

Report to Governance Working Group

To: Chair and Members
Governance Working Group
From: Michael Schulthess
Subject: Council Members' Expense Account Policy – Further Updates
Date: November 27, 2023

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk, the Governance Working Group provide direction for final updates to the Council Members' Expense Account Policy to be considered by the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee.

Executive Summary

The attached policy markup demonstrates the current status of various 2023 update considerations as well as minor additional considerations.

This report summarizes the considerations to-date this year and seeks final direction to bring forward a by-law to enact the policy changes.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

[Governance Working Group – July 27, 2023](#)

[Governance Working Group – November 6, 2023](#)

1.2 Summary of Changes and Considerations in 2023

The Governance Working Group has reviewed and made various recommendations through 2023 with respect to the Council Members' Expense Account Policy (the Policy). These considerations are outlined in the attached mark up version of the Policy. This includes recent considerations to the monthly transportation allowance, that (at the time of drafting this report) have not yet been enacted by Municipal Council.

There have been changes proposed to some wording to provide both clarity and flexibility for Members' use of the annual allocation, as well as updates to specific amounts identified within the policy.

2.0 Additional Considerations

2.1 Proposed Additional Use

The attached draft Policy includes a new section 4.2 c) xii) permitted use of funds that is discretionary in nature. The intention of this section is to further allow the flexibility and choice of an individual Member to use the annual allocation in a means that is not necessarily explicitly provided for, without the requirement to seek a specific exemption through the Corporate Services Committee (and Council). It is important to note that while this provision would provide more flexibility, it is not intended to be used for any expense that is explicitly excluded elsewhere in the policy.

2.2 Additional Housekeeping Amendments

Additional clarity is proposed in section 4.2 c) ix) related to the transportation expenses to simplify the description. It is proposed to remove the 2015 references which are no longer relevant to the use of the policy.

The removal of “on the required form” in part 4.2 d) of the Policy is also suggested as a housekeeping amendment. The form is rarely used, and when an approval is required through the Corporate Services Committee (CSC), Members have chosen to personally draft correspondence as an alternative that provides improved opportunity to present information for the committee’s consideration. In addition, the provision of the proposed new part 4.2 c) xii), is expected to lessen the need to request exemptions through the CSC.

Conclusion

Throughout this calendar year, Council has provided various direction to update the Council Members’ Expense Account Policy. This report seeks to conclude the review through direction to formalize all the recommendations with a by-law to enact Policy updates.

Recommended by: **Michael Schulthess, City Clerk**

Council Members' Expense Account Policy

Policy Name: Council Members' Expense Account Policy

Legislative History: Adopted September 19, 2017 (By-law No. CPOL.-228-480); Amended July 24, 2018 (By-law No. CPOL.-228(a)-427); Amended November 15, 2022 (By-law No. CPOL.-228(b)-233); Amended August 30, 2023 (Council Resolution 2.1/21/SPPC).

Last Review Date:

Service Area Lead: City Clerk

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy establishes the annual budget allocation to individual Council Members to support them in performing their diverse roles and representing their constituents, including the associated conditions for use of the budget allocation.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Not applicable.

3. Applicability

- 3.1 This policy shall apply to all Council Members, excluding the Mayor.

4. The Policy

4.1 Annual Budget Allocation

An annual sum of \$15,000.00 shall be allocated to each Council Member.

4.2 Conditions for Use of the Annual Budget Allocation

- a) This policy does not apply to:
- i) the Head of Council;
 - ii) any travel-related expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement under the Council Policy related to Travel and Business Expenses;
 - iii) travel expenses incurred by any Member of Council who has been nominated by the Municipal Council to represent it as a member of a committee or of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities or the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; it being noted that the latter expenses will be subject to Council approval of a source of financing;
 - iv) elected officials' salaries and related payroll costs;
 - v) expenses related to telephone, mobile devices and computers issued by the Corporation; noting that the standards for the aforementioned equipment are established by the City Clerk in consultation with Information Technology Services and are reflected in the Issuance of Computer Equipment to Council Members Policy;
 - vi) City of London business cards, letterhead and envelopes;
 - vii) a limited general supply of pens, pencils, erasers, highlighters, markers, scribble pads, message pads, post-it notes, paperclips, tape, staples, etc.;
 - viii) expenses for goods or services of a personal nature;
 - ix) election-related expenses, including expenses incurred to produce or distribute campaign literature or materials, in accordance with the Travel and Business Expenses Policy;
 - x) expenses incurred by delegates who the Mayor may, from time to time and at their discretion, request to attend meetings with federal, provincial or municipal organizations, or of the Mayors and Regional Chairs of

Ontario (MARCO) and the Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) on the Mayor's behalf;

- xi) any donations or grants as these items are covered under the City of London Municipal Granting program;
 - xii) registration costs for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and/or Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual **general** conference(s); it being noted that any related expenses would be eligible for reimbursement from the individual expense account; and,
 - xiii) one annual ward-wide mail out, including printing and distribution by Canada Post;
- b) The annual allocation shall be subject to annual Budget approval;
- c) The allocated sum may be used by Members of Council for any of the following purposes:
- i) any conference, seminar or workshop having a direct relationship to municipal concerns or interests; such expenses to be in accordance with the Travel and Business Expenses Policy;
 - ii) educational courses which would assist the elected official in the completion of their Council-related duties and responsibilities;
 - iii) gifts and souvenirs for protocol and City of London promotional purposes, specific sponsorship or merchandise contributions ward events (such as City merchandise or equipment rental) up to a maximum value of \$1,200.00 annually; it being noted that donations and grants (funding) is excluded as per part a) xi), above;
 - iv) the expenses of a spouse or companion when claiming business hosting expenses, at the discretion of the elected official, when such an expense is considered to be necessary for the advancement of the interests of the City and is in accordance with the Travel and Business Expenses Policy;
 - v) office and computer equipment, furniture and supplies exceeding corporate issue, subject to the following conditions:
 - A) purchases of single items exceeding **\$900.00** ~~\$750.00~~ (excluding HST) in value will require the pre-approval of the Expense Review Officer (or designate) and it must be demonstrated that such purchases are necessary in order to effectively represent and serve the constituents;
 - B) purchases of single items exceeding **\$900** ~~\$750.00~~ (excluding HST) in value will be returned to the City Clerk upon the completion of the term to determine appropriate Corporate reuse or redistribution, should the Council Member not be returning for an additional term;
 - C) notwithstanding part B), above, out-going Member of Council may purchase a piece of equipment, originally purchased with "City" funds, using personal funds payable to the City, at present-market value;
 - D) purchases of single items exceeding **\$900.00** ~~\$750.00~~ (excluding HST) in value in the final year of the term will require the submission of a request for approval to the Corporate Services Committee on an exception basis, and will remain subject to all conditions described above;
 - vi) advertising, in the manner deemed appropriate by the Member to extend greetings up to a maximum value of **\$1,200.00** ~~\$1,000.00~~ annually;
 - vii) expenses related to ward matters and the operation of a "ward office", including such expenses as: neighbourhood or constituent meetings,

notices, printing, and other engagement opportunities deemed appropriate by the Member;

- viii) expenses related to the hosting of educational forums related to the business of the Municipal Council, for the benefit of the public (e.g., Speaker's fees and travel expenses, venue rental for the forum, etc.);
- ix) transportation expenses for business-related travel within the City of London, to be paid by one of the following means at the discretion of individual Members of Council ~~for the balance of 2015 (November and December)~~, and for each ~~entire~~ fiscal year, **as applicable**:
 - A) a monthly transportation allowance in the amount of up to **\$177.00** ~~\$150.00~~ maximum; OR
 - B) a per kilometer rate, based upon submission and approval of a "Corporate Car Allowance Statement" claim form, which provides for both parking and kilometre usage;
- x) contracting of temporary, part time office assistants subject to the following conditions:
 - Members of Council will be responsible for the contracting and supervision of office assistants who will be under a purchase of service agreement with the Council Member;
 - Members of Council shall arrange for their assistants to submit an invoice for work performed at the agreed upon rate. All invoices will be approved by the contracting Council Member prior to submission to the City Treasurer for payment. All payments will be subject to the availability of funding in the Council Member's Expense Account;
 - temporary office assistants contracted by Members of Council will not be provided with access to the City Hall computer system, but could be provided with access to any offsite service provided by an outside service provider, at the discretion of the Council Member;
 - office assistants working for Members of Council will be provided keys and security card access from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, to the office of the Council Member for which they are providing services; and,
 - the Code of Conduct policy for Members of Council will be followed in supervising these assistants including the protection of confidential information.
- xi) community event ticket purchases, for the individual Members of Council;
- xii) discretionary expenses of the individual Member that may not be explicitly provided for in subsections i) to xi) above, up to a maximum value of \$3,000.00 annually.**
- d) for expenses not included in (c), above, Members of Council may, at their discretion, submit a request, ~~on the required form~~, through the Corporate Services Committee for approval of an expense, on an exception basis;
- e) no goods or services shall be purchased in excess of what the Council Members require to complete their term of office, and all expense claims will require the submission of original, detailed receipts and clear explanation of the City/Ward-related purpose;
- f) the City Treasurer will provide an annual report to the Municipal Council detailing elected official remuneration and all expenses incurred against each elected official's expense account, such report to be prepared on or before March 31st of each calendar year;

- g) all elected official expense information is considered to be public information, with the exception of any detail that is subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, or any other relevant legislation, and shall be posted by the City Clerk, or designate, on the City of London website, on a quarterly basis;
- h) all eligible claim receipts shall be submitted for processing within **60 (sixty)** ~~45 (forty-five)~~ days from the date the expense occurred, in order to be considered for reimbursement.