

Report TR-TAPS-66-14

To: Chair Barfoot and Members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee
From: M.J. Kelly, Director of Transportation Services
Meeting Date: September 18, 2014
Subject: Winter Backup Operators
Status: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution TAPS107-14; Endorsed by County Council October 7, 2014 per Resolution CC132-14

Recommendation(s)

WHEREAS the Transportation Services Department relies on backup staff to supplement its winter maintenance operation;

AND WHEREAS currently backup staff is only compensated for the hours they are called into work;

AND WHEREAS to ensure that the backup staff continue working for Grey County as required during the winter, the Transportation Services Department is recommending providing a minimum of eight working hours a week for the eligible backup staff;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report TR-TAPS-66-14 regarding the winter backup staff be received;

AND THAT the Transportation Services backup staff within CUPE Local 1530 be guaranteed a minimum of eight hours per week during the winter season provided the staff is available for call-outs twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Background

Grey County Transportation Services Department employs full time permanent, seasonal, and backup operators who are assigned to patrol and operate equipment during the winter season.

Full time permanent and seasonal staff are assigned weekly specific shifts. During the 2014/2015 winter season shifts will be 40 hours per week. When additional staff is required for weekend shifts, afternoon shifts or to fill in for absent employees, backup staff is called into work. Backup staff receives the hourly payment for only the hours that they are called into work, and they are required to respond twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Backup staff receives overtime only after they have worked forty-four hours in a work week.

The Transportation Services Department invests time and resources to train the backup staff and wishes to maintain their continuous employment.

Backup staff is very important to Grey County's winter operations to ensure safe roads that meet the required level of service. However, some of the backup staff is very concerned that they have no guaranteed income each week and seek other employment.

The Transportation Services Department appreciates the work the backup staff is undertaking and wishes to ensure they are treated fairly.

In the spring of 2014 the Canadian Union of Public Employees and its Local 1530 and Grey County entered into an agreement (Minutes of Settlement) that will ensure the backup staff will receive a fair number of hours of work.

When favorable weather is being experienced there can be weeks when backup staff does not receive many, if any hours.

To ensure the backup staff will continue working for Grey County during the winter, it is recommended that backup staff receive a minimum of eight hours of work every week provided they are available to work twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. The eight hours of work could be spread over several days when additional resources are required. Some of the backup staff work for other employers and are only on call for certain periods of time. These individuals would not obtain the guaranteed eight hours of work per week.

The winter operation will require approximately ten backup staff.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

The cost to provide eight hours of employment per week for each backup staff (including benefits) is approximately \$4,600; therefore, the total cost for the winter season for ten backup staff would be approximately \$46,000. However, it must be recognized that during the eight hours of work per week, backup staff will have productive assignments resulting in minimal, if any, additional cost to the County.

If this concept is supported by Grey County Council it will also need to be approved by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and its Local 1530.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Strategic Goal 6.4 - Develop and implement a strategy for ongoing attraction and retention of quality employees.

Respectfully submitted by,

M.J. Kelly
Director of Transportation Services