



Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: Building Inspector
Succession Plan

Date: March 20, 2019

VISION

We see Argyle as home to a healthy and thriving rural population. Our municipality promotes and supports economic and social opportunities for the region and engages in the active expression of our unique Acadian heritage. We are a place of choice for rural living and are widely recognized for our warm hospitality and joie de vivre. Surrounded by fresh air and cool ocean breezes, we work and play in the great outdoors. People choose to live in Argyle because of our commitment to each other, to our community and to our neighbors. Argyle is a place we are proud to call home.

Background:

Residential and light commercial developments are one of our key economic drivers in the municipality. Our current Building inspector, who is a vital part of our operation is nearing retirement or partial retirement. Over the next five to seven years the Nova Scotia Building Official Association is predicted to lose close to 40% of its current members and qualified inspectors due to retirements and attrition. Current training requirements to obtain 1 of 3 Nova Scotia approved building inspector designations, is 1-2 years depending on successful completion of required courses. Further levels of qualification could be an additional 2- 3 years of training and education, over and above the initial designation. The courses are offered on a rotation bases only and if one course is missed or failed, it could be a while before it is reoffered. The Association is currently making changes to make it easier to obtain proper training, but that change is not yet implemented.

Past hiring experience in our Municipality and other local municipalities, has shown that an experienced and licensed building inspector and may require us to offer above market value wages to attract such an experienced individual to our area. Furthermore, in order to “grow” a building official, they must be mentored by a certified building official. Our community has many individuals that have experience that would fit nicely in the training. Noting the above concerns, we always have the option to invest into our staff and start investing in their training to meet our requirements. We need help in two areas; first is the building inspection department and second the by-law enforcement department.

We are proposing to offer a combined position of deputy building inspector and by-law enforcement officer (internally first) to support both departments until all training for the building inspector position is completed. We do have an internal candidate that would qualify for this opportunity. This strategy is also securing existing staff’s knowledge of our operations and assets and provides a gradual transition and effortless training of new staff.

MGA considerations:

Part 5 Section 5.9: Council may delegate its authority to an administrator for by-law enforcement.

Part 5 Section 5.6: Housing and other development should be addressed by a land use strategy. This leads into the need of controlling construction techniques as required by the National Building Code and needs to be supervised by a licensed building official.

CAO's Conclusion:

Approve staffs request to allow for an additional full-time position as Deputy Building Inspector / By-Law Enforcement Officer and offer the position internally before advertising publicly. The succession plan is a necessary step in the ongoing provision of high-quality service. This would be a new position, which requires Council approval. Once the person is trained, there will be no longer a requirement for two positions. Also, it should be noted that our current Building Official would seek to reduce hours at the end of his career prior to retirement.

The by-law enforcement component of the position will relieve the workload currently on our PW Director for unsightly/dangerous premises and should increase our ability to address these complicated issues more effectively.

Suggested motion:

Move the creation of the new position, Deputy Building Inspector/ By-Law Enforcement Officer, so that the CAO can determine salary scale and benefits for the position.