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CONSULTING LTD.



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# Proposal

Provide strategic advice for Council and Senior staff in Central Elgin to assist in defining staff/Council practices.

**SUBMITTED BY TIM L. DOBBIE CONSULTING LTD.**

# INTRODUCTION

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As a result of the most recent municipal election, residents of Central Elgin voted for 7 new members of Council. Having an entire new Council will likely mean that there will be changes in the day-to-day relationship between Council and the senior staff. While staff have provided each member of the new Council with orientation regarding their new roles as members of Council, each member of Council will take some time to become accustomed to the workings of municipal government.

We believe that the single most important thing in operating in a municipality in Ontario is to establish an effective relationship between members of Council and senior staff. This proposal presented to Central Elgin is intended to provide an opportunity for both Council and senior staff to establish that new relationship early in the new Council's term. Tim Dobbie has been successful in working with councils and senior staff teams in municipalities around Ontario. We believe that having a facilitator to guide the discussions between the new Council and senior staff is an effective way to us to start establishing a new Council-staff relationship.

## CONSULTING TEAM

### **Tim Dobbie**

Tim has had a 34-year career in working for a municipality in Ontario mainly Burlington where he has carried out 7 different jobs as a member of the senior staff of that municipality including being Burlington's City Manager for his last 12½ years. Tim is the senior consultant in his own consulting firm working with municipalities across Ontario in a few areas including staff Council relationships. Tim's more detailed CV is attached to this proposal.

### **Laurie-Anne Poole**

Laurie-Anne aids the consulting firm specializing in one-on-one interviews with Council and staff and also has significant experience in administrative issues.

## PROPOSED WORK PLAN

### PART 1:

The first part of the work plan would be that each member of Council would be interviewed by the consultants in a confidential meeting discussing each Councillor's areas of concern regarding their roles as council members in Central Elgin. The way the interviews are undertaken are completely confidential and under no circumstances will any member of Council ever be quoted, with the entire interview remaining confidential. The consultants will summarize the positions that are provided by Council members and will only develop a list of issues that has support of more than one member of Council. In other words, the only items that would be reported on to Council and the senior staff would be provided in a format such as "the majority of Council members feel that ..... ". The interviews with the consultants will be arranged at a time that is convenient to each member of Council. The consultant will provide an interview guide to each member of Council prior to the interview just indicating the type of questions that the consultants will ask.

### PART 2:

This part of the work plan is to interview the senior staff of Central Elgin as well as any staff who will regularly be making presentations to Council throughout the coming year. The interviews with senior staff and other staff are done in the same way as described for the members of Council including the confidentiality and the way in which the outcome of the meetings might be reported.

### PART 3:

The last portion of the work plan would be to hold a workshop with members of Council and the senior staff who had been interviewed as part of this process to go through what is been provided as summary results of the positions of Council and senior staff and would assist both groups in starting to understand what most municipalities in Ontario use when it comes to getting a common understanding of the role of Council and the role of staff. The consultants have done this type of workshop many times in the past and have been quite successful in developing a protocol that will allow both Council and the senior team of staff to move forward all for the betterment of the municipality.

During the workshop we will deal with all issues raised during the interviews with the Council and senior staff. In other municipalities, the range of issues covered in this type of a review would include such things as:

- Scheduling the major issues that the Council would deal with in the 1st year of their term as well as the last 3 years of the term.
- The process and timing for having the new Council develop a strategic plan.
- Communications protocols between Council and staff.
- Possible amendments to the administrative bylaw to facilitate changes required by Council

A very preliminary review of issues raised by candidates for Central Elgin Council in the recent election would suggest the new Council have the following possible issues.

- The level of municipal taxation in Central Elgin appears high.
- Transparency of municipal information and level of communication with citizens needs improvement.
- Affordability of water and sewer rates may be an issue.
- Dealing with growth in Central Elgin being clear about the costs, benefits and challenges of this work
- Supporting the senior community with services designed for seniors to provide opportunities for aging in place.
- Parking issues in Port Stanley.
- Tourism and its impact.
- Climate change and environmental issues.
- Municipal boundary issues between Central Elgin and St. Thomas

Throughout this project Tim Dobbie will be available to speak to members of Council and members of the senior team regarding the various issues that have been raised by both groups. The purpose of this will be to help facilitate reaching consensus on every issue being raised as we work towards the development of a comprehensive Council staff relationship protocol.

We believe that the work as scheduled above will provide Central Elgin Council and senior staff with a good group understanding on the role of Council and the role of staff.

## CONSULTING FEES:

We estimate that the fees for this three-part project would be as follows

Consultant	Hours	Per hour fee	Total
Tim Dobbie	40	\$250	\$10,000
Laurie-Anne Poole	30	\$125	\$ 3,750
Disbursements			\$ 1,000
			<b>\$14,750</b>

\*Plus HST

Respectfully submitted

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