

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) MAY 28, 2002

CITY PAGE ADVERTISING CONTRACT - VAUGHAN CITIZEN/LIBERAL

Recommendation

The Director of Corporate Communications recommends

1. That direction be provided with respect to the following recommendation contained in the attached report which was deferred from the Committee of the Whole Working Session of April 30, 2002:

That the City of Vaughan enter into a two-year contract with The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen for a weekly *City Page* in the Vaughan Citizen and the Thornhill Liberal as follows:

Year One	\$0.99 per agate line plus GST for annual rate of \$ 97,167
Year Two	\$1.02 per agate line plus GST for annual rate of \$100,082

2. That the additional information provided by The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen be received; and
3. That the following report addressing concerns raised at the above-mentioned Working Session be received.

Purpose

The attached report was deferred from the Committee of the Whole Working Session for April 30, 2002, to obtain additional information.

Background - Analysis and Options

Members of the Committee raised the following issues on April 30, 2002:

1. Concern with the contract rate quoted:

Members of the Committee requested comparative figures on rates paid by other municipalities or customers and the possibility of the contract including a disclosure clause that would guarantee the lowest or as low a rate as provided to other customers. Quotes were also requested for a one-year contract, a bi-weekly *City Page* rate and a half-page *City Page* rate.

Comment/Analysis:

The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen has responded to these requests in the attached memorandum and will be in attendance at the meeting to provide additional information, as necessary.

Half-page *City Page* - Council could reduce its *City Page* advertising to a half-page by restricting it to Statutory Ads only. Should the space be insufficient for Statutory Ads, additional lines would be purchased.

Departments would revert to placing their own non-statutory information ads in local papers in accordance with the Advertising Policy. This would result in non-statutory ads appearing randomly throughout the various local newspapers.

By-weekly *City Page* - Statutory and other time sensitive ads would be adversely affected by a delay of two weeks, and the City's flexibility in scheduling meetings

would be reduced i.e. notices of public hearing require 30 days notice. Furthermore, some Statutory Ads must be placed for “four consecutive weeks” in a local paper with general circulation within the municipality.

2. Advertising rates from The Vaughan Weekly and LoSpecchio were requested. Members of the Committee had also suggested that the City explore the option of supplementing The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen *City Page* advertising with regularly, alternately placed ads in the other commonly used local papers, The Weekly and LoSpecchio.

Comment/Analysis:

The attached confidential summary of rates and distribution is based on the advertising application forms submitted by the various media.

The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen is the only paper with citywide distribution, which meets advertising criteria for Statutory Ads.

During discussion of the City Advertising Policy, it was identified that departments should take particular care to identify the target audience and advertise appropriately. To ensure that Statutory Ads are given the widest possible distribution, Council could amend the Advertising Policy to include that Statutory Ads be placed in other local papers as appropriate.

3. Duplication of Ads:

A concern was expressed that ads were frequently placed in the *City Page* for two or more weeks.

Comment/Analysis:

Ads are placed at the frequency requested by the originating departments, space permitting. There are occasions when there are insufficient ads to fill the *City Page* and some ads are repeated, with the consent of the originating department. This occurrence is more prevalent in the summer months or holiday periods when there is less Council activity.

4. Inconsistent coverage between the Vaughan Citizen and the Thornhill Liberal.

Comment/Analysis:

This has been an ongoing concern of the City since the launch of the new Vaughan Citizen last August and has been brought to the attention of the newspaper. In the attached memo, the newspaper has responded to this concern.

Conclusion

Should Council wish to move towards consistency in City advertising, the full tabloid size *City Page* in The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen should be retained. Council may wish to enter into a one-year contract as opposed to a two-year contract as proposed by the newspaper, to retain flexibility in future years. The Liberal/Vaughan Citizen is the only local paper with citywide distribution.

Should Council wish to add to the *City Page* advertising to target specific audiences, an amendment to the Advertising Policy should state that Statutory Ads be placed in local papers as appropriate. For example, a public meeting in the Woodbridge area would also be placed in LoSpecchio.

Should Council wish to reduce the corporate advertising in the *City Page*, an alternative would be to include a half-page "Statutory Ad only" section in The Liberal/Vaughan Citizen. The full size *City Page* has met the needs of the organization however, from time to time, duplication of ads has occurred to fill space. Other non-statutory community information ads would be placed directly by City departments in accordance with the Advertising Policy. This would result in ads occurring randomly in local papers.

Attachments

1. Memorandum from The Liberal-Vaughan Citizen dated May 10, 2001 (Mayor and Members of Council only)
2. Summary of Rates and Circulation (Mayor and Members of Council only)

Report prepared by:

Victoria Leskie

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Leskie
Director of Corporate Communications