

Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Board of Directors

Date: September 30, 2016

Attendees

Jimmy MacAlpine, Russell Walker, Doug Sabean, Connie Nolan, Greg Keefe, Alex Morrison, Madeleine Daves, Michele McKenzie (phone)

Regrets

Kevin Saccary, Mike Dolter, Amanda Whitewood, Robert Bird, Betty MacDonald

Staff Attendees

Kathy Gillis, Russ Adams, Meredith Buchanan, Chris Doucette, Grace Chitate, Carlos Resendes, Jill Brogan, Tracy Williams

The Chair, Jimmy MacAlpine, called the meeting to order.

1. Review of Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed.

Moved by Connie Nolan, seconded by Madeleine Daves that the agenda be accepted.

Motion carried.

2. Review of the Minutes

Daft minutes of the June 24, 2016 meeting were reviewed.

Moved by Russell Walker, seconded by Connie Nolan that the June 24, 2016 minutes be accepted. Motion carried.

3. Committee Updates

Quality and Client Service

The Quality and Client Service Committee Chair, Michele McKenzie advised the Committee met on September 29, 2016, and the following items were covered.

(a) IPTI (International Property Tax Institute) Commercial Audit Update

The Committee received a report on the results of the IPTI Commercial Audit. The results were very positive, and some areas were identified for improvement. The Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) is proceeding with their audit of PVSC, now planned to begin in January 2017. A scoping meeting is planned for Oct 31, 2016.

(b) 2017 Preliminary Assessment Roll

A presentation/update was provided on the 2017 preliminary Assessment Roll. One of the new features for 2017 is that the base date lag time has been reduced from two years to one year (i.e. the base date for the 2017 Assessment Roll is January 1, 2016 rather than January 1, 2015). Assessment notices will go out in January, 2017. Overall, the current picture looks like Residential +2% 2017 (1% 2016) and Commercial -1% 2017 (2% 2016).

(c) Advanced Notification and Consultation (ANC)

ANC will proceed on October 18, 2016. The goal is to increase public awareness and understanding of the assessment process, and ideally reduce appeals. Last year, ANC targeted certain groups including a sample of repeat appellants (people who have appealed at least twice in last 5 years). The Critical Analysis Secretariat analyzed data after ANC for lessons learned. Only one group showed change in behavior – repeat appellants – with a reduced number of appeals. This year the whole repeat appellant group will be included on the ANC target. Communications efforts are planned to promote the ANC approach.

(d) 2016 Media Audit Results

The 2016 Media Audit was conducted in-house this year. The audit included media from April 1, 2015-March 31, 2016. The number of mentions (print, audio, video) were down a bit from previous audit for 2014-15. There was some variance in topic (i.e. less CAP, more assessment). Overall, there were no concerns to bring forward to the full Board. Next year, social media will be included in the media audit.

(e) Municipal Client Satisfaction Survey

The Municipal Client Satisfaction Survey result is a Scorecard metric for PVSC, so it is important information for the Board to monitor. The 2016 survey was conducted at the Association of Municipal Administrators (AMA) Conference. A total of 22 responses were received (this is fewer than the target but a useful sample size). The results were extremely positive:

- Increase in service quality to 100% (accessible, timely, professional)
- Dip in quality of assessment roll from 100% to 95% (data improvement related to inconsistencies between Land Registry and PVSC information)
- PVSC Reports from 88% to 95%
- Communications 78% to 100% (informed, aware of value added services)

There were some comments regarding expanded shared service, and opportunities to improve service (communications, promotion of e-delivery, etc.)

(f) Excellence Canada Update

The Committee received an update regarding the Excellence Canada review of PVSC. Excellence Canada was established in 1992 by Industry Canada as the National Quality Institute (2011 rebranded to Excellence Canada). They have longstanding experience in certifying public and private sector organizations – with a focus on Excellence, Innovation and Wellness.

As part of the Excellence Canada review process, staff participated in a 26 question survey on June 22, 2016, and as well, over two days in July, Excellence Canada performed an on-site benchmark. A follow-up process mapping and training session was held in August and covered such topics as train the trainer for process improvement, identifying key processes and owners, and process mapping and analysis.

Going forward, Management will explore having the Excellence Canada employee survey as replacement for the Great Place to Work Survey; PVSC representatives will attend the Excellence Canada award ceremony in November to receive Gold Certification; and, continuous improvement activities will be integrated into operational and planning processes.

(g) Social Media Policy

PVSC has recently adopted a Social Media Policy and will be rolling it out to staff in October (the policy was a recommendation of the Quality Committee).

Moved by Michele McKenzie, seconded by Greg Keefe that the Quality Committee update be accepted. Motion carried.

Audit, Risk and Finance Committee

Russell Walker, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee provided an update on the September 29, 2016 meeting.

(a) Request for Proposal (RFP) - Audit Services

A RFP will be issued for an external audit service provider.

(b) External Audit Review

An audit review of the current external auditor service provider will be conducted/completed by the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee.

(c) Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)

No risks have been identified as requiring immediate action, some have been identified as requiring attention to improve the management of the risk and this is moving forward.

Moved by Russell Walker, seconded by Connie Nolan that the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee update be accepted. Motion carried.

4. Budget

Russ Adams presented the proposed draft budget and the budget strategy and goals for the next three years to the Board. The Audit, Risk and Finance Committee is recommending a budget increase of 0.5% for 2017/18, a projected 1.5% for 2019 and 2020, and that the existing Special Operating balance be utilized over the three years to achieve these budget increases. The details of the proposed budget were reviewed. It was noted the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee will look at developing a strategy to mitigate the US currency payment for the CAMA system vendor.

As well, staff will be engaging with the Province (Department of Municipal Affairs) regarding Employee Future Benefits and the requirement for funding valuation of liabilities, to confirm compliance with accounting standard.

Moved by Russell Walker, seconded by Greg Keefe that the recommended budget increase of 0.5% and the proposed budget for 2017/18 with a Municipal funding of \$17,176,240 be accepted. Motion carried.

5. Preliminary Roll

Kathy Gillis introduced Carlos Resendes to the Board. Carlos is the VP for Business Innovation Services (this role was previously fulfilled by Dwayne Phillips).

Carlos provided an overview on how properties are assessed and why market valuation is used. Values for the 2017 Assessment Roll will reflect a valuation date of January 1, 2016 (called the base date). The base date has transitioned from two years to one year. PVSC analyzes sales six months on both sides of the base date. The date used to determine the state of the property for the 2017 Assessment Roll will be **December 1, 2016** (called the state date). In terms of key dates, the Advanced Notification and Consultation launch will be Oct. 18th, the Assessment Roll will be submitted in iasWorld Nov. 30th, the quality check and assessment roll validation will take place the week of Nov. 30-Dec. 5th, the Assessment Roll will be filed with Municipal Units on Dec. 30th, assessment notices will be mailed Jan. 13, 2017, and the 31-day appeal period ends Feb. 12th.

Carlos highlighted that throughout the province, both residential and commercial markets are relatively flat. Last year there was a decrease in sales and permit activity, a similar volume this year as compared with last. In HRM, the commercial market continues to soften with new development activity in the mixed use apartment and condo sectors. The 2017 preliminary residential and commercial assessment values were reviewed with the Board.

6. Excellence Canada

Jill Brogan (Policy Research and Development Consultant with PVSC) explained that as part of the Excellence Canada review process, staff participated in a survey in June; Excellence Canada performed an on-site benchmark assessment over two days in July that consisted of focus groups with the executive team, managers and staff; held interviews with Board members and key partners; and, a documentation review was completed. Jill reviewed a benchmark chart that demonstrated how well PVSC rated in comparison to the "Excellence, Innovation and Wellness" Standard, and reviewed strengths and opportunities identified.

In terms of next steps, Excellence Canada will provide PVSC with a final report in September. Staff will explore the Excellence Canada employee survey as replacement for the Great Place to Work Survey, PVSC representatives will attend the Excellence Canada award ceremony in November to receive the Gold Certification, and going forward continuous improvement activities will be integrated into operational and planning processes. (Jill noted that PVSC is one of five organizations to achieve Gold Certification on the first try.)

7. Board Development

The Chair indicated that with the upcoming election, as well as Board terms that we know will be ending, it's not timely for training. Staff have been exploring opportunities pertaining to Board effectiveness and performance.

8. CEO Report Q2

Kathy Gillis advised notification has been received from the Province (Department of Municipal Affairs) that they will be proceeding with the audit as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) requirement. The audit is planned to begin in January 2017 (they initially wanted to start in October but with the amount of activity taking place to file the Assessment Roll they have agreed to January). A scoping meeting is planned for October.

9. In Camera

An *in camera* session was held. There were no issues or concerns to note.

Meeting adjourned