Report Highlights

To inquire as to Council’s desire to conduct a Ward Boundary Review for the Town of Huntsville.

Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Staff be directed to retain a consultant in 2020 to conduct a Ward Boundary Review for the Town of Huntsville;

AND FURTHER THAT: The cost associated with the review to an upset amount of $40,000 be taken from the Ontario Service Delivery - Reserve.

Background

Subsection 222 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 provides for a municipality to establish, divide, redivide the municipality into wards or to dissolve existing wards.

As adopted by Council on September 23, 2019, one of the goals in the new 2019-2023 Strategic Plan is to have a Ward Boundary Review conducted for the Town of Huntsville.

Discussion

As outlined in Appendix "I", it has been twenty (20) years since the Town has conducted a full ward boundary review.

In 1999 Council hired ESI Consulting who recommended downsizing representation at the ward level by two (2) Councillors as well as combining the six (6) wards into three (3) wards to better balance residential and commercial / industrial assessment, population, geography and development potential.
Council was provided with the following five (5) ward models:

- **A** - Three (3) Wards:
  - 1) Huntsville & Stisted;
  - 2) Stephenson, Port Sydney and Brunel;
  - 3) Chaffey.

- **B** - Three (3) Wards:
  - 1) Huntsville plus 20% of Chaffey;
  - 2) 80% Chaffey and Brunel;
  - 3) Stephenson, Port Sydney and Stisted.

- **C** - Three (3) Wards:
  - 1) 50% Chaffey and Stisted;
  - 2) 50% Chaffey and Huntsville;
  - 3) Stephenson, Port Sydney and Brunel.

- **D** - Four (4) Wards:
  - 1) 40% Stisted, 40% Stephenson and Port Sydney, 25% Huntsville;
  - 2) 25% Huntsville, 60% Stephenson and 60% Stisted;
  - 3) 25% Huntsville, 40% Chaffey and 40% Brunel;
  - 4) 25% Huntsville, 60% Chaffey and 60% Brunel;

- **E** - Three (3) Wards:
  - 1) 55% Chaffey and Stisted;
  - 2) 45% Chaffey and Huntsville;
  - 3) Stephenson, Port Sydney and Brunel.

The Consultant’s recommendation was not accepted. The Ward Boundary Committee concluded that downsizing the representation at the ward level by two (2) Councillors with a three (3) Ward Model System was not feasible based on the following reasons:

- Geographic distribution of population;
- Huntsville is the largest of the Muskoka Towns which would give less representation in relative terms;
- Huntsville is continuing to grow by population faster than any other Town in Muskoka; therefore, need the representation to at least remain the same;
- Caliber of representation;
- Create administrative problems;
- Maintain the community of interest and identity;
- Historical comparisons maintained.

**2008-2013**

Beginning in 2008 through to 2013 Council called upon Staff to provide a series of reports as well as to hold multiple public meetings to seek input on ward boundaries, Council complement and elections at large. On November 25, 2013 Council adopted Resolution No. 409-13 requesting Staff prepare a by-law to change the composition of Council and hold a public meeting. The public meeting was held with one comment provided. The subsequent by-law was never presented.

**2019**

It is important for municipalities to periodically conduct ward boundary reviews in order to ensure effective and equitable electoral representation (Population Growth - See Appendix "II"). The review would not only determine current status but also review projected growth, neighbourhoods and
natural boundaries and include various stages of public consultation. A consultant is key to ensure the process is arms length from Council.

**Timelines**

Should Council wish to have any changes in place for the 2022 Elections, it is prudent that Council provide a decision to Staff as quickly as possible in order to allow proper time for the review. A high level of public consultation is prudent and municipalities who do not take the proper time for public consultation may end up experiencing appeals to the LPAT. As Huntsville has a large number of non-residents, this is key to the success of any changes to ward boundaries. Any appeals received could take eight (8) to ten (10) months to conclude.

After the period for appeals has concluded, implementation would commence with the following key activities:

- Redrawing ward maps;
- Integration into geospatial platform;
- Review and redraw all voting subdivision boundaries based on the new ward boundaries;
- Notification to MPAC and school boards;
- Provide final voting subdivisions to MPAC;
- Undertaking of communications through the 2022 Election Communication Plan.

Ward boundaries must be in place and all appeals finalized prior to the end of 2021 in order for the boundaries to be in place for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Elections.

Subsection 222 (8) of the *Municipal Act, 2001 (Wards - by-law)*:

**Coming into force of by-law:**

(8) A by-law of a municipality described in this section comes into force on the day the new council of the municipality is organized following,
(a) the first regular election after the by-law is passed if the by-law is passed before January 1 in the year of the regular election and,
   (i) no notices of appeal are filed,
   (ii) notices of appeal are filed and are all withdrawn before January 1 in the year of the election, or
   (iii) notices of appeal are filed and the Tribunal issues an order to affirm or amend the by-law before January 1 in the year of the election; or
(b) the second regular election after the by-law is passed, in all other cases except where the by-law is repealed by the Tribunal.

**Options**

Option 1: Approval to retain a consultant to conduct a Ward Boundary Review to be funded to an upset amount of $40,000 from the Ontario Service Delivery - Reserve *(Recommended)*

Option 2: Remain as status quo and remove section Gov.3.6 from the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. *(Not recommended)*
Capital

Nil

Operational

Ontario Service Delivery - Reserve (one time funding received from the Province)
   Option 1: $40,000 – Consultant – estimated.

Council Strategic Direction / Relevant Policies / Legislation / Resolutions

Municipal Act, 2001

2019-2023 Strategic Plan:
   • Gov.3.6 - Review and realign ward boundaries to reflect an even distribution of electors per representative.


Attachments

   Appendix I - Ward Boundary - Council Complement Background
   Appendix II - Population Counts

Consultations

Margaret Stead, Corporate Information Coordinator

Respectfully Submitted: Tanya Calleja, Municipal Clerk

Manager Approval (if required): ________________________________

Director Approval: ________________________________

CAO Approval: Denise Corry, Chief Administrative Officer
## Appendix "I"

### Ward Boundary / Council Complement Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</table>

- The Staff Report was prepared by the Deputy Clerk and HR.
- The Report outlined Bill 86 which repealed provisions in the District of Muskoka Act that established area municipalities and composition of Council. The Report noted the intent was to provide area municipalities the ability to utilize new, streamlined provisions to create wards, change council composition etc. without requiring an amendment to the District Act.
- Staff provided two options: 1) leave the composition of council as nine (9) and the ward system as six (6); or 2) alter one or both.
- The Report was tabled as the Administrator/Clerk was not in attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 17 1997 (COW)</td>
<td>CAO-04-97 – 1997 Municipal Elections Report</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Staff Report was noted in the minutes as being tabled until discussions have taken place to the possibility of reviewing the current system of ward boundaries and council composition with the Town’s consultants on restructuring.

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- Resolution: No changes to be made until the Consultant’s recommendation is received and accepted by Council.

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<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23 1999 / March 1 1999</td>
<td>TM-1-99 – Endorsement of Committees</td>
<td>74-99</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Staff Report was prepared by the Town Manager and noted that a “Municipal Restructuring” Final Report was received by ESI Consulting recommending that Council should be reorganized into three (3) wards for Huntsville (from six).
- Resolution: To establish a Ward Boundary Change Committee consisting of the Clerk, Planner and two (2) members of Council.
### May 3 1999 – Clerk-02-99 – Ward Model System

- The Staff Report noted that the Ward Boundary Committee reviewed the Report from ESI Consulting and concluded that downsizing the representation at the Ward level by two (2) Councillors with a three (3) Ward Model System was not feasible.
- The Report stated that the Ward Boundary Committee felt changing the Ward System at that time was premature and that the issue would be revisited after the New Municipal Act came into effect or if it pertained to local political representative and ward boundary changes.


- The Staff Report prepared by the Clerk, Director of Corporate Services and CAO outlined the procedure and criteria and was provided in response to a Councillor’s inquiry regarding a ward boundary review and the possibility of changing the composition of Council. The composition consisted of nine (9) members of Council and a six (6) ward system. The same ward system and composition of Council as today.
- The Report called for direction from Council. None was provided.


- The Staff Report prepared by the Clerk requested sole source approval to retain Dr. Robert Williams to lead a public process, develop options and make final recommendations for Council’s consideration. The Report also called for a budget in the amount of $30,000.

### Jan 19 2009 – Mayor Doughty noted that a public meeting would be held at the beginning of the next Council meeting (Feb 9 2009) to discuss the need for a ward boundary review and / or any changes to the composition of Council

### Feb 9 2009 – Council Public Meeting: No comments were received.
### Meeting Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 21 2011</td>
<td>Councillor Tim Withey presented a PowerPoint Presentation – “Town of Huntsville – Ward Boundary Discussion” Resolution: Direction to Staff to prepare a Report to investigate the cost and procedures for a vote at large election.</td>
<td>334-11</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Meeting Date

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 23 2012</td>
<td>CORP-2012-05 – Election at Large</td>
<td>116-12</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Staff Report was prepared by the Director of Corporate Services/Clerk for information only. The Report outlined the cost and procedures to change the composition of Council to permit a general vote.
- Resolution: Direction to Staff to investigate the cost and procedures with increasing the Council complement.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 22 2012</td>
<td>CORP-2012-15 – Changes to Council Composition – Process</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Staff Report was prepared by the Director of Corporate Services/Clerk for information only. The Report outlined the cost and legislation to increase the Council complement.

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<tr>
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<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun 25 2012</td>
<td>Resolution: Direction to Staff to arrange for two public meetings to discuss ward boundaries</td>
<td>185-12</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 13 2012</td>
<td>Council Public Meeting: Six comments provided.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>

### Meeting Date

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 15 2012</td>
<td>Council Public Meeting: Three comments provided.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28 2013</td>
<td>CORP-2013-02 – Ward Boundary / Council Composition</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Staff Report was prepared by the Director of Corporate Services/Clerk and called for Council to determine which option they wanted Staff to proceed with:
  - Full Ward Boundary Review
  - Increase Council composition by one
  - Realign Ward Representation
  - Election at Large
  - Election at Large – decreasing Council composition
  - Conduct an electronic survey
  - Status quo

No direction was provided.

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<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 25 2013</td>
<td>Business Arising from Closed Session: Resolution: Direction to Staff to prepare a By-law to change the composition of Council and hold a public meeting before it was presented.</td>
<td>409-13</td>
<td>Adopted</td>
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<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
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<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 11 2013</td>
<td>Council Public Meeting: One comment provided.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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APPENDIX “II”

Population Counts – Statistics Canada

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population and dwelling counts</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>12131</td>
<td>14997</td>
<td>15918</td>
<td>17338</td>
<td>18280</td>
<td>19056</td>
<td>19816</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population change (%) from previous census</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total private dwellings</td>
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<td>Private dwellings occupied by usual residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population density per square kilometre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land area (square km)</td>
<td>700.90</td>
<td>700.90</td>
<td>700.90</td>
<td>703.29</td>
<td>703.23</td>
<td>710.64</td>
<td>710.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/