



CORPORATE SERVICES – LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
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November 19, 2015

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT – LEGISLATIVE SERVICES – 2015-24

TO: Mayor Van Bynen and Members of Council

SUBJECT: Selection of Town Crier

ORIGIN: Lisa Lyons, Deputy Town Clerk, Legislative Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Corporate Services Report – Legislative Services – 2015-24 dated November 19, 2015 regarding “Selection of Town Crier” be received; and,

- 1. THAT staff be directed to work with the Ontario Guild of Town Criers to hold a competition to select a Town Crier for Council appointment; and,**
- 2. THAT staff be directed to prepare a Volunteer Contract to be brought back with the recommended appointment.**

BACKGROUND

On June 25, 2015, correspondence was received by the Mayor's office from Mr. Athol Hart requesting that the Town consider appointing him as the Official Town Crier for Newmarket. This request was placed on a Committee of the Whole agenda with the staff recommendation that the correspondence be received and referred to staff to organize a Town Crier competition at a future event.

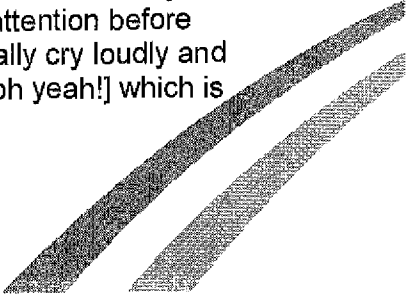
At the October 5, 2015 Council meeting, Council directed that staff work with the Ontario Guild of Town Criers to identify an appropriate process for Town Crier selection and report back within 30 days.

COMMENTS

What is a Town Crier?

The Ontario Guild of Town Criers states:

A Town Crier makes proclamations and announcements for his or her town or community. Criers attend functions or celebrations and ring their bell to get everyone's attention before reading a special announcement or proclamation from a scroll. Criers normally cry loudly and clearly so that all can hear. They use the traditional opening word "OYEZ! [oh yeah!] which is a very old french term meaning "To Hearken" or "Hear YE!"



What is the difference between a Town Crier and an Official Town Crier?

Being appointed as an Official Town Crier for a municipality, the Crier is given the authority to say, "On behalf of his/her Worship and the Member of Council, congratulations is extended to...", and when invited, may attend events and proclaim greetings of Council. A Crier for a historical association does not have the same ability.

Staff contacted the Ontario Guild of Town Criers and have confirmed the following information:

- A motion by the appointing municipality is required to appoint an "Official Town Crier";
- Some municipalities will define that the Town Crier is an official volunteer and not in the employ of the Town and will enter into a Volunteer Agreement which recognizes the dignity of the position and sets out guidelines and directives for the position in relation to the Town;
- Municipalities may require that the Town Crier be a member of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers and abide by its statement of Ethics and Conduct;
- Town Criers may represent the Town at Provincial, National and International competitions;
- Appointments may coincide with the Term of Council;
- An honorarium may be paid ranging from 50 to 500 dollars, travel expenses and uniform expenses may also be reimbursed;
- Some Town Criers may attend limited municipal functions and others appear well over 100 times a year;
- Town Criers may also be privately contacted to provide cries for business openings, weddings/anniversaries or charity events
- Selection of a Town Crier has varied across the Province with smaller municipalities simply appointing when approached by an interested party, and other larger municipalities such as Oakville and St. Catharines having organized competitions with the Ontario Guild of Town Criers.

The Ontario Guild of Town Criers has offered to assist the Town of Newmarket in establishing a Town Crier either through official appointment or contest. In discussions with the Director of Recreation and Culture, it was suggested that holding a competition as part of the grand opening of the Old Town Hall would promote the ancient and honourable craft of Town Crying, while celebrating the re-opening of such a valuable historical site for the Town of Newmarket.

The competition would be advertised and each participant would be provided with a proclamation to be performed. Each Crier would be encouraged to put their own creative energies and twist into their performance. Visitors to the event would be invited to cheer on their favorite competitors and would witness the selection of the new Town Crier. The Ontario Guild of Town Criers has offered to provide judges.

As being appointed an Official Town Crier, an individual may be provided financial compensation for attending events whether on behalf of the Town or for private functions. As such, proceeding with a competition provides transparency to this Town appointment.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

This report relates to the Well-equipped and Managed link of the Town's Community vision – implementing policy and processes that reflect sound and accountable governance.

CONSULTATION

This report was prepared in consultation with the Ontario Guild of Town Criers, various municipalities in York Region and throughout Ontario, and with the Director of Recreation and Culture.

HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

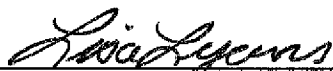
There are no human resource considerations associated with this report.

BUDGET IMPACT

An honorarium may be provided by the Town for Town related events. Attendance of the Town Crier at such events would be at the invitation of the Town. In the past, a Town Crier has been used at the Council Inaugural meeting and Santa Claus Parade for example, and have been given an honorarium of approximately \$100.00 to \$150.00. As indicated above, the Town Crier may be employed at private events and compensation would be provided by the event organizer, subject to the Volunteer Agreement.

CONTACT

For more information on this report, contact Lisa Lyons, Deputy Town Clerk at 905 953-5300, extension 2203 or by email at llyons@newmarket.ca.



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