

## **Policy # COUN-2025-01**

**Approved by:** Council

**Administered by:** Clerk.

**Effective:** after hiring of permanent CAO

### **1. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all members of Council and Township of Wilmot employees (Staff).

This Policy has implications for the relationship between Council and Staff, and with the Wilmot community.

Relations between Council and all Staff will also be guided by these related documents:

- 1.1 Council Code of Conduct
- 1.2 Corporate Communications and Community Engagement Strategy
- 1.3 Corporate Structure and People Plan
- 1.4 Employee Code of Conduct (?)
- 1.5 Rules and Procedure By-law, 2024-42
- 1.6 Violence & Harassment Policy, CG #OHS-043-03.
- 1.7 Wilmot Strategic Plan

With the approval of this Policy into by-law, the Violence & Harassment Policy CG #OH-043-03, is hereby amended, so as to change any and all references in it, and all other Corporation documents, from the term “*Corporate Leadership Team*” to the title “*Senior Management Team*”.

### **2. PURPOSES**

*“Municipalities are created by the Province of Ontario to be responsible and accountable governments with respect to matters within their jurisdiction and each municipality is given powers and duties under this Act and many other Acts for the purpose of providing good government with respect to those matters.” [O.M.A. 2001, section 1, Purposes, 2]*

*Pursuant to the “Ontario Municipal Act, 2001, section 270 (1) A municipality shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to the following matters:*

*2.1 The relationship between members of council and officers and employees of the municipality.”,*

Residents of the Township of Wilmot, as “*la raison d’être*”, require that the Corporation’s elected representatives to Council and its employees (Staff) interact with each other in a respectful relationship that ensures the successful development and implementation of the programs, policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures necessary to implement the decisions of council, and such that the financial integrity of the municipality is maintained.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 “C.A.O.” means the Chief Administrative Officer who may be appointed by the municipality to fulfill the duties as prescribed in “*the Ontario Municipal Act*”, section 229.
- 3.2 “C.F.O.” means the individual who may be hired by the municipality in the role of Chief Financial Officer and/or Treasurer.
- 3.3 “Clarity” means coherent, intelligible; the qualities of being certain, definite, easy to see or hear or understand.
- 3.4 “Clerk” means the individual who may be hired by the municipality to fulfill the duties as prescribed in “*the Ontario Municipal Act*”, section 228 (1).
- 3.5 “Cohesion” means the action or fact of forming a united whole.
- 3.6 “Communication” means the imparting or exchanging of information between and among persons by speaking, listening, writing, reading or some other medium (electronic, art, print visuals, etc.).
- 3.7 “Comprehensive” means including or dealing with all or nearly all elements or aspects of something; a large content or scope; a wide-ranging knowledge of something.
- 3.8 “Constituent(s)” means citizen(s) who are resident(s) in the area of Wilmot Township as represented by a councillor.
- 3.9 “Consultation” means the action or process of formally consulting or discussing among parties, seeking information or advice from someone; especially information which is professionally or expertly factual, accurate, unbiased and fulsome.
- 3.10 “Council” means all the individuals, as a body, elected or appointed to the Council for the Township of Wilmot.
- 3.11 “Councillor” means an individual elected or appointed to the Council for the Township of Wilmot.

- 3.12 “Corporation” means the Corporation of the Township of Wilmot.
- 3.13 “Decision Making” means a sequential process that involves:
- 3.13.1 Knowledge - access to factual information that is ‘remembered’;
  - 3.13.2 Comprehension – understanding, explaining ideas or concepts by classifying, discussing, identifying, selecting, translating factual information;
  - 3.13.3 Application - using acquired knowledge to solve problems in a new situation;
  - 3.13.4 Analysis – breaking down information into parts to understand relationships, motives, or causes;
  - 3.13.5 Synthesis - drawing connections among ideas by combining elements or creating new meaning (organize, differentiate, compare, contrast, question, examine);
  - 3.13.6 Evaluation – making judgements about information using benchmark criteria or standards to justify a position (appraise, defend, judge, select, value, critique, weigh);
  - 3.13.7 Decision Making – Creating or producing a new or original product – making a decision (design, assemble, construct, develop, formulate)
- 3.14 “Deputy Clerk” means the individual who may be hired by the municipality to fulfill the duties as prescribed in “*the Ontario Municipal Act*”, section 228 (2).
- 3.15 “Director” means a member of the senior management staff who is the head of a ‘department’ or ‘service area’.
- 3.16 “Engagement” means the action of engaging in something; to participate or become involved in something.
- 3.17 “Fulsomeness” means abundant, generous in size or quantity.
- 3.18 “Member of the Public” means a person, living in Canada, having a specific interest in the affairs of the Township of Wilmot.
- 3.19 “Gantt Chart” means a type of scheduling diagram, which is a subset of a “project management tool”.
- 3.20 “Openness” means accessibility, lack of restrictions, acceptance of or receptiveness to change or new ideas.
- 3.21 “Participation” means the action of taking part in something.
- 3.22 “Project Management Tool” means a document and/or computer program that helps plan, organize, and manage resources. It may help manage estimation, planning, scheduling, cost control, budget management, resource allocation, collaboration software,

- communication, decision-making, quality management, time management and documentation or administration systems.
- 3.23 “Representation” means the action of speaking or acting on behalf of someone; a formal statement made to or by an authority so as to communicate a fact, an opinion or to register a protest.
- 3.24 “Resident” means an individual citizen whose permanent residence is within the geo-political boundary of the Township of Wilmot. The terms resident and citizen are deemed to be inter-changeable.
- 3.25 “Respect” means due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others.
- 3.26 “Senior Administrator” means an employee of the Township of Wilmot, including ‘Directors’ and the “Chief Administrative Officer”.
- 3.27 “Senior Management Team” means all senior administrators as a body.
- 3.28 “Service Area” means one of the organizational divisions within the Corporation to address the interests, needs and goals of the community of Wilmot. Its management head is a director.
- 3.29 “Staff” means all Corporation of the Township of Wilmot employees, including probationary and temporary employees, and senior administrators.
- 3.30 “Transparent” means open to public scrutiny.
- 3.31 “Trust” means the firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something.
- 3.32 “Values” means principles or standards of behaviour.

#### **4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

- 4.1 Pursuant to the “*Ontario Municipal Act, 2001, section 270 (1) A municipality shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to the following matters:*”
- 2.1 The relationship between members of council and officers and employees of the municipality.”*
- This Council-Staff Relations Policy identifies the legislation, policies, procedures and practices that the Township complies with in order to promote respectful relations between members of Council and the Staff employees of the Township of Wilmot, with implications for their relationship with the Wilmot community.
- 4.2 This policy was subject to review February 25, 2022.
- 4.4 This policy will be reviewed every four (4) years.

## 5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 Powers granted to municipalities are delegated at the will of the Province of Ontario.
- 5.2 Municipalities exist for, *“providing and delivering valuable programs and services to meet the needs of their residents”*. [O.M.A. 2001, section 1]
- 5.3 The Township recognizes that the relationship between its Council and its employed Staff, is critical to their relationship with its citizens, and their success in meeting the needs of its residents.
- 5.4 Residents of the Township of Wilmot require that the Corporation’s Council and its employed Staff demonstrate openness, transparency, clarity, honesty, fulsomeness, and respect for each other and the Township’s residents.
- 5.5 Residents of the Township of Wilmot require that the Corporation’s elected representatives to Council and their employees (Staff) comply with appropriate accountability processes.

## 6. ROLES

- 6.1 It is the role of council, (Councillors as a body)
  - (a) to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
  - (b) to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality;
  - (c) to determine which services the municipality provides;
  - (d) to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;
  - (d.1) to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;
  - (e) to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and
  - (f) to carry out the duties of council under this or any other Act.
- 6.2 It is the role of head of council, (Mayor)
  - (a) to act as chief executive officer of the municipality;

- (b) to preside over council meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;
- (c) to provide leadership to the council;
- (c.1) without limiting clause (c), to provide information and recommendations to the council with respect to the role of council described in clauses (d) and (d.1);
- (d) to represent the municipality at official functions; and
- (e) to carry out the duties of the head of council under this or any other Act.

6.3 As chief executive officer of a municipality, the head of council shall,

- (a) uphold and promote the purposes of the municipality;
- (b) promote public involvement in the municipality's activities;
- (c) act as the representative of the municipality both within and outside the municipality, and promote the municipality locally, nationally and internationally; and
- (d) participate in and foster activities that enhance the economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality and its residents.

6.4 It is the role of the officers and employees of the municipality,

- (a) to implement council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out council's decisions;
- (b) to undertake research and provide advice to council on the policies and programs of the municipality; and
- (c) to carry out other duties required under this or any other Act and other duties assigned by the municipality.

6.5 A municipality shall appoint a clerk whose duty is,

- (a) to record, without note or comment, all resolutions, decisions and other proceedings of the council;
- (b) if required by any member present at a vote, to record the name and vote of every member voting on any matter or question;
- (c) to keep the originals or copies of all by-laws and of all minutes of the proceedings of the council;

- (d) to perform the duties required under this Act or under any other Act; and
  - (e) to perform such other duties as are assigned by the municipality.
- 6.6 A municipality may appoint deputy clerks who have all the powers and duties of the clerk under this and any other Act.
- 6.7 A municipality may appoint a chief administrative officer (CAO) who shall be responsible for,
- (a) exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality; and
  - (b) performing such other duties as are assigned by the municipality.

## 7. POLICY

- 7.1 Council acts by Resolution – Council sets policy and provides direction to the administration by Council resolution.
- 7.2 Fiduciary Responsibility – Council exercises fiduciary supervision and control over the financial affairs of the Corporation. The C.F.O. is responsible for maintaining the ongoing financial operations of the Corporation and is accountable to Council for their integrity.
- 7.3 Transparent, Open, Clear, Honest, Fulsome Communications – Quality communication between Council and its employees are seen as essential to optimum decision making. Councillors and employees should feel comfortable speaking to one another.
- 7.4 Confidentiality - Council will have access to all information available to its hired staff, to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, and as requested in public Council Meetings. Staff is accountable to Council. Council is accountable to its residents, and will communicate with them. Councillors and staff will respect all legislative requirements specifying confidentiality. (Example: Per OMA Sections 239, Meetings, Exceptions.)
- 7.5 Respectful Workplace – The Township is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe, and supportive workplace, free from discrimination and harassment.

- 7.6 Partnerships – Council and its employees will operate in a working partnership, with Council in a supervisory relationship, to produce the best results and outcomes for the Township and the collective public good of its residents.
- 7.7 Mutual Respect and Professionalism– Council and its staff shall foster a climate of mutual respect for each other’s duties and responsibilities.
- 7.8 Represent the Whole Community – Council and staff work for the public good. Staff will provide, in a timely manner upon request, complete, accurate and unbiased information to Council for its decision making and communications with residents. Council and councillors will rely on accurate information provided by its staff, and their own judgement based on the trust placed in them by the citizens.
- 7.9 Participation in Decision Making - Residents of the Township of Wilmot require that, in the relations between Council and Staff, their actions, policies, procedures and programs facilitate residents’ appropriate participation in decision making.
- 7.10 Effective Use of Council Time – Staff will provide comprehensive information to Councillors, in a timely manner, that facilitates prior review of reports, and support documentation, and time to consult with their constituents. This will minimize the need for time consuming, unnecessary questions. This will assure sufficient time for Councillors to interact among themselves, and seek specific complementary professional advice from staff if required.
- 7.11 Council’s Accountability to Township Citizens – Councillors are accountable to Wilmot’s citizens. Thus, they need to be able to communicate accurately and honestly with them. To ensure that goal, Wilmot councillors will access information from all levels of staff, to save time and ensure efficient use of staff resources. They will use their judgement as elected public officials in maintaining appropriate confidentiality. (Example: Per OMA Sections 239, Meetings, Exceptions.)
- 7.12 Formal Public Communications – The Mayor, as head of council is the official representative at official functions and, as the Chief Executive Officer, is the official spokesperson for the municipality. Staff do not have a “public voice” for communications with the “press”, etc. Council will determine the parameters for the role of any inhouse communications specialist. (See 7.15 below.)



- 7.13 Internal Communications – The C.A.O. in their role of “*ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality*”, will be a conduit for regular, daily, ongoing communications among Staff. The C.A.O. will report upward to Council. The C.A.O. will facilitate downward communication between Council and Staff. The C.A.O. will provide leadership downward only, to staff. Council will fulfill its legislated duties by providing appropriate direction to its Staff in public meetings of Council.
- 7.14 Comprehensive Management - The CAO is responsible for the general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality. As such, the CAO will have a comprehensive knowledge of all its affairs, and specifically of all aspects of the service areas or departments in the Corporation.
- 7.14.1 The CAO will produce a record, which is used as the Corporation’s “project management tool”, describing all actions of all service areas, plans for implementation, and timelines for completion. This document will outline all activities on a calendar basis so that the Corporation will be able to understand its past, describe its current status, plan for the future, and anticipate when reports will be produced for potential action by the Corporation.
- 7.14.2 This “project management tool” document will be provided to Council, as a Report, at the beginning of each term of its office.
- 7.14.3 This “project management tool” will be updated, and presented to Council, as a Report, on a regular basis as determined by Council.
- 7.14.4 This “project management tool”, in consultation between Council and the CAO, will be made publicly available, in a format deemed appropriate by Council, providing for exclusions of such items which may inappropriately disclose information for contract negotiations purposes, or other restrictions imposed by legislation.
- 7.14.5 This “project management tool” may produce, for example, “Gantt Charts” which will provide clarity for residents of the Municipality.
- 7.15 Compilation of Policy Records – The Clerk has the duty to record, without note or comment, all resolutions, decisions and other proceedings of council, and to, keep the originals or copies of all by-

laws and of all minutes, of the proceedings of council. The Township recognizes the value of transparency in its relationships between Council and Staff, and with its residents toward building mutual trust.

- 7.15.1 The Clerk's Office, with the cooperation of the CAO's Office, will produce a record, which is used as a complete record of all policies enacted by By-law and which are of current force and effect for the Township.
  - 7.15.2 This record will indicate, for each and every policy currently in force and effect, its: Title, Policy Number, Section of the Corporate Policy Manual, Issue Date, Revision Date, Review Date, and Approval Body.
  - 7.15.3 This record will be placed on the Township's website, on a dedicated 'landing page', in 'chart / table' form.
  - 7.15.4 This record will be posted in an electronic format such that all members of the community may click on any cell in the record and conduct a search using criteria such as alphabetical order, numerical order, date, etc.
  - 7.15.5 This record will be updated by the Clerk's Office every time a change is made to add, rescind, edit, amend, or otherwise revise the contents of the comprehensive record.
  - 7.15.6 This record will be provided by the CAO, in cooperation with the Clerk, to every newly elected councillor, before the close of the calendar year in which an election is held, before they are officially sworn into office.
- 7.16 Communication – The Township recognizes that effective decision-making by the Corporation is a product of the relationship between Council and Staff requiring optimum communication strategies. It recognizes that increased communications within the Corporation, and engagement with the community, is needed to help strengthen community trust and confidence in the municipality's government and decision making.
- 7.16.1 The Township's communication team will produce a detailed '*corporate strategic communications plan*' which will include social media and public engagement strategies, that align with the Corporation's priorities and sets clear direction to teams/groups within the corporation. This plan will be 'received' and 'reviewed' by Council, then released to the community for their consultation, and then again reviewed and subjected to approval by Council.

- 7.16.2 This '*corporate strategic communications plan*' will be reviewed at the beginning of each new term of Council.
- 7.16.3 The Township's communication team will have a seat at all leadership tables as trusted tacticians and strategists.
- 7.16.4 The Township's communication team members will not be subject to influence or pressure by any other member of the Council (Councillor) or Staff. The communications team is accountable to Council.
- 7.16.5 The communications person will be consulted regularly for strategic advice and input for key decisions. This role will facilitate an optimum, trusting relationship between Council and Staff, and with the community.
- 7.16.6 No Reports to Council will be prepared by, reviewed by, presented by - only one individual or person.
- 7.16.7 All Reports to Council will be prior reviewed by the communications team and will be so noted on every Report. Any consultation advice, by the communication team, that may be rejected by the Report's presenter, will be so noted, with rationale, in the 'recommendations' portion of any Report.
- 7.16.8 External communications from the Corporation to the community, including the press, will be subject to consultation and review by the communications team. The only exception is that of the mayor, who, as Chief Executive Officer, is the official spokesperson for the Corporation.
- 7.16.9 The Corporation's communications team will coordinate the Corporation's story and brand, in consultation with Council, so that a clear voice and tone is communicated in every interaction, and which aligns with 'customer service' to the community. The communication relationship between Council and Staff and with the community will be consistent and positive.

## **8. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

- 8.1 Formal complaints related to the implementation of this policy shall be directed to:
  - 8.1.1 the CAO if the complaint is about staff other than the CAO;

- 8.1.2 the Integrity Commissioner if the complaint is about a Member of Council or the CAO;
- 8.1.3 the mayor, who will consult with the CAO, if the complaint is non-ethical in nature, and is from a resident of the community.

## **9. COMMUNICATION**

This Policy is communicated through activities led by the Communications Specialist Officer in coordination with the H.R. service area:

- 9.1 Orientation of members of Council and employees.
- 9.2 Council and / or staff discussions.
- 9.3 Coaching of employees found to have contravened this Policy.

## **10. EVALUATION**

This Policy will be reviewed every four (4) years.

DRAFT