
MEMORANDUM

CAORC-C 2-2021

Subject: Chief Administrative Officer Recruitment – Background Information

Date: January 26, 2021

To: Chief Administrative Officer Recruitment Committee

From: Franco Meffe, Director Human Resources

This memo provides background information with respect to the recruitment of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), including items that were discussed and/or requested by members of the Chief Administrative Officer Recruitment Committee (CAORC) at its initial meeting held on January 12, 2021.

The following is a summary of the aforementioned items and any corresponding attachments:

1. The CAO updated Job Description (Appendix 1).
2. The Executive Competency Library (Appendix 2).
3. The minutes of the CAORC meeting CAORC 5-2016 dated July 20, 2016 (Appendix 3).
4. Overview of the 2013 and 2016 CAO recruitment process.
5. Survey results of recent CAO recruitment activity of other municipal/public sector employers.

Item 1 – CAO Job Description

Attached at Appendix 1 is the updated Niagara Region job description for the position of CAO. As per normal process, when a vacancy occurs and a recruitment is initiated, a review of the job description is undertaken to ensure it accurately reflects the position requirements as it pertains to education, knowledge, responsibilities, special requirements, and reporting relationships. The job description is then approved by the hiring authority and HR to confirm that appropriate qualifications, principal functions, and responsibilities for the position are accurately captured. The attached job description was updated to ensure alignment with By-law No. 2020-09, which provides the roles and responsibilities of the CAO.

The CAORC is required to approve the updated job description as written, or approve with any amendments. The job description will then be further approved by Regional Council through ratification of the CAORC minutes of this meeting.

Item 2 – Executive Competency Library

Attached at Appendix 2 is the Niagara Region Executive Competency Library which contains the list of competencies applicable to executive level positions, including the position of CAO. They include the following seven competencies: Strategist, Change Leader, Relationship Builder, Organization Guardian, Business Acumen, Navigates Complexity, and Drives Engagement,

The job description and executive competency library are key tools that will be used by the Executive Search Firm (ESF) in the recruitment process, subject to any refinement by the CAORC Committee.

Item 3 – Minutes of the CAORC meeting CAORC 5-2016 dated July 20, 2016

These minutes contain CAORC-C 6-2016 Phelps Group Consultation Summary that summarized the stakeholder feedback they received pertaining to CAO characteristics and key traits; the CAORC requested this information for their review.

As discussed at the CAORC meeting on January 12, 2021, the CAO Recruitment Procedure Terms of Reference (TOR) require that, in consultation with the CAORC, the ESF is to develop the key CAO character traits and competencies required to move the organization forward. Once an ESF is selected, the CAORC has options available to them on how to proceed in directing the ESF in the development of the CAO character traits and competencies, those options include the following:

1. Commence the stakeholder review from scratch;
2. Use the character traits and competencies that were collected in 2016;
3. Take the character traits and competencies from 2016 and conduct a review and potential refresh, including revisiting the stakeholder consultation process in any review;
4. Another option approved by the CAORC.

In accordance with the TOR, the CAORC should consider the direction it will provide to the ESF regarding the development of the key CAO character traits and competencies.

Item 4 – Overview of the 2013 and 2016 CAO recruitment process

In 2013, Odgers Berndtson, was selected by a Single Source procurement as the ESF and in 2016, Phelps Group was selected through a Modified Single-Source procurement as the ESF. In both cases, they were selected to support the CAORC with recruitment for the Region. The ESFs respectively followed a similar process, undertook a national search, and promoted the candidate profile through various media. This work was complemented by active outreach to leaders in various sectors and the respective firms' network.

There were some differences in approach in each of those years. In 2013, a review and amendment of the job description occurred with input from and approval by Regional Council. In 2016, a comprehensive stakeholder consultation was undertaken with members of Regional Council, senior staff at the Region, and external municipal and business community member with the intent to develop the CAO character traits and competencies in the recruitment process, which received approval of Regional Council.

The overall efforts in each year resulted in candidates being selected for initial consideration, and preliminary screening interviews occurred. Following this screening process, candidates were presented to the respective CAORC's for short-listing and preferred candidates were invited to participate in two rounds of interviews. Following that stage in the process, once the preferred candidate had reference checks and education verifications, the offer of employment was presented and approved by Regional Council.

Item 5 – Survey results of recent CAO recruitment activity of other municipal/public sector employers

In anticipation of recruitment activities with the CAORC, it was determined that a scan of recent CAO level recruitment would be helpful to provide as information to the CAORC to support their mandate in facilitating the recruitment of a CAO, namely, the next steps in selecting an ESF. As a result, staff reached out to the twelve Local Area Municipalities (LAMs) and to our Regional Single-Tier Municipalities (RSTM) working group to inquire about the status of their CAO. Specifically, if a recruitment had been initiated and/or completed recently, and if yes to the latter did the municipality engage an ESF. At our CAORC meeting on January 12, 2021, staff advised that they would bring the brief survey results to this meeting.

We received responses from eleven LAMs, two of which were currently in the recruitment process involving the use of an ESF:

- Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake = Legacy Partners;
- City of Welland indicating they were just commencing the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for an ESF.

Since this time, the City of St. Catharines and City of Niagara Falls have both indicated that they too will be proceeding with a CAO recruitment process, it is uncertain at the time of this memo as to whether or not an ESF will be involved.

We also received responses from seven RSTMs, five of which were currently in the recruitment process resulting in the use of an ESF:

- Durham Region = Odgers Berndtson
- City of Hamilton = Odgers Berndtson
- City of Toronto = Odgers Berndtson
- Waterloo Region = Legacy Partners
- York Region = Not disclosed

At our CAORC meeting on January 21, 2021, it was requested that staff also reach out to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NCPA), and the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) to request this information. Staff did so and received responses from both organizations; the NPCA advised that they engaged the ESF Feldman Daxon, and the NPC advised they engaged the ESF Odgers Berndtson, with the latter noting that no RFP was conducted as this ESF was on the Provincial Vendor of Record list.

The items above along with the corresponding attachments noted are provided as relevant information to assist the CAORC in the next steps in the recruitment process.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Franco Meffe
Director, Human Resources