring of an individual to train to replace our Treasurer who plans to retire within the next three to four years and to assist with eliminating a backlog of legislated work.

**Recommendation:** That Council agrees to support this proposal to meet our long-term staffing needs and to commit to providing a flexible work place to assist in attracting and retaining competent long-term personnel.

**WHEREAS** the absence of the Clerk over the past 7 months for personal reasons clearly demonstrates the probability and consequences of absences of office staff;

**AND WHEREAS** this absence resulted in some hardship to existing staff members, some disruption to normal workplace schedules and practises, and an increased backlog of work;

**AND WHEREAS** due to personal obligations and holiday time owed to staff the office will be manned by only one person for as much as 15 weeks during 2009;

**AND WHEREAS** our Treasurer is contemplating retirement within the next 3 – 4 years;

**AND WHEREAS** it is difficult to locate trained individuals willing to work on a part time basis and willing to travel for a part-time position;

**AND WHEREAS** the Clerk and Treasurer have developed a plan which will provide for on the job training at no extra cost to the ratepayer for the current year and limited additional expense for the subsequent 2 years;

**AND WHEREAS** the municipality currently has \$9,500 in reserves to be used towards succession planning;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria agrees to allow the Clerk and Treasurer to work a regular 4 day work week each, using the payroll savings realized to hire a trainee by July of 2009 to job shadow and eventually take over the position of Treasurer;

#### Background/Executive Summary:

This proposal solves a number of challenges. It allows for a flexible workplace which will work towards employee attraction and retention. It allows an additional (unskilled) individual to work towards assisting in eliminating a backlog of routine, time-consuming tasks. It allows for the hiring of a person at a lower wage rate for the immediate future increasing pay as they learn the job and obtain necessary skills and education required to fulfill the obligations of the Treasurer position.

- Because of the size of our municipality, many processes and procedures that are automated elsewhere are not automated here yet. We are working on changing this however; there is much to learn – hands on is the easiest way. A Treasurer familiar with procedures in another municipal office would take some time to adapt to the specific programs and processes here.

- Payroll savings would be realized as the new hire would be paid at the low end of the office assistant scale working their way up as education and experience increased to reach the low end of the Treasurer phase on the grid by the time Ruth retires.
- Due to Clerk's absence in 2008, there is a substantial backlog in work that needs to be caught up. Further, for 2009 there is a large volume of time where there will only be one person in the office. Due to health and vacation absences a total of 15 weeks are owed for 2009 – another nearly 4 months of time with only 1 staff member present will result in increased backlog.
- Areas that we are falling behind include – legislated bylaws, researched and updated or replaced; records retention by-law and back up of records we are required to keep, with destruction of those that are no longer required; PSAB implementation and change to new taxation and accounting software; Accessibility – new service standard and training to be implemented by 2010; Health and Safety policies and training; next year is election year – still do not have an appropriate counsellor orientation package plus will need to update election policies; employee policies need to be updated; emergency management requirements need to be fulfilled. We have a large volume of work that needs to be completed and we have a position that needs to be filled in the near future. This opportunity would allow the new person to become acclimatized to the office and provide an opportunity for them to learn as much of the unwritten knowledge that Ruth can pass on before her retirement while assisting with relieving the existent backlog of work.
- Time required to hire competent replacement for other retiring Clerks and Treasurers within the County - Laurentian Valley and Deep River, was quite lengthy proving the difficulty hiring qualified trained individuals for management type positions within the public sector and this geographic area. There is a shortage of suitably trained and/or educated individuals in the workforce.
- Because many of the current municipal employees are baby boomers, there will be a notable increase in the number of retirements from the Municipal sector in Ontario within the next 5 to 10 years. There will be a huge demand with limited supply. Our solution is to hire an individual who has transferable skills and suitable education and train them to the specifics of this office and municipal governance.
- Training – we have \$9,500 in reserves for succession planning purposes that could be used to provide registration for training programs to the new hire. We could share a 50-50 cost sharing for the first course, then we hope to cross train the new person so they can perform the duties of clerk and treasurer. The other funds will be used to offset increased wages for subsequent years until Ruth retires.
- Gayle is currently working her full day in her current position providing backup, keeping records, documenting statistics, filing and Emergency Management.

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact: Compensation – with Ruth and I each giving up 1 day – payroll savings result in funding required to pay someone at the lowest office pay rate for 3 days work – no payroll difference or additional cost to Council for 2009. Eventually we will change this position to 4 days a week for retention purposes which would mean approximately \$10,000 extra cost for the extra day.

Upon Ruth's retirement in 2012, the increased salary expense would be nullified by Ruth's salary being discontinued.

Policy Impact: None – our Alternate Work Schedule Policy already allows for these changes.

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,  
Municipal Clerk

*Melinda Reith*