



CITY OF HAMILTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Financial Planning, Administration and Policy Division

TO:	Chair and Members Governance Review Sub-Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	August 24, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Councillor Ward Office Budgets and Policy Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials (FCS18083(c)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SUBMITTED BY:	Mike Zegarac General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services Corporate Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Appendix “A” to Report FCS18083(c) Policy and Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials: Budget for the Office of the Mayor, Legislative Budget and Councillor Ward Office Budget be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its December 19, 2018 meeting, Council approved Appendix “B” to Report FCS18083(a) which outlined the guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials.

Report FCS18083(c) seeks to amend the eligible expenses related to the following:

- Sponsorships – Sponsorships and donations will not be allowed from the first day that nominations can be filed for candidates, until the day after the election
- Capital Related Expense – All capital purchases must adhere to the City’s Procurement Policy
- Councillor Ward Budget Process and Guidelines / Staffing – Expenses for sick time and maternity leave are not required to be reimbursed if the Ward budget is exceeded

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

- Meeting Expenses – Clarify who is responsible for meeting setup

The amendments are reflected in Policy and Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials attached as Appendix “A” to Report FCS18083(c).

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 3

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Councillor Ward Office Budgets are calculated using several categories including population, number of households and ward-specific challenges. These categories and factors have been developed over many years and have been approved by Council primarily through the Governance Review Sub-committee and Audit, Finance and Administration Committee (AF&AC).

Ward Budgets Report FCS04039, approved by Council in 2004, established some of the initial budget methodology and the policy for eligible expenses for elected officials. Council approved changes to the Policy in:

- 2011 – Report FCS11108 clarified Councillor sponsorships and donations
- 2012 – AF&AC Report 12-002 provided updates on the administration coverage, seasonal information mailings, Inner-City Fund, geographic factor and population factor
- 2014 – AF&AC Report 14-008 provided updates on the Inner-City Fund and the Student Accommodation Factor
- 2016 – AF&AC Report 16-015 provided information on the Ward Budgets.
- 2017 – AF&AC Report 17-003 provided information on the Ward budgets and updates on the administration coverage.

- 2018 – AF&AC Report 18-014 provided Budget changes and amendments to the Policy and Guidelines for eligible expenses

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The amendments required in Report FCS18083(c) are reflected in the Policy and Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials attached as Appendix “A” to Report FCS18083(c).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff in the Office of the City Clerk were consulted on the amendments to the Policy and Guidelines.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

The policy and guidelines for eligible expenses for elected officials requires updating to allow for costs relating to short and long-term sick absences and maternity leave and benefit costs.

As these costs are charged directly to the Ward Office Budget, it could result in a negative variance, thereby requiring Councillors to reimburse the City. In recent times, a few requests have been approved to provide additional funding from the Contingency fund and Tax Stabilization reserve. By removing these costs when calculating a variance, it will eliminate the need for such requests, while still maintaining the expenses within the Ward Operating budget for analytical purposes.

Other minor areas of the policy were also updated including Capital Related Expenses and Meeting Expenses.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Maintain status quo thereby requiring Councillors to request funding, as needed, to cover sick leave and maternity costs.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Engagement and Participation

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report FCS18083(c) – Policy and Guidelines for Eligible Expenses for Elected Officials: Budget for the Office of the Mayor, Legislative Budget and Councillor Ward Office Budget