



**The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

C O U N C I L R E P O R T

April 7, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council
AUTHOR: Tom Vair, CAO
DEPARTMENT: Chief Administrative Officer
RE: Hiring of Senior Staff Policy Amendment

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to approve amendments to the current, “Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Staff” policy, contained in By-law 2004-234.

Background

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has a Council-approved policy, “Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Staff” which was last revised and approved in August, 2005 (Attachment A – 1-9 Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Staff).

This policy covers both the hiring process for the CAO position as well as a number of named senior staff positions. A number of the named senior staff positions no longer exist in the organization and staff recommend an update to this policy to reflect governance and management best practices.

Given a pending vacancy for the City Solicitor position (a report appears elsewhere on the Council Agenda on this matter), staff are recommending the following:

- Amend the current policy on senior staff hiring to leave its application to the CAO position only;
- Approve a revised “Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Staff” (Attachment B to this report – Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Staff 2025) to become Schedule “E” to by-law 2004-234;
- Approve the revised Schedule “D” which is the Guideline on the Summer Student Hiring Policy, which was updated in 2018, but for which the by-law was not amended (Attachment C – 2025-58 Schedule D Summer Student Hiring Policy);
- Staff will return at a future Council meeting with an updated, new policy outlining the process for “CAO Recruitment and Selection”.

Hiring of Senior Staff Policy Amendment

April 7, 2025

Page 2.

Following this process will enable staff to recruit the City Solicitor position under the new hiring policy and establish the revised policy for future senior staff positions.

Analysis

Reviewing best practices among municipalities, a common practice is that Council is involved with selecting the CAO position but the hiring of senior staff remains with the CAO and staff. Of the other cities in Northern Ontario, senior staff hires are managed by the CAO and do not involve Council members in the hiring process (note, Sudbury indicated it did have a practice of two councillors sitting in on a round of interviews for General Manager positions).

The *Municipal Act* outlines the role of the Chief Administrative Officer. Section 229 states that a municipality, “may appoint a chief administrative officer who shall be responsible for,

(a) exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality; and

(b) performing such other duties as are assigned by the municipality. 2001, c. 25, s. 229.”

The City CAO by-law 2007-48, (amended by by-law 2021-209), details the following regarding personnel administration:

Section 2 (o) recommend to the Council the appointment, employment, suspension or dismissal of any department head;

(p) subject to any overriding directive by Council and in accordance with the City's Hiring and Selection policies, to appoint or employ any civic employee who is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement; further to suspend or dismiss any such employee subject to the right of such employee to appeal to the Council any such suspension or dismissal;

The process proposed by staff would still see Council authorization to fill a Department Head position and other positions required by legislation. Council would also approve the final appointment of Department Head positions and those positions required by legislation (first discussed in Closed Session and then confirmed in a Regular Council meeting). This will provide Council with an opportunity to confirm that the proper hiring process was undertaken as per policy and ask any questions of staff.

The update to the hiring policy aligns with best practices in municipal governance and recruiting processes and is recommended by staff for approval.

Hiring of Senior Staff Policy Amendment

April 7, 2025

Page 3.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to this change in the hiring policy.

Strategic Plan / Policy Impact / Climate Impact

The hiring policy for senior staff is an operational matter not articulated in the corporate Strategic Plan.

Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

The relevant By-law 2025-58 is listed under item 12 of the Agenda and will be read with all by-laws under that item.

Respectfully submitted,

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