

Report CAOR-PCD-01-15

To: Chair Wright and Members of the Planning and Community Development Committee

From: Sharon Vokes, Acting CAO

Meeting Date: March 17, 2015

Subject: **Appointment to Southwest Information Fibre Technology (SWIFT) Steering Committee**

Status: Recommendation adopted by Committee, by appointing Warden Kevin Eccles per Resolution PCD44-15; Endorsed by County Council April 7, 2015 per Resolution CC55-15;

Recommendation

WHEREAS Grey County is supportive of the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus' (WOWC) initiative to implement fibre throughout Southwestern Ontario through the Southwest Information Technology Fibre (SWIFT) project;

AND WHEREAS the WOWC has determined that it is necessary to establish a Steering Committee for SWIFT;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT _____ is hereby appointed Grey County's representative to the SWIFT Steering Committee;

AND THAT this appointment is for the duration of the current Council.

Background

As Council is aware, the SWIFT project is continuing to gain momentum. Most counties in the region have committed funding to the project as have Stratford and Grey Bruce Health Services. The Region of Waterloo, Barrie and Orillia are considering funding as well.

The project has been spearheaded by the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus, with Grey County being the primary lead for this project at the staff level from its inception through Lance Thurston, former CAO, and Geoff Hogan, our Information Technology

Director, as technical lead. With Mr. Thurston's departure, staff lead on the project has been turned over to Sonya Pritchard, CAO of Dufferin County.

The project has now reached the point that a steering committee to provide first level political review of SWIFT project initiatives would be beneficial. Advocacy to all three levels of government is also critical to the project. While most of the municipal funding has been secured, for the project to succeed, federal and provincial funding is essential and the SWIFT Steering Committee will be instrumental in this regard.

The creation of the SWIFT Steering Committee will create champions in every county which will hopefully take some pressure off of Mr. Hogan who has been spending a great deal of time speaking to different councils.

The appointment is for four years with the majority of meetings being via teleconference, with one to two physical meetings per year.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

There are no legal or information technology considerations related to the report. The development of the SWIFT Steering Committee will lead to more local champions in each county which will hopefully alleviate the workload that Mr. Hogan is currently under with respect to the SWIFT project. There will be some minor financial implications within the Council budget for the per diems and mileage required for a couple of meetings each year. This will be accommodated within the current budget.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Access to reliable high speed connection is linked to all of council's strategic goals as technology is woven into the fabric of everything the County does. Specifically, this initiative links to Goal 4.5 of championing a broadband initiative for Southwestern Ontario.

Attachments

Terms of Reference of SWIFT Steering Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Sharon Vokes
Acting CAO and Clerk

SWIFT Steering Committee

Mandate: To provide first level political review of SWIFT project initiatives, to disseminate information about the project.

Membership: One political representative from each WOWC member municipality (15) to participate for the term of Council.

Chair/Vice-Chair: To be selected from the membership. To act as spokespersons at events/meetings. To sit on the SWIFT Advisory committee of stakeholders as Chair/Vice Chair.

Meetings: Monthly usually via teleconference for 1-2 hours. Expect approx. 1-2 in person meetings per year.

Remuneration: None.

Overview of Committee Member Responsibilities

- To gain a comprehensive understanding of the project
- To review project updates and initiatives
- To provide regular updates to County/Regional Councils on the status of the project
- To advocate (with the Warden) for the project to local provincial and federal government representatives
- To disseminate information about the project to local stakeholders
- To provide feedback to the Steering Committee concerning local issues related to the project