



CITY OF HAMILTON
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
Human Resources Division

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	January 17, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Ward Office Staffing Recommendations (HUR24001) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Lora Fontana (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4091 Nenzi Cocca (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3924
SUBMITTED BY:	Lora Fontana Executive Director Human Resources
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That staff be directed to increase each Ward Office staffing budget by one (1) full time equivalent (FTE) administrative position, salary grade 3, compensated at \$66,431-\$82,039 annually (2023) in order to ensure appropriate administrative support for business and operational continuity, and provide adequate coverage for legislated absences such as vacation, illness and/or to cover extra work. The cumulative amount for the proposed additional FTEs (N=15) is \$1.62 million and will be referred for consideration to the 2024 budget deliberations.
- (b) That staff be directed to conduct a non-union Job Evaluation of existing Ward Office positions to confirm the appropriate non-union salary grade, create accurate and up-to-date job descriptions and appropriate, consistent job functions/titles within the Ward Offices.
- (c) That Human Resources be directed to assign a dedicated HR staff resource for administrative support, using existing complement, in order to provide Councillors with the necessary support and assistance in regard to employment matters such as recruitment, onboarding, mandatory and required training, compliance with Corporate policies and procedures, and Council transition requirements.

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.

- (d) That staff be directed to create a Council Staffing Policy, outlining roles and responsibilities of Members of Council for managing City employees working in their Ward Offices, and affirm applicable City Human Resource policy requirements as it relates to Ward Office staff.
- (e) That staff be directed to revise the process for formulating Ward Office Budgets to encompass only discretionary expenses, set at a fixed sum of \$55,710 for the year 2024, with provision for annual adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index.
- (f) That staff be directed to retain the Inner-City Fund for Wards 2, 3, 4, and 5 and that it be added to the fixed amount in recommendation (e).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 26, 2023, Council approved a motion directing the City Manager and Executive Director of Human Resources to undertake a comprehensive review of the appropriate ongoing financial and staffing levels related to Ward Office Budgets and report back to General Issues Committee prior to its consideration of the 2024 operating budget. The scope of work was determined at the May 10, 2023 General Issues Committee meeting.

The deliverables of this review, conducted by a third-party consultant, included:

- A current state assessment on Ward staffing and functions (i.e., administration, communications, community engagement, research, etc.)
- A summary of the jurisdictional scan
- Options and recommendations for Ward Office budget methodology and staffing levels

Mungall Consulting Inc. (Mungall) was engaged to perform a comprehensive review of the Councillor Ward Offices, including financial (budget) and staffing levels. Mungall conducted consultations with Councillors and staff (focus groups), a jurisdictional scan of similar sized municipalities (City of Ottawa, City of London, and City of Windsor), as well as a review of previous Council reports regarding the budget methodology for the Ward Councillor Offices in order to develop a current and future state assessment and deliver recommendations regarding budget and staffing implications.

Findings of the review and recommendations were presented in-camera to the General Issues Committee on November 27, 2023 (Ward Office Staffing Review HUR23107). This report is in response to the Confidential Staff Direction provided at the November 27, 2023 General Issues Committee respecting Report HUR23107, Ward Office Staffing Review.

The Mungall report identified compensation and staffing issues with a view to ensuring a fair and equitable approach across the Ward Offices. To this end, it is recommended that each Ward Office staffing budget be increased by one (1) full time equivalent (FTE) administrative position, salary grade 3, compensated at \$66,431-\$82,039 annually (2023) in order to ensure appropriate administrative support for business and operational continuity as well as provide for adequate coverage for legislated absences such as vacation, illness and/or to cover extra work.

Alternatives for Consideration – see page 7

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The recommendations to enhance the existing Ward Office staffing levels by one additional full time equivalent (FTE) would have a cumulative impact of \$1.62 million (referred for consideration to the 2024 budget deliberation). The extra \$1.62 million would contribute an additional 0.14% increase to the residential tax increase.

Staffing: It is recommended that Human Resources be directed to assign a dedicated HR resource through existing staff complement, in order to provide Councillors with support and assistance in regard to employment matters such as recruitment, onboarding, mandatory and required training, compliance with Corporate policies and procedures, and Council requirements. This would not require any additional resources or financial enhancements, as an existing HR staff resource will be assigned this work as part of their existing portfolio.

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the April 26, 2023 Council meeting, Council approved the following motion:

“That Hamilton’s City Manager and Executive Director of Human Resources and their staff as needed, undertake a comprehensive review of the appropriate ongoing financial and staffing levels related to Ward Office Budgets and report back to General Issues Committee prior to its consideration of the 2024 operating budget.”

A report on the scope of this work was provided at the May 10, 2023 Council meeting. At the May 10, 2023 Council meeting, Hamilton City Manager and the Executive Director of Human Resources presented Report CM23015/HUR23008 (City Wide), recommending the Ward Office Budget review, including the in-scope and out of scope activities. This comprehensive review would include evaluation of the financing and

staffing levels related to the Councillor Ward Office Budgets, including a current state assessment, a summary of the jurisdictional scan and recommendations around the Ward Office Budget methodology, and that up to \$50,000 be allocated to consulting costs to conduct the comprehensive review.

The deliverables from these activities were:

- A current state assessment on Ward staffing and functions (i.e., administration, communications, community engagement, research, etc.)
- A summary of the jurisdictional scan
- Options and recommendations for Ward Office Budget methodology and staffing levels

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Recommended decisions arising from this report would update the Methodology for Developing Elected Officials Office Budget and Ward Councillor Office Budget Policy.

It is also recommended that a Council Staffing Policy be created to outline roles and responsibilities of Members of Council for managing City employees working in their Ward Offices and affirm applicable City Human Resource policy requirements.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Mungall Consulting Inc. (Mungall) was initially engaged to perform a comprehensive review of the Councillor Ward Offices, including financial (budget) and staffing levels. Mungall conducted consultations with Councillors and staff (focus groups), a jurisdictional scan of similar sized municipalities (City of Ottawa, City of London, and City of Windsor), as well as a review of previous Council reports regarding the budget methodology for the Ward Councillor Offices in order to develop a current and future state assessment and deliver recommendations regarding budget and staffing implications.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Ward Office Staffing and Supports

Mungall Consulting Inc. was engaged to conduct a comprehensive review of the financing and staffing levels related to the Councillor Ward Office Budgets.

Through a number of Councillor Office focus group sessions and staff interviews, as well as a review of a number of related documentation, it was clear that there is an inequity in the administration of compensation and staffing levels across the Ward

Offices. Historically, each Ward Office has been funded for one (1) Administrative Assistant position (non-union) however in practice, staffing levels and assigned compensation has varied amongst the Ward Offices.

To this end, it is recommended that each Ward Office is assigned one (1) additional full time equivalent (FTE) Administrative position, salary grade 3 in order to provide adequate support for business and operational continuity as well as appropriate coverage for legislated absences such as vacation, illness and/or to cover extra work.

The current Ward Office Budget methodology provides for administrative coverage during vacations, at the Administrative Assistant II level, for a period of two weeks. This salary grade 2 is lower than the majority of current Ward Office staff salary ranges and is insufficient in terms of funding for the Ward Offices in order to adequately support vacation coverage with a qualified incumbent. Both the two-week funding allocation along with the complement support needed is inadequate in terms of supporting the Ward Offices for vacation period coverage, absence due to illness or other legislative leaves and does not provide sufficient support during times of additional workload.

It is further recommended that Human Resources be directed to assign a dedicated staff resource, through existing complement, to Councillors in order to provide support and assistance in regard to employment related matters such as recruitment, onboarding, mandatory and required training, compliance with Corporate policies and procedures, and Council transition requirements.

This dedicated staffing resource will ensure Councillors have the necessary assistance and resources to support their employees with such matters as onboarding and orientation, access to City assets such as mandatory and required training (for example Occupational Health & Safety Training) and assistance in navigating recruitment of new employees. This will also ensure all employment-related legislative requirements are met.

This dedicated position will continue to reside in Human Resources, reporting to the Director, Talent & Diversity, and will be available to Councillors and their Ward Office Staff as a resource and liaison to access HR related supports, tools and consultation on relevant policies and procedures.

It is further recommended that staff be directed to create a Council Staffing Policy, outlining roles and responsibilities of Members of Council for managing City employees working in their Ward Offices, and affirm applicable City Human Resources policy requirements as it relates to Ward Office staff.

The Council Staffing Policy will clarify the relevant City of Hamilton Human Resources Policies and Procedures that are applicable to Ward Office Staff, including entitlements

to things like vacation and benefits, and information and guidance related to employment matters. This Policy, in collaboration with the support of the dedicated HR staffing resource, will ensure Councillors and their Ward Office Staff have the resources and supports they need to ensure an equitable and consistent employment experience amongst Ward Offices. It will also support recruitment and retention of Ward Office Staff by formalizing the applicable policies, specifically those related to relevant entitlements, including total rewards and compensation.

Non-Union Job Evaluation

It is recommended that, with the assistance of Human Resources, that Ward Office staff be directed to participate in a non-union Job Evaluation of existing Administrative Ward Office positions to confirm the appropriate non-union salary grade, create accurate and up-to-date job descriptions and appropriate, consistent job functions/titles within the Ward Offices.

The City of Hamilton utilizes a Job Evaluation system to measure non-union jobs, establish job classifications and job descriptions, and determine the relative value of the job through a measurement of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions so that jobs can be compared to each other, and ensure equity across the organization. Currently, different Ward Offices employ different job positions that are compensated at different rates, which may not be reflective of the work being performed by the individuals in the position.

Updating and validating job descriptions, scope of work, function and the appropriate salary grade will provide consistency and equity between Ward offices, ensure positions are compensated at the appropriate rate and ensure Ward Offices are staffed with the necessary competencies and job functions.

Ward Office Budget Calculation

Appendix “A” to Report HUR24001 illustrates the current Ward Office Budget calculation methodology in Table 1 and the what the revised budgets would look like if recommendations (e) and (f) are approved.

The jurisdictional scan completed by Mungall found that the median total 2023 annual Ward Office Budget allocated to all Ward Offices of \$54,457 is competitive and does not require enhancement to close any gap in funding relative to Single Tier municipal comparators.

The Inner-City Fund was established in 2004 to recognize the increased cost of Inner-City issues including social services, language barriers, addiction, density of second level lodging homes and Residential Care Facilities for Wards 2, 3, 4 and 5. Mungall’s

review found that Wards 2, 3 and 4 demonstrate the lowest years of life span and experience the highest rates of potentially avoidable deaths per 10,000 population among the 15 Wards. Wards 2 and 3 experience the highest levels of Emergency Visits and Hospitalizations, well above aggregate City Rates. Wards 2 and 5 demonstrate the highest rates of non-official languages spoken at home and as the first language of communication. Interviews with Ward Office staff confirm high incidence of constituency issues in relation to environment/health quality, income disparity, housing and rent insecurity, homelessness, addiction and acts of desperation. For these reasons, it is recommended that Wards 2, 3, 4, and 5 retain the Inner-City fund.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Council could elect to continue with the current financing and staffing levels within the Council Ward Offices, however this may not provide sufficient coverage for business and operational continuity as well as support for employee absences such as vacation, illness, or coverage for circumstances where there is additional workload, without a potential adverse impact to business and operational continuity.

Alternatively, Council may elect to accept some of the proposed recommendations, for example the assignment of a dedicated Human Resources staff resource, which would ensure they have the support and assistance in regard to employment matters such as recruitment, onboarding, mandatory and required training and compliance with Corporate policies and procedures and Council transition requirements.

Council has the option to allocate an extra Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) exclusively in Wards where the Councillor deems it necessary. Any Councillor desiring to incorporate an extra FTE would formally communicate their intention in writing to the City Clerk by Thursday January 24, 2024. The cumulative amount will be calculated and presented for consideration during the 2024 Budget Deliberations.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report HUR24001 – Ward Office Budget Calculation