

## **POSTPONED MOTIONS: ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER**

**NUMBER:** PM 33-2018

<b>REQUESTED BY:</b>	Councillor Sheena Hughes
<b>ORIGIN OF REQUEST:</b>	Email
<b>DATE OF REQUEST:</b>	November 20, 2017

<b>AUTHOR:</b>	Cory Sinclair
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Strategic Services
<b>DATE RESPONSE DUE:</b>	November 22, 2017

### **MOTION:**

That the survey for public feedback on methods of preferred public communication is discontinued, and the 2018 Corporate Services operating budget is reduced by \$30,000, and the tax rate is reduced accordingly, and the city increase its use of social media and email to supplement its print communication plans.

### **RESPONSE (one page max.):**

#### **Administration's Understanding of Intent Motion:**

Administration understands that the intent of this motion is to discontinue the Residents' Communications Preferences Survey planned for 2018, and remove it from the 2018 Corporate Services Operating Budget. The survey is \$25,000 plus GST (\$1,250), which is less than the \$30,000 figure shared at the Nov. 16 special council meeting. Administration is also being asked to increase its social media presence and email communications to help supplement print communication plans.

#### **Operational or Organizational Impacts if Motion is Approved:**

- The Residents' Communications Preferences Survey will assist the branch in making informed decisions regarding the best types of communications channels to use when sharing information with residents. By not knowing exactly how our residents consume information, including which technology they use, we will not be communicating to our residents in the most efficient and effective manner and our communications may not be reaching our audience.
- Corporate Communications & Design is not currently resourced to increase its social media presence as requested.
- Due to Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation, the City can not email residents on a specific topic without their expressed approval. This means that a promotional

campaign will need to be developed and advertised, in order to have residents register to receive information on City programs/services via this new communication channel.

- Administration is aware that some residents, especially younger residents, are making more use of social media to get information regarding the City. Administration would like to expand its use of social media, but lacks the resources to undertake anything more than one-way communication to residents which is the current direction of Council.
- City currently uses social media to share links to the City website to profile events, initiatives or feedback opportunities, but is not able to build an online community or to engage residents in discussions. Administration does monitor social media several times each day to identify and answer questions, and would like to take a more active role in this area. If additional resources were in place, the City could undertake a significant effort to more actively monitor, use and benefit from social media opportunities.
- In prior years, Administration has brought forth business cases for a social media coordinator, but these requests were not successful. The City is planning to bring forth the business case once again as part of the 2019 Proposed Budget and was going to include information from the 2018 Residents' Communications Preferences Survey to back up the business case.

#### **Financial Implications of Motions:**

- By not moving forward with the Residents' Communications Preferences Survey, Administration will not understand how our residents consume information, including what technology they use. We will not know if our communications are effective, efficient, and even reaching our target audiences.

#### **Stakeholder Consultations:**

- If the motion passes, stakeholder consultation is not required.

#### **Background:**

- Over the past three years, Administration has set aside funds to conduct the study. Existing funding will be used, with no additional funding being sought.
- In the 2017 Community Satisfaction Survey, no questions were included regarding where residents look for information on the City. The most recent survey to include this question was in 2014, which indicated that 87 per cent of residents looked to the St. Albert Gazette for information on the City. Based on this research, the City places a weekly Citylights feature in the Gazette, which provides residents with information on City programs, services etc. Click [Community Satisfaction Surveys](#) for prior results.
- In 2017, Administration developed a Social Media Coordinator business case that wasn't approved. This position would enable the City to provide a more active, timely and engaging social media presence to support resident communication.