



Meeting Date: January 25, 2023

Submitted by: James Hutson, Municipal Clerk

Report No: CLK-02-2023

Subject: Municipal Clerk Services Activity Report for 2022

Recommendation:

THAT Report CLK-02-2023, re: Municipal Clerk Services Activity Report for 2022 be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council and members of the public with an overview of service level activity as it relates to core services offered via the Municipal Clerk or designates through the 2022 calendar year.

Background:

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the oversight of the following services accessed by members of the public:

- Marriage Licensing and Civil Marriage Ceremonies
- Commissioner of Oath Services
- Lottery Licensing
- The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

The delivery of these services is done in conjunction with the support of Middlesex Centre staff, particularly those within the Corporate Services department. The Administrative Assistant – Planning Services and Corporate Records is the staff lead for issuance of marriage licences and commissioning of planning application submissions.

The *Municipal Act, 2001* and related legislation, such as the *Marriage Act, 1990* provide the authority for Ontario municipalities to offer the above noted services and to collect fees in accordance with Middlesex Centre by-laws.

Lottery licensing, commissioner of oaths and marriage related services are available to the public by contacting the Clerk or visiting the municipal website/offices. Each of these services are detailed on the municipal website where individuals can learn more about what is offered and how to obtain assistance.

In addition to these public facing services, the Clerk provides support to Council through the facilitation and management of Council meetings and the related decision process with respect to agendas, minutes and resolutions and additional statistics related to this are included for information purposes.

Analysis:

Marriage Licensing and Civil Marriage Ceremonies

The Municipality issued 43 marriage licences to the members of the public in 2022. Total revenue for this service amounted to \$8,530.00. This represented an increase over 2021 and as well as 2020 through 2018.

In addition to licences, the Clerk performed 7 civil marriage ceremonies in 2022. This service was initially re-established in August of 2021, and the municipality will look to continue to grow and expand this service in future years, appointing additional team members as marriage officiants.

The popularity of service level offerings surrounding marriage and licensing can be attributed in part to an increase in promotion of the service, and general public awareness of the offerings. The municipality receives significant word of mouth promotion of marriage offerings when individuals access the services and share their experiences with others.

A portion of this demand can also be attributed to the continuance of this service during periods of intermittent interruption in the service at other municipalities. Several residents of Middlesex County, the City of London and surrounding areas accessed the marriage licensing services of Middlesex Centre if they were unavailable at their local municipal offices.

Commissioner of Oaths Services

In 2022, the municipality commissioned 104 documents for members of the public, including those required for planning or development related submissions.

Members of the public seek out commissioner of oaths services for a number of reasons, such as the transfer of used vehicles as per Service Ontario protocols or as required for certain government related forms.

Lottery Licensing

The municipality issued 26 lottery licences in 2022

Lottery licensing saw significant year over year increase as service groups respond and recover from the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health directives surrounding in-person gatherings and events reduced demand from local charitable organizations for lottery licences in 2020 and part of 2021, and these groups are once again conducting lotteries.

The administration of the lottery licensing program requires significant investment of staff resources. The rules and regulations for lottery gaming are set out by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO); however, municipalities are responsible for interpreting these rules, issuing licences, as well as overseeing lottery events with prize values less than \$10,000.00 in their communities. Regardless of the size of a lottery prize (under this amount), the requirements of each application do not change and are substantial in scope. Applicants for a lottery licence must fulfill eligibility and application requirements for each lottery event, and work with the Clerk to submit the required reporting documentation following the events.

In addition to working with the above eligible groups, staff invest considerable time educating members of the public and reviewing inquiries regarding charitable gaming from various clubs, groups and organizations who are exploring ways to fundraise. The Clerk receives eligibility submissions and reviews these against the criteria for eligibility to conduct a lottery which is based on four charitable categories established by the AGCO.

The fee for lottery licences issued by a Municipality is set out by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) and is fixed at 3% of the total prize value generating a total revenue of \$2,541.91

The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (Administration)

The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (OWDCP) is established by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and is administered by local municipalities within the Province. The purpose of this program is to provide financial assistance to eligible owners whose livestock or poultry has been killed as a result of eligible Wildlife predation. In 2022, this program was accessed a total of (3) times by members of the public, which is roughly consistent with previous years. In instances where a claim is submitted, the Municipal Wildlife Inspector undertakes an investigation and review, in order to collect evidence in support of a given claim. The Municipal Clerk oversees this activity, completes the submission of applications, collects additional information as required and remits payment to the applicant upon a successful claim.

Council Statistics

In 2022, 26 meetings were held, which included 23 regularly scheduled meetings and 3 special meetings of Council.

In total, Council voted on 318 resolutions and approved a total of 115 by-laws. The agendas, meeting minutes and original by-laws are preserved and reproduced digitally.

Looking Ahead:

Given election was a primary project for the Clerk's office in 2022, it is encouraging to see continued growth in service levels and revenue generation.

The Municipal Clerk has completed the appointment of additional municipal staff as commissioners of oath, including members of the Administrative Services Group. Staff whom are appointed as commissioners of oath receive training from the Clerk and this allows the municipality to expand its offerings and accommodate drop-in appointments.

In addition, the Legislative Services portion of the municipal website has been enhanced with additional information provided to the public regarding available services and how to access them.

Ultimately, these services offer value and convenience for the community, but they can be accessed at almost any municipality in Ontario. With this in mind, our goal is to provide excellence in our approach to customer interaction and convenience to the local community such that they seek out Middlesex Centre for their services.

Financial Implications:

The overall revenue generated in 2022 from the above referenced services was \$12,841.91 compared with \$8,806.07 in 2021 and \$2,275.80 in 2020.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Offering services which hare a benefit to the community allows the municipality to respond to the needs of area individuals and offer services in a convenient and easily accessible manner.

Attachments:

N/A