



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: PLAN2024-063
Meeting Date: November 5, 2024
Title: Youth Advisor Pilot Project
Description: Recommendations from Youth Advisor Pilot Project
Author and Title: Mark Jull, Supervisor of Policy Planning

Recommendations:

That Report PLAN2024-063, **Youth Advisor Pilot Project**, be received;

That staff be directed to update CP2021-031 Council Committee, Board, and Task Force Policy to allow for Youth Advisor position(s) on appropriate Advisory Committees and Task Forces, by end of Q1, 2025; and

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

At the Council Meeting of April 30, 2024, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2024-245

Moved By Councillor Warren

Seconded By Councillor Perry

That the Terms of Reference for the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee be amended to permit a non-voting Youth Advisor role, as a pilot project ending December 31, 2024;

That the age requirement within Section 1.1 (iii) of Policy CP2021-031, being the Council Committee, Board and Task Force Policy, be waived to permit the Youth Advisor on the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee;

That a Youth Advisor be appointed to the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee for a term ending December 31, 2024;

That Staff report back to Council with an overview of the Student Advisory Pilot Project for the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee by the end of Q4, 2024;

That Ola Pasternak be appointed to the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee as the representative from the Kawartha Region Conservation Authority, with a term ending December 31, 2026; and

That Josh Feltham be appointed to the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee as the representative from Fleming College, with a term ending December 31, 2026.

Carried

This report addresses the direction to report back to Council with an overview of the Student Advisory Pilot Project.

Rationale:

The City of Kawartha Lakes has a number of Council-appointed Committees, Boards, and Task Forces, which are composed of volunteers who review and recommend actions to Council to advance various issues relating to the municipality. Committees,

Boards, and Task Forces are vital to informing and supporting Council in accomplishing the City's strategic goals and priorities. The appointed volunteer members of these Committees, Boards, and Task Forces bring valuable community knowledge, experience, and information, and are committed community stakeholders and ambassadors.

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) is one of these important Committees. The EAC was formed in 2003 to assist Council in developing, implementing, and monitoring the City's environmental policies.

On April 30, 2024, Council appointed three full Members to the EAC to fill vacancies, as well as a high school student as a 'student member' as a pilot project to assess if a student or youth advisory role could be adopted more broadly.

At that time, it was determined the student member may be able to participate and contribute to the work of the committee but was restricted from moving motions or voting on motions or resolutions. The student member had to receive parental consent.

During the tenure of the student member, a number of questions arose about their role and the EAC was consulted on June 13, 2024 and again on October 17, 2024.

The following addresses issues and questions based on input from the EAC and internal staff discussions.

Role of Youth Advisor

During the EAC's pilot project, the student member participated in the work of the committee, including attending committee meetings, but, due to not yet being eighteen (18), was not able to pass motions or vote. Members of the EAC have advised that student members and youth advisors in some other municipalities do, in fact, have voting privileges on their respective committees. A list of such municipalities is available.

Number of Youth Advisors per Committee, Board or Task Force

Where appropriate or advisory in nature, one Youth Advisor per Committee, Board or Task Force would provide opportunities to youth and support the work of the Committee, Board, or Task Force.

Age range

Full members must be at least eighteen (18). Youth Advisors between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) would provide opportunities to youth and support the work of the Committee, Board, or Task Force. However, since students' birthdays come at various times of the year, recruiting Youth Advisors in Grade 11 or Grade 12 would avoid a situation where a Grade 11 student would be unfairly disqualified if they happened to have a birthday in the fall and thus be 15 at the beginning of the school year.

Parental consent

Since Youth Advisors are minors, parental consent would be required.

If a Youth Advisor turns eighteen (18) during their appointment

If a Youth Advisor turns eighteen (18) during their appointment, they could continue their role and should a vacancy be advertised, they could apply as a full member.

Length of appointment

Full members are typically appointed for four years (or to the end of the Council term should they be appointed during a Council term). Appointing Youth Advisors for one or two years would expand opportunities to youth. Beginning the appointment in September would coincide with the school year. A Youth Advisor in Grade 11 could continue for a second year, whereas a Youth Advisor in Grade 12 would only hold the position for one year.

If a Youth Advisor leaves for college or university

If Youth Advisors must be in Grade 11 or Grade 12, this would not be an issue.

Youth Advisors as registered students

Typically, Youth Advisors would be a student at a local school, however some may be attending alternative schools or home schooled. Regardless, just like full members, Youth Advisors should reside in the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Incentive for youth to become Youth Advisors

The Youth Advisor position provides an opportunity for young people to be involved with their community on issues that matter to them. Since they are volunteer positions,

they would gain hours towards the forty hours needed for a high school diploma. Youth Advisor will have the chance to work with other community leaders, Councillors, and learn about Council and local governance. Youth Advisors could receive reference letters for their contributions. They will also experience the benefit of service to their community.

Committee, Board, and Task Force Terms of Reference

Should Council adopt this report's recommendation to update CP2021-031 Council Committee, Board, and Task Force Policy, staff could then work to update this policy document in Q1 2025. Once updated, the Terms of Reference for certain Committees, Boards, and Task Forces may then be revised to include a Youth Advisor.

Other Alternatives Considered:

It was considered that the Youth Advisor position be made permanent for just the Environmental Advisory Committee, but was recommended to extend the opportunity to other Committees, Boards, and Task Forces.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The City's Strategic Plan, under Good Government, seeks to build a collaborative, supportive, inclusive and equitable community. This is to be achieved, in part, by encouraging and supporting youth-friendly initiatives. Creating the opportunity for Youth Advisor positions on the City's Committees, Boards, and Task Forces implements this goal.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

There are no anticipated financial impacts. The intent of Youth Advisor positions would be to support operational processes.

Consultations:

City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee

Chief Administrative Officer

Clerks Office

Attachments:

Appendix A – CP2021-031 Council Committee, Board, and Task Force Policy



CP2021-031 Council
Committee, Board ar

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Department Head: Leah Barrie, Director of Development Services

Department File: C06