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Council-In-Committee Meeting – September 09, 2025

Subject: Revised Council Remuneration 2026 - 2030
Report Number: CS-25-113
Division: Corporate Services
Department: Legislative Services
Ward: All Wards
Purpose: For Decision

Recommendation(s):

That Council receive report numbered CS-25-113, Revised Council Remuneration as information ; and

That Council select the level of compensation to be implemented for the incoming Council taking office in 2026 through 2030; or

That Council defer the decision and the establishment of remuneration for the Council term 2026 2030 to the incoming elected Council;

Further, that should Council determine the level of compensation for the upcoming term, that staff be directed to establish the rates accordingly and provide to the Mayor for inclusion in subsequent budgets.

Executive Summary:

Purpose of the Report: To provide Council with additional information and options for consideration, when establishing the compensation level for the next term of Council.

Background and Context: Council was presented with a detailed report in May for consideration of setting the compensation level for the 2026-2030 term of Council. At that time, Council requested that staff consider additional information and options and bring back a subsequent report for Council’s consideration. At the May meeting, a number of suggestions were provided to staff by individual council members as areas to consider. Those suggestions have been reviewed and have been incorporated where practical in this updated report.

Key Findings and Analysis: There is no provincial guidance provided for Municipal Councils to establish their rate of pay.

As noted, all municipalities reviewed establish council remuneration rates by some type of arbitrary determination. While some utilize citizen committees in establishing rates, others use base compensation, with additional monies tied to committee/board obligations and work.

All municipalities reviewed use a review of comparator municipalities that are deemed similar to themselves in establishing compensation levels for elected officials.

Options: Staff have provided four options for Councils consideration:

1. Use a larger comparator group and consider what level as a percentile they wish to fall under.
2. Continue with the current level of compensation, status quo, and provide additional compensation for committee work.
3. Using the comparator group, establish a rate based on compensation relative to the number of constituents being governed.
4. Base compensation as a ratio to that of a Member of Provincial Parliament.

Conclusions: Staff have provided additional information and options for Council's consideration, based on the guidance it received from the meeting discussion in May 2025.

There is no universal formula or guideline provided to municipalities for establishing the remuneration levels for its elected officials.

Council itself is in the best position to make the determination of what is fair compensation for the level of work and effort that is required to be a municipal Council member in Norfolk County.

Regardless of the approach or methodology, it does indeed come down to an arbitrary decision to establish the level of pay for Council.

A number of options have been provided to assist Council in making its decision.

Council is not obligated to establish the rate of pay for the next term of Council; it has only been presented as a recommendation so that individuals seeking elected office in 2026 will have a clearer understanding of the compensation associated with providing this valued service to Norfolk County.

Recommendations: That Council determine the rate of compensation for the Council serving the term 2026 – 2030.

Or

That Council defer that decision to the incoming Council itself.

Financial Implications: Detailed information has been provided within the body of the report showing the various costings of options identified by staff. Please refer to the specific section of the report to fully review the financial implications of the various options.

Discussions:

Council in Committee, in May received Report CAO-25-053 on Council remuneration. Direction at that time was for the matter be referred back to staff for additional review and options for discussion and decision at a future meeting.

Individual Council members did offer suggestions on other methodologies for consideration in determining the compensation level for Council members in the next term of Council, 2026-2030.

Two of the suggestions included using a methodology based on a per capita calculation or utilizing the job evaluation system used in the determination of staff job ratings and salaries within the organization. As there is no established job evaluation tool to evaluate the role of elected officials and the current job evaluation tool used for unionized and non-unionized positions would not meet the same criteria for elected officials, staff did not move forward with this idea. Also, there was a suggestion of determining a base remuneration level, with additional payment with linkage to advisory committee and board participation. Subsequent to the meeting a Councillor provided the idea of using the Provincial remuneration for elected members of the Legislature as a means of establishing a rate of pay for Council itself. These have been further reviewed by staff and are included in the options below.

Staff also suggested and have gathered data from a slightly larger comparator group that meets the requirements of being a single-tier, similar population and delivering a similar suite of municipal services. That additional data has been included for this report as information to Council.

As noted in the previous report there is no set formula, or guidance provided to Municipalities in determining the rate of remuneration for Council. The Province through the Municipal Act has left the decision in the hands of each Council.

Council was also advised that some municipalities, like Brantford and Guelph have used Citizen committees to review and propose remuneration levels for the Council. Although this is an option, with the timing of the next municipal election use of a committee may be better utilized next term to determine the following term of Council.

The one consistent tool used by municipalities, in staff's research, has been to look to comparator groups and use those comparators as benchmarks in determination of their own rates.

One item that was discussed also was the issue around what is the role of Council, full or part time. Staff would advise that under law there is no employer/employee relationship

between the Municipality and its elected officials. There are no pre-determined hours of work for an elected official and their role cannot be defined as full-time or part-time but instead it is better described as a continual role of governance.

This then requires elected officials to participate in special projects, fulfill committee appointment responsibilities, and be available to their constituents upon demand. Such duties require that Members of Council travel throughout their wards, the municipality, and even the province. The reality is that the role is what it is, and individual members determine themselves what is required to fulfill their electoral responsibilities to their constituents.

Considering this, the concept of using a tool designed by provincial legislation for pay equity of employees would not be applicable in determining the level of remuneration of elected officials. Staff therefore did not pursue this avenue.

Essentially, staff determined the following options for Council's consideration and direction.

Options:

1. Broaden the Comparator group and select the preferred level of compensation based on either the 50th, 60th or 65th percentile of comparator group.
2. Status Quo Compensation at current levels plus an additional amount for committee appointments and participation in those committees.
3. Compensation based on a calculation of \$/1000 population based on the median of the expanded comparator group.
4. Base the compensation on the compensation of Ontario MPP's. MPP remuneration is now based on 75 percent of a Federal MP's remuneration. Ontario MPP's 2025 compensation was increased to \$157,250.

The suggestion by staff is that the Mayor's remuneration be set at 75 percent of MPP level, being \$117,937.50. With Councillors' remuneration being compensated at either 50 percent of the Mayor's compensation, or an appropriate percentage of an MPP's compensation.

Various costs are provided for Council information and direction.

Below Council will see a number of options for consideration as well as the financial impacts of each option relative to the others. Staff believe that the options that have been presented within this report are reasonable and subsequently justifiable for establishing the rate of pay for the incoming council in 2026.

2024 council compensation levels as provided in council remuneration reports and most recent census data for populations were compiled for comparison of single tier municipalities shown below.

Table 1: Council Compensation Summary

Council Remuneration 2024 Compensation Levels	Mayor Salary	Councillor Salary	Total Cllrs	Population (2021)	Pop/ Cllr	Mayor Pay/ 1k Pop	Cllr Pay/ 1k Pop
Guelph	\$160,138	\$49,822	12	143,740	11,978	\$1,114	\$4,159
Kingston	\$142,598	\$50,020	12	132,485	11,040	\$1,076	\$4,531
Brantford	\$128,779	\$36,759	10	104,688	10,469	\$1,230	\$3,511
Chatham-Kent	\$137,475	\$43,451	17	103,988	6,117	\$1,322	\$7,103
Kawartha Lakes	\$120,020	\$51,588	8	79,247	9,906	\$1,515	\$5,208
Haldimand County	\$116,672	\$63,026	6	49,216	8,203	\$2,371	\$7,684
Cornwall	\$79,733	\$31,377	10	47,845	4,785	\$1,666	\$6,558
Timmins	\$108,893	\$31,375	8	41,145	5,143	\$2,647	\$6,100
Brant County	\$106,824	\$38,681	10	39,474	3,947	\$2,706	\$9,799
Prince Edward County	\$57,856	\$28,928	13	25,704	1,977	\$2,251	\$14,631
Average	\$115,899	\$42,503			7,357	\$1,790	\$6,928
50th Percentile	\$118,346	\$41,066			7,160	\$1,590	\$6,329
60th Percentile	\$123,524	\$45,999			8,884	\$1,900	\$6,776
65th Percentile	\$127,465	\$48,866			9,650	\$2,163	\$7,022
Norfolk County	\$93,139	\$40,830	8	67,490	8,436	\$1,380	\$4,840

Council is also aware that there is no provision that would bind any subsequent council on remuneration from a previous council.

Council will also note that there have been no indexing factors built into the options and the numbers presented. It may want to provide guidance on this matter.

Indexing the pay to 2025 levels and applying the potential rates would result in the following impacts relative to the 2025 Operating Budget.

Table 2: Potential Budget Impacts

Option Compensation Levels Compared to 2025 Operating Budget	Mayor Salary	Deputy Mayor Salary	Cllr Salary	Total M&C Budget	Budget Impact
2025 Budget	95,933	44,054	42,054	507,100	
Option 1 - Comparator Total Salaries					
(a) 50th Percentile	121,896	44,298	42,298	539,600	32,500
(b) 60th Percentile	127,229	49,379	47,379	593,300	86,200
(c) 65th Percentile	131,289	52,332	50,332	625,600	118,500
Option 2 - Stipends for Approved Committees¹					
(a) Status Quo, \$500/Committee	95,933	45,367	43,367	519,300	12,200
(b) Status Quo, \$1,000/Committee	95,933	46,679	44,679	531,600	24,500
(c) Comparator 50th%, \$500/Committee	121,896	45,611	43,611	551,800	44,700
(d) Comparator 50th%, \$1,000/Committee	121,896	46,923	44,923	564,100	57,000
Option 3 - Comparator Per Capita Salaries²					
(a) 50th Percentile	110,563	56,997	54,997	645,100	138,000
(b) 60th Percentile	132,094	60,881	58,881	706,500	199,400
(c) 65th Percentile	150,374	63,013	61,013	747,800	240,700
Option 4 - Relative to MPP Pay³					
(a) Mayor 75% of MPP Salary, Councillor 50% of Mayor Salary	118,013	61,006	59,006	691,300	184,200
(b) Mayor 75% of MPP Salary, Councillor 35% of MPP Salary	118,013	57,073	55,073	654,500	147,400
(c) Mayor 75% of MPP Salary, Councillor 30% of MPP Salary	118,013	49,205	47,205	580,900	73,800

¹ Stipends were averaged across all councillors for calculation purposes; actual total compensation would vary depending on attendance. Option 2 calculates based on an average of 10 meetings per committee.

² Per capita calculations use an average number of constituents per Councillor and would not fluctuate between different wards.

³ MPP pay is subject to cost-of-living increases April 1 each year. Should this option be chosen, in order to maintain relativity council may choose to follow suit with timing of cost-of-living increases.

Finance Comments:

Mayor and Council compensation established in report CAO-22-080 Mayor and Councillor Remuneration Effective January 1, 2023, approved economic increases in line with Non-Union staff that have been included in budgets for the current term of council. Any changes to this methodology would take effect at the beginning of the next term of council. There would be minimal impact in 2026 due to the timing of council terms. Any changes to compensation will be included in future Levy Operating Budgets when applicable, as the changes occur. As noted in Table 2 there is a wide range of potential impacts from \$12,200 up to \$240,700 depending on the option selected.

Interdepartmental Implications:

There are no direct or indirect implications on other departmental activities or budgets as a result of Council establishing rates of compensation for its members.

Consultation(s):

Finance, Human Resources and Legislative services worked jointly on the drafting of the report for consideration. SLT and the CAO were also provided with an opportunity for input.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

Serving Norfolk - ensuring a fiscally responsible organization with engaged employees who value excellent service

Attachment(s):

None

Approval:

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