

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes

Council Report

Report Number CLK2017-007

Date: April 18, 2017

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Council Chambers

Ward Community Identifier:

Subject: Internet/Telephone Voting Financial Analysis

Author/Title: Judy Currins, City Clerk

Signature:



Recommendation(s):

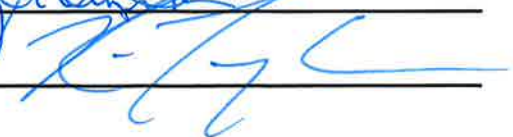
RESOLVED THAT Report CLK2017-007, **Internet Telephone Voting Financial Analysis**, be received.

Department Head:

Corporate Services Director / Other:



Chief Administrative Officer:



Background:

At the Council Meeting of January 24, 2017, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2017-059

Moved By Councillor James

Seconded By Councillor Strangway

RESOLVED THAT the alternative voting method of telephone/internet for the 2018 municipal election, be approved;

THAT a by-law be presented to authorize the telephone/internet voting method for the 2018 municipal election.

CARRIED

As noted in the Report CLK2017-001, if a municipality wishes to use an alternative voting method in the 2018 election, a by-law is required to be passed to adopt the method by May 1, 2017. Council adopted By-law 2017-013 that authorizes the use of internet/telephone voting for the 2018 municipal election. At that time, the costing was not known and as a result, a commitment was made to report back outlining the financial implications compared to the use of the mail-in ballot.

This report provides the details of that commitment to provide more information to Council.

Rationale:

After the decision of Council to use Internet/Telephone Voting for the 2018 municipal election, the City Clerk issued an RFI from the five main internet/telephone suppliers to receive the financial information required to develop the financial analysis for this Report. It should be noted that this is a high level budget comparison as the final procedures, award to the vendor and agreement with the Library Board on use of library staff have not taken place. This analysis is to ensure that there is sufficient budget within the current parameters for the 2018 election. As this is a new process, the true cost will not be known until after the election.

The City budgets for elections every year to level out the budget impact over the term of Council. Currently an annual election budget amount of \$70,000.00 is included in each operating budget with \$66,000.00 being transferred to a reserve at the end of the year. There is one annual charge for the software used to allow staff to update records relating deceased persons.

The 2014 election cost approximately \$260,000.00. This does not include the cost of the City Clerk and Deputy Clerk wages as they remained within the Clerk's operating budget.

The current balance in the election reserve at the end of 2016 is \$203,680.84 and with the contribution for 2017 and 2018, the balance should be over \$330,000.00 if no other election expenses are incurred.

Completing a high level budget review, it is estimated that the budget for internet/telephone voting would add approximately \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00 to the election expense but there are savings to be found with no rental of tabulation equipment and reduced number of staff to scan and tabulate ballots. The net impact to the budget would be \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00. This range is very conservative and at the high end as it is not yet known what the library and service centre staff requirements will be.

Using the high estimate above of \$30,000.00, the total cost of the 2018 election is estimated at \$290,000.00, well within the reserve balance accumulated by the end of 2018.

The need for extra education of the elector, both for the new voting system and the ward boundaries has not been accounted for in the estimates above as a plan has not been developed at the time of writing this report. The balance of the reserve would cover these costs.

It is recommended that there be no change in the alternative voting method of internet/telephone voting as currently approved by Council.

After the experience of the 2018 municipal election, Council will be in a position to analysis the outcome including the costs, the process and elector satisfaction and future annual contributions to the reserve for the next four year cycle will begin in 2019.

Other Alternatives Considered:

Council could rescind the by-law to adopt internet/telephone voting and adopt another alternative voting method such as mail-in and electronic tabulators. If this is the decision of Council, a special meeting of Council will be called prior to May 1st to meet the legislative timelines. If this is the decision then the following resolution is required to be passed that this meeting:

RESOLVED THAT the City Clerk be instructed to prepare a by-law to repeal By-law 2017-013 that adopted the Internet/Telephone Voting Method: and **THAT** the City Clerk prepare and present, prior to May 1, 2017, a by-law to authorize the alternative voting method of mail-in ballot and electronic tabulation.

Financial Considerations:

With no change in the decision of Council to retain internet/telephone voting for the 2018 municipal election, there will be no direct budget implication as the requested annual amount will remain unchanged in 2018. Upon completion of the 2018 municipal election, a review would be required to ensure that the requested amount for the 2022 municipal election is available and the annual amount requested is sufficient for that event.

Relationship of Recommendation(s) To The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan:

The selection of a voting method has the potential to support many of the goals or enablers within the adopted Strategic Plan. Internet/telephone voting:

- improves accessibility for those with disabilities or location challenges on election day (Goal 2.2.1);
- reduces paper and therefore supports the Integrated Waste Management Strategy (Goal 3.1.2);
- shows fiscal responsible service delivery (Enabler E1.1);
- provides excellent customer service (Enabler E3.1); and
- best use of technology to deliver services(Enabler E4.1).

Review of Accessibility Implications of Any Development or Policy:

Of all election voting methods, internet/telephone voting provides the best and most efficient way for persons with disabilities to participate in the election process. The Accessibility Advisory Committee supports the internet/telephone voting method.

Servicing Comments:

N/A

Consultations:

Attachments:

Phone: (705)324-9411 Ext. 1295
E-Mail: jcurrins@city.kawarthalakes.on.ca
Department Head: Ron Taylor, CAO
Department File: