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ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS DURING 2008 CHRISTMAS SEASON

The Finance and Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, October 10, 2008, from the Commissioner of Corporate Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council receive this report for information.
2. This report be shared with the local municipalities.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Regional Council of the Region's hours of operation during the holiday period as it impacts on residents, taxpayers and all those individuals doing business with the Region.

3. BACKGROUND

We have closed non-essential administrative offices in past

The Region has closed its administrative offices over the last number of years during the Christmas holiday period using a variety of methods to address the time off for employees. The closure decision was based on several aspects; an assessment of impact on demand for services, practices of the local municipalities, how the statutory holidays fell and obligations under our Collective Agreements with unionized staff. The Region has always ensured that essential services were provided without disruption during this period.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

A holiday closure was considered

It was noted that the statutory holidays fell on Thursday, December 25 (Christmas Day) and Friday, December 26 (Boxing Day) in the first week of the holiday season and Thursday, January 1 (New Year's Day) in the second week.

Each permanent full time employee has one (1) “personal float day” and one (1) “corporate float day”. The Region had already negotiated with its unions to use the “corporate float day” for 2008 on Monday, June 30th. Typically if the “personal float” day can be combined with the “corporate float day” and used in conjunction with statutory holidays then it made some sense to close administrative operations in order to have a continuous period of closure. The additional day required to achieve this was in lieu of early closures on Christmas Eve day and New Year’s Eve day.

This does not seem to be the case to offer the same opportunities to us this year. Too many days would have to be granted to employees and it was felt this was not appropriate. A review of local municipal intentions was conducted and is attached.

Business as usual is best option

Consultations with our Unions have yielded interest in supporting the use of a corporate float day on January 2, 2009, but not a corporate administrative closure for the full week. Since there are three (3) scheduled working days each week and with union support of a “corporate float day” on January 2 it was deemed that an administrative closure was not feasible or required. In the event any employee wishes time off they may avail earned vacation time, or use of lieu time.

Management is expected to ensure adequate staffing of all operations in considering requests for time off. All offices will be open as shown below. Essential service personnel are excluded from this as usual.

Table 1
Overview of Christmas Season

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22	23	24	25 Statutory Holiday	26 Statutory Holiday	27
28	29 Regular Business Day	30 Regular Business Day	31 Regular Business Day	January 1 Statutory Holiday	2 Corporate Float Day	3
4	5 Office Reopens	6	7	8	9	10

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No additional costs

There are no additional costs for work performed during this time frame.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There is no impact on service coordination with local municipalities based on a business as usual model.

7. CONCLUSION

While the Region has closed administrative offices in past years it is not deemed feasible or necessary for the period between Christmas and New Years Day. The Region will be closed on Friday January 2, 2009 using its 2009 “corporate float” day.

For more information on this report, please contact Karen Close, Director Human Resources at Ext. 1217.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the November 6, 2008 Committee meeting.)