



Mike Mayes, Director
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August 20, 2015

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT - FINANCIAL SERVICES-2015-19

TO: Mayor Tony Van Bynen and Members of Council
Committee of the Whole
SUBJECT: Delegation of Authority with Respect to Property Assessment and Collection of Taxes
ORIGIN: Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Corporate Services Report - Financial Services – 2015-19 dated August 20, 2015 regarding the Delegation of Authority with Respect to Property Assessment and the Collection of Taxes be received and the following recommendations be adopted:

1. **THAT Council delegate authority to initiate and file notices of assessment appeal, for any property in the Town of Newmarket, with the Assessment Review Board from time to time, to the Treasurer or his designate;**
2. **THAT Council delegate authority to withdraw any appeal filed by the Town of Newmarket, should it be determined that it is not in the Town's best interest to proceed, to the Treasurer or his designate;**
3. **THAT Council delegate authority to attend before the Assessment Review Board on property tax or assessment matters as a party to all appeals whether filed by the Town of Newmarket or another person, entity or agent, to the Treasurer or his designate;**
4. **THAT Council delegate authority to execute settlement agreements, on behalf of the Town of Newmarket, reached in the course of a taxation or property assessment appeal, to the Treasurer or his designate;**
5. **AND THAT the delegation by-law be updated to reflect these items of delegated authority.**

COMMENTS

Purpose

The purpose of this report is for Council to delegate the municipality's authority for the collection of property taxes and the related assessment maintenance to the Treasurer, which then allows the Treasurer to delegate specific authorities to any other person, in this case, Grace L. Marsh, Supervisor, Property Tax and Assessment.

Budget Impact

There is no immediate budgetary impact to this delegation, however, there should be a positive impact realized as new processes are implemented that will reduce the Town's costs for outside assistance.

Background

Sections 39 and 40 of the *Assessment Act* allows that any person, including a municipality, may appeal to the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) or the Assessment Review Board (ARB), that a property assessment may be too high, too low, wrongly classified or omitted from the assessment roll. The delegation of the authority for staff to perform the tasks associated with these appeals, and the related collection of property taxes, will allow them to be performed in an efficient and expedient manner.

The Town has an assessment base of over \$14 billion. This base must be managed to ensure that property tax is levied and collected in a fair and equitable way. This base is challenged every year through property assessment and property tax appeals. More details have been provided to Council through Financial Services Information Report 2015-18, Pro-Active Assessment Management (report available on-line or hard copies upon request)

Section 23.1 of the *Municipal Act*, requires that a by-law must be enacted for Council to delegate its' authorities to staff, and section 286 of the *Municipal Act* allows that Council may permit the Treasurer to delegate his authority related to the collection of taxes.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

Under the theme of Efficiency / Financial Management, Council has set the priority of ensuring effective and efficient services. The delegation of authority with respect to property assessment and collection of taxes is a part of the plan for Proactive Assessment Management, a key component in the Financial Services departmental goal to establish a sustainable financial strategy to support the Council priority.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with other municipalities within the GTA and it was determined that these delegations are common practice. The language and structure of the by-law and report have been reviewed by the Clerk's Office.

HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Staffing levels are not impacted as a result of the recommendations in this report; however, this delegation of authority will allow the Finance Department to fully utilize the qualifications and skills available in the Supervisor of Property Tax & Assessment and the Property Assessment Analyst positions.

BUDGET IMPACT

Operating Budget (Current and Future)

There will be no immediate impact on the operating budget for 2015 or 2016, however, the 2017 and beyond operating budget could see a reduced allowance for outside consultations with experts in property tax and assessment.

Capital Budget

There are no capital budget impacts.

CONTACT

For more information on this report, contact: Mike Mayes at 905-953-5300, ext. 2102 or via e-mail at mmayes@newmarket.ca



Grace L. Marsh
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GM/nh