

Report CAOR-CC-06-14

To: Warden Milne and Members of County Council
From: Lance Thurston, Chief Administrative Officer
Meeting Date: July 8, 2014
Subject: **Appointing Grey County Representative on SWEA Board**
Status: Recommendation adopted by County Council July 8, 2014 per Resolution CC99-14 by appointing Duncan McKinlay to the Board;

Recommendation

WHEREAS Grey County as a member in good standing is entitled to one Authorized Representative on the Board of Directors of the South West Economic Alliance (SWEA);

AND WHEREAS Lance Thurston, the county Chief Administrative Officer, was re-appointed to serve as Grey County's Authorized Representative for a two year period effective June 17, 2014;

AND WHEREAS Lance Thurston has tendered his resignation as County CAO effective August 5, 2014;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report CAOR-CC-06-14 be received;

AND THAT Duncan McKinlay is hereby appointed as Grey County's Authorized Representative to the SWEA Board of Directors.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appoint a new Grey County representative for the Board of the South West Economic Alliance to replace Lance Thurston.

Background

The Southwest Economic Alliance was established in 2006 as a unique partnership of local governments, educational institutions, the broader public sector and the private sector. The organization focuses on building the Ontario economy in the Southwest through strong regional leadership, cooperation, research and advocacy.

SWEA is governed by a board of directors elected by the membership each year at the annual general meeting. Elected directors serve two year terms and are limited to a total of three consecutive terms. The President is an ex-officio voting member of the board. In addition, the board has established an Executive Committee comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, one Director-at-Large and the President. These positions are appointed by the board on an annual basis.

On January 1, 2014 new rules for membership and governance came into effect. The changes have two key objectives:

- Strengthen the Alliance by extending voting privileges to all categories of members, thus improving the level of engagement;
- Broaden involvement in SWEA's governance processes by expanding the size of the board of directors and ensuring all municipal members are guaranteed a seat on that board.

As a result, the new rules now allow two categories of voting members — Municipal Members and Non-Municipal Members. Each category is allowed a single vote during annual and special general meetings. In addition, the SWEA board is expanded to 30 directors from the previous 11. Each Municipal Member is guaranteed a seat on Board.

Board Meetings

Since the new Board is larger than the former Board, it will meet less frequently and will provide more of a strategic oversight role. The full Board will meet in person four times a year. The dates for 2014 are:

- Thursday, March 14 at 10 a.m.
- Wednesday, June 11 at 10 a.m.
- Thursday, September 11 at 10 a.m.
- Thursday, December 4 at 10 a.m.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is chosen from the Board of Directors and has responsibilities delegated to it by the Board in respect of the management and direction of the affairs of the Corporation, except such acts as must, pursuant to the Act or the By-laws, be performed by the Board itself.

The Executive Committee functions as a management committee and meets monthly, via teleconference, on the Second Thursday of every month at 11 a.m., with the exception of those months when the Board of Directors meets, as follows:

- Thursday, January 9 – 11 am Teleconference

- Thursday, February 12 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, April 10 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, May 8 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, July 10 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, August 14 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, October 9 – 11 am Teleconference
- Thursday, November 13 – 10 am to 2 pm In Person

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology Considerations

Lance Thurston, the County Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), has served as the Grey County representative on the SWEA Board for the last two years. His term of appointment was extended at the recent SWEA AGM on June 11, 2014 for a further two year term. Mr. Thurston was also appointed as the Director-at-Large of the Executive Committee.

In light of Mr. Thurston's recently announced resignation as CAO for the county effective August 5th, 2014, County Council must now decide on a replacement for its representative on the SWEA Board. County Council may choose any person from the county as its Authorized Representative. The representative may be a member of county council, a member of staff or a member of the public.

The role of Authorized Representative has nurtured a strong direct and beneficial working relationship between SWEA and the Grey County organization, particularly in the areas of economic development, regional transportation and broadband internet connectivity projects. It has also served well in strengthening the working relationship between SWEA, the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) and its CAO group, given the active involvement of the Grey County CAO in that organization and on its regional broadband initiative.

While County Council has the latitude to appoint anyone from Grey County as its representative on the SWEA Board, given the nature of the issues being addressed by SWEA and the formative nature of the relationships between SWEA, the WOWC and the county, it is suggested that the position be filled by either a member of County Council or a staff position from within either the Planning Department or Tourism and Economic Development.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

The lack of coordination and collaboration among stakeholders can significantly hamper growth and effective use of resources in the region. There is a clear need for "single window" thinking that will more efficiently focus and harness the investments being

made in the region by all levels of government, by colleges and universities, including their research arms, and by the private sector. SWEA provides an opportunity for regional collaboration.

Membership in SWEA and working with other counties and municipalities, post-secondary educational institutions and private sector organizations in the region underpins virtually every strategic goal and objective set out in County Council's Strategic Plan. Participation on the Board of Directors is an excellent strategic investment of the County's time, energy and resources and enables the County to be part of and to influence regional decision-making.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lance Thurston, Chief Administrative Officer