

BUDGET COMMITTEE JANUARY 12, 2009

COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT – REVIEW OF HONORARIUMS

Recommendation

The City Clerk and the Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services recommends:

1. THAT the honorariums for the Committee of Adjustment members be increased to \$200 per meeting attended and \$234 per meeting attended for the Chair of the meeting; and,

Economic Impact

There is a provision of \$13,000.00 in the Draft 2009 Operating Budget to accommodate an increase in the honorariums paid to the Committee of Adjustment members. Justification for this increase is outlined below.

Communications Plan

N/A

Purpose

The City Clerk received a request from the Chair of the Committee of Adjustment to review the honorarium that Committee members receive. The purpose of this report is to provide the results of that review and to make recommendations regarding the honorariums received by the Committee members.

Background - Analysis and Options

On December 8, 2008, Council approved the following recommendation:

“That this matter be referred to the Budget Committee meeting of January 12, 2009 for a further report including a recommendation that would bring the honorariums paid to the Committee of Adjustment members in line with neighbouring municipalities, and that a salary comparative chart of honorariums paid to Committee of Adjustment members of surrounding municipalities be provided”.

A review of Committee of Adjustment salaries for the surrounding municipalities has been completed and is attached as Attachment #1. The Town of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill, City of Brampton and City of Mississauga were included in the review. The City of Toronto was excluded due to their structure of having “panels” for each of the Community Councils and having a City Chair that attends all of the Community Panels. The number of applications also varies greatly between the Panels, and is not considered to be a good comparison.

Comparison of Number of Applications per Meeting

The City of Vaughan schedules approximately 24 meetings per year, and in 2008 heard 397 applications (which includes both minor variances and consent applications). This represents an average of 16.5 applications per meeting. Both the City of Brampton and Town of Richmond Hill held 17 meetings, with 265 applications and 300 applications respectively. This is an average of 15.6 applications per meeting in Brampton, and an average of 17.6 applications per meeting in Richmond Hill.

The Town of Markham had 19 meetings in 2008, with 130 applications. This is an average of 6.8 applications per meeting. The City of Mississauga has significantly higher volumes of applications (570 applications in 2008) which they deal with by having weekly meetings (43 meetings in 2008) to reduce the size of their agendas. This results in an average of 13.3 applications per meeting.

The average number of applications per meeting, across the comparable municipalities is 13.3 applications/meeting. Comparing the workload of applications at each meeting, the Vaughan Committee of Adjustment is above the average.

Comparison of Honorariums

The honorariums paid to the Committee members vary with each municipality. As most municipalities base their honorariums on a per meeting basis, paying only when a member attends a meeting, the City of Vaughan honorarium has been calculated at a per meeting rate, though paid regardless of attendance. The current rate, based on 24 meetings a year, is \$98.96 per meeting for Committee members and \$118.75 for the Chair. This is lower than all the comparable municipalities.

Most municipalities do not provide a premium for the Committee of Adjustment Chair, except for the Town of Richmond Hill. As a comparison of the honorariums, Richmond Hill pays \$150/meeting for Committee members, and \$175/meeting for the Chair. It should be noted that Richmond Hill last increased their honorarium in 2001. Brampton and Mississauga pay \$175/meeting and \$240/meeting respectively. It should be noted that Mississauga includes a \$40/meeting mileage allowance in their honorarium.

The average honorarium paid to each member in the comparable municipalities is \$180/meeting, which ranges from \$150/meeting to \$240/meeting. Considering the higher average of applications per meeting it is reasonable that the Vaughan Committee of Adjustment be compensated at an above average rate.

Reviewing the comparable municipalities an honorarium of \$200/meeting for each member is recommended. This is competitive with Richmond Hill and Brampton, but less than Mississauga, recognizing the greater number of applications and meetings in Mississauga.

An honorarium of \$234/meeting for the Chair is also recommended. The additional \$34/meeting is 17% more than the members. This is in keeping with Vaughan's current premium for the Chair, and also matches the premium the Town of Richmond Hill provides for its Chair. This recognizes the additional duties the Chair has during a meeting.

When the Honorarium is Paid

The City of Vaughan's current honorarium is calculated on an annual basis and paid to the members through the year. Most of the other municipalities pay their honorariums based on attendance at a meeting.

It is recommended that the City of Vaughan establish a similar payment structure. Payment based on attendance ensures that Committee members who attend the meetings, and consequently have done the work to review the applications and background materials, are fairly compensated for their efforts. Members who do not attend the meetings are not required to review any of the materials or prepare for a meeting. Rewarding attendance will more fairly compensate the Committee members.

Additionally, it is recommended that when the Chair is absent, and the Vice Chair acts as the Chair for a meeting, the Vice Chair receive the Chair honorarium rate, being \$234/meeting. This will recognize the additional duties the Vice Chair will have at that particular meeting.

Impact on Budget

The Clerk's Department budget currently accounts for the Committee of Adjustment members' honorariums. A total of \$12,350.00 has been budgeted in the past for the honorariums. Based on the recommended honorariums, and assuming attendance at all 24 meetings, the annual honorarium will be as follows:

	<u>Per Meeting Honorarium</u>	<u>Number of Meetings</u>	<u>Annual Total</u>
Committee Members (4 members)	\$200	24	\$19,200.00
Committee Chair (1 chair)	\$234	24	\$5,616.00
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TOTAL MAXIMUM ANNUAL COST			\$24,816.00

It is important to note that the \$24,816.00 represents the maximum annual cost, as the honorarium will be based on meeting attendance. This assumes that all the members attend all the meetings, and that there are 24 meetings held. The minimum cost is \$20,016.00, based on a quorum of 3 members at each meeting, and 24 meetings in a year. It is likely that the actual cost will be slightly lower due to not having all members at every meeting, and that because it is likely one or two meetings will be cancelled, as in past years.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the priorities set forth in Vaughan Vision 2020, particularly "Demonstrate Leadership & Promote Effective Governance".

This report recommends a change from the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have not yet been allocated.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

Based on a review of Committee of Adjustment honorariums at surrounding municipalities, it is recommended that Committee of Adjustment members receive an honorarium of \$200 per meeting attended, and that the Chair of the meeting receive \$234 per meeting.

Attachments

1. Review of Honorariums – Committee of Adjustment

Report prepared by:

Todd Coles, Manager of Development Services/Secretary-Treasurer to Committee of Adjustment

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey A. Abrams,
City Clerk

Janice Atwood-Petkovski
Commissioner of Legal and
Administrative Services, City Solicitor

**Review of Honorariums
Committee of Adjustment**

	Vaughan		Richmond Hill		Brampton		Mississauga	
	Per Year	Per Meeting (1)	Per Year (1)	Per Meeting	Per Year (1)	Per Meeting	Per Year (1)	Per Meeting (2)
Honorarium for Members	\$2,375.00	\$98.96	\$2,550.00	\$150.00	\$2,975.00	\$175.00	\$10,320.00	\$240.00
Honorarium for Chair	\$2,850.00	\$118.75	\$2,975.00	\$175.00	\$2,975.00	\$175.00	\$10,320.00	\$240.00
Number of Members	5		5		5		7	
Number of Meetings per Year (2008)	24		17		17		43	
Number of Applications per Year (2008)	397		300		265		570	
TOTAL HONORARIUM COST PER YEAR (1)	\$12,350.00		\$13,175.00		\$14,875.00		\$72,240.00	

(1) - Assumes members attend all meetings

(2) - Includes \$40/meeting mileage

BOLD honorarium indicates basis of pay (annual or per meeting)