

Request for Decision United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria Council

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, January 30, 2015				Report Date	Tuesday, January-27-15			
Decision Required	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction	X	Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed

IT Service Providers - Report #30/01/15/1205

Subject:

A review of the possibility of purchasing IT services on a monthly basis.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the following resolution purchasing IT Services for the 2015 Calendar year.

WHEREAS considerable time is spent by staff weekly troubleshooting various IT problems and annually researching, purchasing and installing security options, software and hardware based solely on personal experience and not training;

AND WHEREAS options exist for purchasing IT services on an annual basis with a company which is familiar with programs and equipment used by Ontario municipalities including HCM;

AND WHEREAS it is recommended that a one year trial period is purchased to determine if the service is valuable for HCM due to its size;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria does hereby authorize staff to utilize funds from the IT reserve to contract for IT services for a one year trial period for 2015.

BACKGROUND/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff have consulted with an IT firm who provides services to lower tier municipalities including North Grenville, Elizabethtown-Kitley, North Algona Wilberforce, the Township of McNab/Braeside and the Town of Deep River.

This firm will provide all IT services including:

1. Helpdesk services for all commercial products including ASYST - Troubleshooting software and hardware issues;
2. Purchasing and installing upgrades to programs and operating system;
3. Antivirus, firewalls and security;
4. Offsite backups and updates;
5. Networking;
6. Internet providers and connectivity;

7. Printers and networking;
8. Include the library computers;

We have completed some research on the company by contacting current service users who are happy with the service they have been provided and the value for service.

The company has been in service since the 1980s and provides services to health services, professional as well as to the municipal sector. Their website might be accessed through <http://www.onserve.ca/>.

Options/Discussion:

Currently significant staff time is spent troubleshooting software challenges, researching and purchasing software, hardware and learning as we go. Staff are not trained as IT experts but have performed many tasks on a weekly basis taking time from other important tasks.

As an example, for the past two weeks, Noella has spent 12.75 hours at a cost of over \$350 for these two weeks alone on IT issues. These range from troubleshooting issues with the taxation/accounting software to backups, research and updates. Other staff are required to complete regular backups, updates and troubleshoot issues as well. All of this takes significant time and cost.

Further a significant amount of time was recently spent undoing work undertaken by a local IT service provider who did not consider the requirements of the programs being used by staff and attempted to remove some of them due to his preferences. His recommendations were to change to Linux based operating systems and programs instead of attempting to work with our systems.

Without having to spend time on these issues, not only will the time be saved but will be spent actually doing the work that the person has been hired to do and is in each job description.

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact:

Quotes from the current company are \$500 per month. Due to our size, we would consider asking for a reduction in the monthly fee although it might not be accepted.

Funds exist in the IT reserves to pay this fee for one year - \$6,000.

Others Consulted:

Noella LeBreton, Treasurer.

North Algona Wilberforce – Heidi – quite happy with experience and service.

Elizabethtown Kitley – Betty – satisfied with service, not aware of any challenges, provide what they say they will provide.

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,
Municipal Clerk