

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes
Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number CORP2019-012

Date: June 4, 2019
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Place: Bobcaygeon Service Centre

Ward Community Identifier: 05

Title: High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection
63 Victoria Ave N - Lindsay

Description: This report presents Council with a recommendation from the High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection Appeals Committee for the above named subject property.

Author and Title: Linda Liotti, Manager, Revenue and Taxation

Recommendation(s):

That Report CORP2019-012, **High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection for 63 Victoria Ave N - Lindsay**, be received;

That Council approve the recommendation of the High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection Appeal Committee and provide a credit of \$311.45 as a one-time exemption for the same property owner; and

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the June 18, 2019 Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

At the Council Meeting of May 22, 2018, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2018-340

That Report CORP2018-009, **High Water Bill Adjustment Appeals Committee**, be received; and

That the Terms of Reference for the Committee be amended to include both High Water Bill Adjustment and Mandatory Connection Appeals; and

That the necessary by-law amendments and revised terms of reference be brought forward to Council; and

At the Council Meeting of December 11, 2018, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2018-647

That Councillor Dunn, Councillor Ashmore and Councillor Yeo be appointed to the High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection Appeals Committee, in accordance with By-law 2018-039, for the entire term of Council ending December 2022, with a mid-term review of appointments in 2020.

Rationale:

The High Water Bill Adjustment Appeals Committee held a meeting on May 14, 2019 to hear the concerns of the owner of 63 Victoria Avenue North, Lindsay.

City records indicate this property is a single family semi-detached home and the property owner confirmed the property is multi-tenanted.

In a typical billing cycle (+/- 90 days) this address consumes 50 to 90 cubic metres of water. During the period of August to October 2018, consumption totaled 246 cubic metres of water. The total bill for both water and wastewater was \$1,232.93.

City records indicate discussions between the home owner and various staff date back to February 2018, at which time the property owner advised that his tenant had indicated the possibility of a leaking toilet, which had he had recently fixed. A check read was done on February 19, 2018 and consumption appeared to have normalized.

In November 2018, the property owner contacted the utility department to state that there was high consumption and that the tenant was providing the meter reads. He suspected there was another leak at the property. A check read was done on November 16, 2018 confirming consumption at that time seemed to have normalized.

As a matter of interest, on April 4, 2019, the property owner advised that the property was being sold with a closing date of April 30, 2019, however, requested the matter to go forward.

Section 8 of the High Water Bill Adjustment Policy provides one-time relief for instances similar to those that occurred at this property, however, Section 8.3 states:

*This section does not apply to commercial, industrial, multi-residential (as identified by assessment property classification) and **income producing residential properties** or leaks as a result of irrigation systems.*

The Committee received the deputation of the property owner and recommended that a credit be applied to the account, using the same methodology that would be applied had the property not been income producing.

The credit is calculated as 50% of the consumption billed that was above the average consumption for the previous five billing cycles. Specific to this property, the credit would be equal to 74.55 cubic metres or \$311.45.

It is important to note that the High Bill Adjustment Policy does not provide for relief to income producing properties.

The Committee also made the recommendation that staff review the policy and submit a report to Council with consideration to extending the policy to commercial, industrial, multi-residential (as identified by assessment property classification) and income producing residential properties for leaks with an adjustment cap of \$1,500.00.

A review of the High Water Adjustment Policy is not within Terms of Reference for this Committee, however, staff feels that a review is warranted and a report will be forthcoming.

Other Alternatives Considered:

If Council wishes to uphold the High Water Bill Adjustment Policy, and not provide relief, then the following resolution should be passed:

That Council deny the request for financial relief of the high water bill incurred at 63 Victoria Ave N, Lindsay for the billing period of August to October 2018.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The Water and Wastewater rates are established to recover the cost of producing and delivering safe drinking water to property owners, and the collection and treatment of wastewater.

Providing relief to residents for high water bills results in the City incurring a cost for which there isn't a direct revenue for recovery. This cost is then borne by the remaining user rate contributors throughout the City.

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

Strategic Enabler – Responsible Fiscal Resource

Consultations:

Property Owner

Director, Public Works

High Water Bill Adjustment / Mandatory Service Connection Appeal Committee

Attachments:

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Department Head: Jennifer Stover