



## **Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting**

**Date of Meeting:** September 4, 2018

**Report Number:** SRCFS.18.042

**Department:** Corporate and Financial Services  
**Divisions:** Office of the Clerk  
Financial Services

**Subject:** Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council, and amendments to the Member of Council Expense Policy

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### **Purpose:**

To recommend the approval of a Communication and Mailing Policy for Members of Council, as well as amendments to the Members of Council Expense Policy.

### **Recommendation(s):**

- a) That staff report SRCFS.18.042 be received.
- b) That the Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council, attached as Attachment A to Staff Report SRCFS.18.042, be approved.
- c) That the amended Member of Council Expense Policy, attached as Attachment B to Staff Report SRCFS.18.042, be approved.

### **Contact Person:**

Stephen M.A. Huycke, Director, Legislative Services/Town Clerk, extension 2529

David Dexter, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer, extension 2484

### **Report Approval:**

**Submitted by:** Mary-Anne Dempster, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services

**Approved by:** Neil Garbe, Chief Administrative Officer

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), Town Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and Chief Administrative Officer. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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### **Background:**

On May 12, 2014, Council adopted the following resolution:

“That SRCFS.14.002 regarding Council Mailings be received and referred back to staff to review a revised policy that addresses the comments of Council that include permitting two (2) newsletters each year per member along with a funding source for printing and distribution of newsletters within members of Council constituency budgets.”

On February 9, 2015, Council adopted the following resolution:

“That staff be directed to review the Council Code of Conduct, Member of Council Expense Policy and the draft Council Mailing Policy and report back with the results of the review for consideration by Council by the end of April, 2015.”

Council has previously been advised that the review of the Member of Council Expense Policy and the draft Council Mailing Policy would be completed in conjunction with the review of the Council Code of Conduct by the Town’s new Integrity Commissioner. Richmond Hill’s new Integrity Commissioner, ADR Chambers Inc., as represented by Deborah Anschell, is expected to recommend the adoption of a revised Code of Conduct on September 4, 2018.

### **Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council**

Staff recommend that Council adopt the proposed Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council (Attachment A). The proposed policy is consistent with current Town practices, and is based on the following principles:

1. Council and its’ Members are committed to accountability and transparency in the use of Richmond Hill Resources.
2. Members are elected or appointed to represent the interests of constituents on Council and communication with constituents is an important function of a Member’s mandate.
3. Members are committed to showing respect to other Members, Council, Staff and the public.
4. Members are committed to showing respect for the decisions of Council, even if the Member disagrees with the decision.
5. Members are committed to honesty and integrity in any information communicated.

The proposed policy establishes clear rules for a Members of Council’s use of printed newsletters, mass mailings and the use of digital communication tools (when directed to a large group of constituents only). This policy is not related to Members communication with other Members, staff or individual constituents. Communications with other

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Members, staff or individual constituents are matters which generally fall under Code of Conduct rules related to Council, Staff and Public Relations.

The proposed rules for newsletters are generally consistent with the “2006 Procedures for Member of Council Newsletter Preparation.” Under the proposed rules, Members are permitted to print and distribute two newsletters each calendar year, except in an election year a Member is only permitted to print and distribute one newsletter. Consistent with current practice, the policy proposes that the cost of printing a newsletter be charged to a Constituency Budget, with a discount equal to the Town’s cost of printing the newsletter in Black & White. The cost of distribution of a newsletter (i.e. the postage) will continue to be charged to the corporate postage accounts. Members may only distribute a newsletter to the Member’s Ward, with the exception of the Mayor and the Regional and Local Councillors who may distribute Town wide.

In addition to Newsletters, the proposed policy establishes rules for other mass mailings and the use of digital communication tools. In both cases, the expectations in the proposed policy are the same as current Town practice.

### **Members of Council Expense Policy**

From the past and recent term of Council it was identified the need to update the Member of Council Expense Policy to include provisions for eligible newsletters and mass mailing expenses. Staff have created a separate policy for Communications and Mailings (as part of this report). However, staff identified other areas of the Member of Council Expense Policy that require update, as summarized below:

- Added eligible educational and training expenses that relate to a Member of Council’s duties;
- Clarified eligible and non-eligible expenses in relation to Resident’s Meetings; and Formalized allowable Constituency Budgets in Election years

The updated draft policy is provided as Attachment “B” to the report.

### **Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:**

There are no financial or staffing implications related to the approval of the Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council, and amendments to the Member of Council Expense Policy. Expenses related to Newsletters, mass mailing and the use of digital communication tools, as well as other Member of Council expenses, are included in the Council approved Constituency Budgets and Corporate Postage Budgets.

### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan:**

The adoption of a Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council is consistent with the Strategic Plan goals of Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill and Wise Management of Resources in Richmond Hill.

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The adoption of an amended Member of Council Expense Policy, is consistent with the Strategic Plan goal of Wise Management of Resources.

### **Conclusion:**

Staff recommend the approval of a Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council, as well as amendments to the Member of Council Expense Policy, which are consistent with current Town practice.

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call contact person listed in this document.

- Attachment A – proposed Communication & Mailing Policy for Members of Council
- Attachment B – revised Members of Council Expense Policy

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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCFS 18.042 - Communication and Mailing Policy and Member of Council Expense Policy.docx
Attachments:	- SRCFS 18.042 - Attachment A - Communication and Mailing Policy for Members of Council.docx - SRCFS 18 042 - Attachment A - Communication and Mailing Policy for Members of Council.docx - SRCFS.18.042 - Attachment B - revised Member of Council Expense Policy.docx
Final Approval Date:	Aug 23, 2018

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**David Dexter - Aug 21, 2018 - 3:16 PM**

**MaryAnne Dempster - Aug 22, 2018 - 8:41 AM**

**Neil Garbe - Aug 23, 2018 - 9:40 AM**