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2006 CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The Finance and Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, August 4, 2006, from the Commissioner of Corporate Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The administrative operations be closed from Monday, December 25, 2006 to Monday, January 1, 2007 inclusive, with administrative operations reopening on Tuesday, January 2, 2007.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to advise Committee and Council of the plan to close administrative operations during the period Wednesday, December 27, 2006 to Friday, December 29, 2006.

3. BACKGROUND

Last year we successfully implemented a planned closing of the general administrative offices between Christmas and New Year's Day. The plan arose out of negotiations with our respective Unions in 2002 combined with the use of the corporate float holiday and use of employee banked vacation/lieu time. The impact on staff was extremely positive and in the last four (4) years the Employer has received acknowledgement of gratitude from many employees as well as from our Unions.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Over the Christmas holiday season there are three (3) statutory holidays and three (3) days available to be scheduled as work days – December 27, December 28, and 29. Our current collective agreements allow for a “corporate float day” in lieu of Remembrance Day, which could be observed during the 2006 Christmas Closure period. The “Corporate Float Day” would logically be observed on Wednesday, December 27. New Year's Day falls on a Monday this year, and the recommendation is to observe the holiday on that day. There are no organizations that we are aware of that are back dating it to the Friday before and resuming business on the Monday. Normal administrative operations would resume on Tuesday, January 2, 2007. (See Table 1)

Table 1 (Existing Situation)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24	25 <i>Statutory Holiday</i>	26 <i>Statutory Holiday</i>	27 <i>Corporate Float</i>	28	29	30
31	January 1 <i>Statutory Holiday</i>	2				

As illustrated in the above Table above there are two days remaining (Thursday December 28 and Friday December 29) which need addressing. The following outlines the Region's options:

Option 1: Open Administrative Offices for December 28 & 29

Local area municipalities were surveyed (see Attachment) in May and asked what their expected practice would be for the Christmas period. Responses indicated seven (7) would be closed; two (2) were unknown (although in the past have closed during this period) and one (1) indicated would be open. This Option would be a departure from past practice.

Option 2: Close offices for Christmas Holiday Season

**Additional Day in Lieu of Early Closures - December 24 & December 31
Staff to Use One (1) Vacation Day or Lieu for December 29**

Closing the Region, with the exception of 24/7 operations for the Christmas holiday season would be in keeping with past practice and with most of our local area municipalities. Although not a formal designated holiday, many of these organizations, including ourselves have observed early closures on Christmas Eve and New Years' Eve. Combining these two ½ days and giving an additional day in lieu and is an option. Several (six) of our comparator organizations indicated they had plans to that effect.

Option 3: Close offices for Christmas Holiday Season

Staff to Use Two (2) Vacation Days or Lieu for December 28 & 29

Closing the Region, with the exception of 24/7 operations for the Christmas holiday season would be in keeping with past practice most of our local area municipalities. Staff would be asked to use vacation or lieu time for the remaining two days. Several (5) of our local area municipalities indicated they had plans to that effect.

It is recommended that York Region adopt Option 2 on the basis of fairness to all staff and ease of administration. Many staff have not enjoyed the informal practice of early closing on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve days due to the nature of their work. The

combined ½ days model would require crediting 24/7 operations with a similar day and this will add some administrative complexities which we can cope with.
We have consulted with CUPE and ONA on this matter and they both support this option.

It is recognized that a number of our Regional services are essential and require staffing on a 24/7 basis. As in past years, essential services will be expected to continue uninterrupted for our residents. Details will be provided to all line managers from Human Resource Services to ensure that Regional HR policy, employment legislation and collective agreements are followed. In addition to essential services such as EMS, LTC, Transit and various Transportation & Works services, Court Services cannot close according to legislation.

We would propose to advertise in the local media and on our website of the closure of our administrative operations from Monday December 25, 2006 to Monday January 1, 2007, with administrative operations reopening on Tuesday, January 2, 2007.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no additional cost as the Christmas closure will incorporate statutory days, a corporate float day, and an employee's vacation/lieu time.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There is no local municipal impact. The proposed closure is consistent with practices in other municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

The closure during the Christmas period improves staff morale at minimal cost to the corporation while ensuring essential services are delivered to the residents of the York Region.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the September 7, 2006 Committee meeting.)