


TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE


SUBJECT: COUNCIL CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

WARD: ALL

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: D. MCALPINE, DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AND COURT SERVICES/CITY CLERK, EXT. 4421

SUBMITTED BY: D. MCALPINE, DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AND COURT SERVICES/CITY CLERK

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: E. ARCHER, CMA, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES 

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER 

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That _____ and _____ be granted approval to attend the 2014 Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) annual conference to be held in Niagara Falls, Ontario as an official delegation for the City of Barrie.
2. That _____ and _____ be granted approval to attend the 2014 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) annual conference in the City of London as an official delegation for the City of Barrie.
3. That Councillor B. Ainsworth, Chair of the Town and Gown Committee be granted approval to attend the annual Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposia typically held in May of each year
4. That the applicable related expenses (including registration, travel, accommodation and meals) be funded from the Council Conference Account to a maximum of \$15,000 for the three conferences (Account # 01-06-0950-0000-3071).

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

5. Motion 08-G-511 was adopted on October 28, 2008 regarding Council Expenses. Paragraph 2 of the motion required a staff report to be presented annually regarding the approval of the delegates for each conference.
6. In 2012, Council adopted motion 12-G-248 regarding Funding for Annual Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposia, as follows:

"That the Council Policy regarding funding for attendance at annual conferences be amended to add to the list of conferences with Council representative attendance funded from the \$15,000 included annually in the Council Conference Account (Account # 01-06-0950-0000-3071), as follows:

One member of Council be granted approval to attend the annual Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposia typically held in May of each year."

7. The 2014 Business Plan includes \$15,000 to permit three members of Council to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) annual conference, five members to attend the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) annual conference and a single member to attend the Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposia, including all applicable related expenses (including registration, travel, accommodations and meals).
8. Typically, participants who register early and take advantage of the "early bird registration" will receive a discounted registration fee. The early bird registration deadlines for the FCM and AMO conferences had not been announced as of the date of preparation of this staff report. However, the early bird registration deadlines have historically been the end of March for both conferences.
9. The FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show is being hosted in Niagara Falls, Ontario at the Scotiabank Convention Centre from May 30 – June 2, 2014. The FCM annual conference is designed to engage political leaders and senior staff in professional development offering informative and thought-provoking sessions.
10. The 2014 AMO annual conference is being hosted by the City of London from August 17th – 20th, 2014. The AMO annual conference is a gathering of municipal government officials and each year offers a program with a theme related to current and emerging issues. A wide range of sessions provides delegates with the opportunity to learn, network and share information regarding best practices.
11. The Town and Gown Association of Ontario Symposia is being held from May 12 – 15, 20¹⁴ in Waterloo, Ontario. The symposium focuses on working in a collaborative way to address near-campus issues. The 2014 TGAO Symposium is expected to attract approximately 150+ delegates, representing universities/colleges, student organizations, citizens, community organizations, local municipalities and others. The theme of the 2014 Symposia is Celebrating Collaborative Community Building: 10 Years of TGAO.
12. The information provided at the conferences/symposia offers municipal elected officials an opportunity to gather new tools for leading their communities and then bring this information back to their respective communities.
13. Members of City Council in 2013 were able to meet with other municipalities to share and receive perspectives on infrastructure funding, new technologies, the economy and other Municipal Government affairs. As well, these conferences often present opportunities to meet with Federal and Provincial Ministers to discuss Barrie's concerns and requirements related to funding of projects.

ANALYSIS

14. Council members have acknowledged the importance of having political representation at two specific annual conferences, FCM and AMO. Attendance provides City Councillors the opportunity to represent the City as official delegations to other levels of government regarding current issues. Council has also identified the importance of the annual Town and Gown Symposia.
15. Individuals not selected as part of the official delegation for either of these conferences would still be able to attend utilizing their own individual expense account. If there are other conferences that Council members wish to attend, the costs associated would continue to be reimbursed through individual expense accounts. Council may also approve attendance for a certain conference at any time through a Council resolution.

16. Information currently available for the FCM, AMO and Town and Gown conferences is attached. Additional information concerning the conferences will be provided to Members of Council as it becomes available.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

17. There are no environmental matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

18. The following alternatives are available to General Committee with respect to the recommendation:

Alternative #1 General Committee could add, change or reduce the number of attendees at the conferences/symposia as an official delegation for the City of Barrie.

Alternative #2 General Committee could require attendance at any of the three conferences to be paid from individual expense accounts or by the individual member of Council rather than the Council Conference Account.

FINANCIAL

19. \$15,000 has been included in the proposed 2014 Business Plan for the costs associated with the delegations on behalf of City Council to the FCM, AMO and Town and Gown annual conferences. This includes costs associated with registration, travel, accommodation and meals. It is estimated that \$15,000 is sufficient based upon the location of the conferences and typical costs for three members to attend FCM, five members to attend AMO and one member to attend the Town and Gown Symposia.
20. Expenses associated with attendance at either of the conferences would be included in the annual Council remuneration report as required by section 284(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001. Council expenses include the costs associated with attending events on behalf of the City hosting guests, communication materials, travel related expenses and office expenses.

LINKAGE TO 2010-2014 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

21. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report are not specifically related to the goals identified in the 2010-2014 City Council Strategic Plan. However, attendance at the FCM and AMO Conferences and Town and Gown Symposia supports Council Strategic Priorities as they promote opportunity to network with other Municipal Officials and gain ideas to help build a stronger community.