



STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG

Corporate, Finance, and Legislative Standing Committee

Report to: Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors
From: Brent Larmer, Town Clerk, Director, Legislative Services
Standing Committee Date: October 9, 2025
Report Number: LS-2025-019
Council Meeting Date: October 29, 2025
Subject: **Town of Cobourg Council Remuneration 3rd Year of Term Review**

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1. Recommendation:

WHEREAS the Committee adopt the following recommendation and refer to Regular Council for final approval.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive the information report on Town of Cobourg Council Remuneration Review practices on a three (3) year review of Council Remuneration prior to a new Council Term; and

FURTHER THAT Council provide direction on any steps to be taken on Municipal Council Remuneration.

2. Executive Summary:

The purpose of this staff report is to provide Council with the previous Council's approach to the review of Municipal Council Remuneration, prior to the 2026-2030 Council Term of Office.

3. Background

Pursuant to Section 283 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* a municipality may pay any part of the remuneration and expenses of the members of any local board of the municipality and of the officers and employees of the local board.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 283 (2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, despite any Act, a municipality may only pay the expenses of the members of its council or of a local board of the municipality and of the officers and employees of the municipality or local board if the expenses are of those persons in their capacity as members, officers or employees and if,

- a) the expenses are actually incurred; or
- b) the expenses are, in lieu of the expenses actually incurred, a reasonable estimate, in the opinion of the council or local board, of the actual expenses that would be incurred.

By-law No.078-2015 being a By-law to provide for the paying of remuneration including expenses, insurance, and benefits to Members of Council and is referred to as the 'Council Remuneration By-law', establishes the policies for annual remuneration and expenses paid to members.

As part of the approved 2019 Council resolution, Council approved that a formal review of Council remuneration takes place in the third year of every Council's term of office by a method of Council's choosing. Council is now within the last months of its third year and entering into its fourth year. Therefore, Council will have to determine next steps on Council Remuneration. If Council wishes to make any changes to Council remuneration, past Town precedents has been to align remuneration changes with the start of a new term of Council. Thus, based on past practice, any changes to Council remuneration will be implemented for the 2026-2030 Term of Council, which will begin on November 15, 2026, unless otherwise directed by Council.

4. Discussion:

Council Remuneration is provided to elected officials in recognition of the valuable service they provide to the community and the complexity and importance of the issues they manage. Fair and competitive salaries also assist to attract and retain a diverse pool of citizens to public service.

In 2022, the previous Council directed staff to conduct a formal review of Council remuneration for the 2022-2026 Term and that the review include the engagement of a compensation specialist to be funded through the Tax Stabilization Reserve Fund and the 2022 Council Operating Budget to a maximum of \$5,000.

As a result of this resolution, the Human Resources Department, being responsible for managing the Municipal Staff Compensation review, engaged a Compensation Specialist to conduct a review of the Town of Cobourg Council Remuneration.

The primary objective of the 2022 Council Remuneration Study was to review current municipal comparator council remuneration (Base Pay only) and how it compares to the Town’s current by-law, gather data from the eleven (11) municipal comparators and apply a market assessment procedure similar to approaches that are conducted across Ontario municipalities when reviewing Municipal Council Remuneration.

Below is a table that was taken from the Consultants presentation to Council in 2022 on Market Observations for Cobourg Council and the selected Comparator Groups which were taken from the comparators used in the Service Delivery and Organizational Reviews approved by Council in 2021; Brighton, Port Hope, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Owen Sound, Kenora, Huntsville, Tillsonburg, Strathroy-Caradoc, Town of Essex.

Cobourg 2022 Council Remuneration Review –Base Pay								
Job Title	2022 Base Pay Annual	2022 MARKET SUMMARY - ANNUAL BASE PAY (_) = above market +_ % = below market						
		No. of Obs	Market P50		Market P55		Market P60	
			Median Annual	% Diff.	P55 Annual	% Diff.	P60 Annual	% Diff.
Mayor	\$45,412	11	\$45,379	(0.1%)	\$45,899	+1.1%	\$47,713	+5.1%
Deputy Mayor	\$31,082	10	\$27,889	(10.3%)	\$28,931	(6.9%)	\$29,543	(5.0%)
Councillor	\$25,963	11	\$20,893	(19.5%)	\$21,997	(15.3%)	\$23,132	(10.9%)

The 50th percentile salary, is the salary value that has fifty percent (50%) of the salaries lower than it and fifty percent (50%) of the salaries higher than that salary value i.e. “middle” of the salary values for that job. Council established the 50th percentile as the target market compensation for the Non-union employees and this same target market percentile was used in the Council members compensation review.

As a result of the review in 2022, the recommendation made was that no change be made to the base salaries for the Council members, that the annual salary adjustments for Council be administered using the same economic adjustment percent increase as approved for the Non-union Employee group and the market compensation reviews to be completed every four (4) years, using the same target market percentile. For consistency and efficiency, it was recommended that the same municipal comparators used for the Non-union employee compensation review, also be used for Council. Further, it was recommended that Council

compensation be reviewed prior to the end of the Council term, with any recommended changes being effective for the first year of the new Council term.

As a result of the review in 2022 Council approved the results and recommendations of the consultant outlined within the reference comparator table with one addition as follows:

- That effective November 15, 2022 to be equitable to all Council members who sit on many Cobourg committees and boards with no additional remuneration, Council members sitting on the Cobourg Police Services Board shall no longer receive additional remuneration; and
- FURTHER THAT compensation adjustments for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Members of Council continue to be maintained with annual CPI adjustments as a yearly increase to Council Remuneration effective July 1st each year as stated in the current provision of the Council Remuneration Bylaw; and
- **a formal review of Council remuneration takes place in the third year of the next term of Council by a method of Council's choosing to take effect for the next incoming Council Term.**

In 2024, Staff conducted a non-union compensation review for the Town of Cobourg and hired a consultant to look at comparator municipalities at what the market rates are. This review included a new list of comparators and recommended an adjustment to bring it to the 60th percentile of the comparator market group. In addition, the review approved regular adjustments by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) yearly to stay relevant and competitive.

The council remuneration review, which has been mandated by Council to be considered by Council in year three of a council term and take effect in the new Council term should not only review base salary of a member of council in comparator municipalities, but overall compensation, including base salary, allowances such as travel and car, bonuses, board and committee fees paid by the Town, and other forms of direct monetary remuneration. Once the full review has concluded, Council should replace the current 2015 by-law with a new updated version to be introduced to take effect November 15, 2026.

If Council provide direction to Staff on a full compensation review with comparators in addition to the comparator analysis on base salary, Staff could deliver a report to Council by the end of the year 2025.

5. Financial Impact and Budget

There are no financial implications related to this staff report. If there are adjustments made, they should be placed in the 2026 Budget.

6. Relationship to Council's Strategic Plan Priorities 2023 to 2027 and beyond:

Thriving Community

Service Excellence

Sustainability

7. Public Engagement:

Not applicable

8. Attachments:

None