Municipality of the District of Argyle	Item: Election - Voting Method Software Date: March 28, 2024

Our Vision

Argyle is the community of choice to invest, live and play.

Our Identity

*Argyle **invests** time & talent in growth opportunities in fishing, tourism, and renewable energy sectors.*

*Argyle provides affordable taxation while providing safe and **livable** communities and strives to engage and inform our residents on decisions that affect them most.*

*Argyle provides high class, accessible recreational and cultural facilities for health and for **play.***

PURPOSE

Staff are asking the council which company they would prefer to contract for the software used in the upcoming municipal election.

Background:

As you are aware, municipal elections are scheduled for October 19, 2024, and in anticipation of this event, the staff is seeking guidance from the Council regarding the preferred company for the alternate voting software for the upcoming election.

We have been in contact with three possible software options to use for the 2024 elections.

Company #1 - Scytl Company: I attended a product demonstration and had a one-on-one discussion with the sales representative. This option seems very promising for the municipality, as they appear to have all the necessary components to offer easy-to-use software for our residents. One of their key selling points is their robust and unmatched security software. They also offer additional tools in the software to help residents check if they are on the voter list by simply logging into the system. Scytl has already signed a contract with Election NS to provide the E-voting software for the next provincial election, and they have been offering this software since 2012.

However, there are some drawbacks to using this system. We have no prior experience with it, and neither do our neighboring municipalities, so we lack local feedback from others who have used it. Additionally, their quote is significantly higher than that of the other bidders. The quoted price is $27,500.

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Company #2 - Intellivote: I participated in a demonstration and had a one-on-one session with this company. Their software is user-friendly and would fulfill all the municipality's requirements for the upcoming election. We are very familiar with this company and their software, as we have used them for the past 2 to 3 elections. This company is also well-known by our neighboring municipalities and towns. They offer secure software, and the price is very reasonable and significantly lower than Scytl. Intellivote is a local company located in Dartmouth, NS, with over 20 years of experience with the software. The quoted price is $17,800

Company #3 - Simple Voting: This company approached the municipality to inquire if we were interested in a quote. We acknowledged our interest as it is beneficial to compare products and pricing. However, I did not receive a demonstration of the product and am not 100% sure about the software they offer. The pricing seems to be similar to Intellivote, but there appear to be potential added costs in the proposal. This company is not known to our neighboring municipalities or towns, making it difficult to obtain local background information. It is a Canadian company located in Quebec. The quoted price is $16,000 but would have additional costs for audit and other technical inquiries.

Other considerations:

 All three companies that have reached out to assist us in providing e-voting software for the municipality would be well-equipped to provide all the necessary components for an easy-to-use system for both the municipality and our residents. Each company can offer a secure system, which is a crucial component to ensure the confidentiality of our residents. They all would provide training and assist us throughout the process leading up to election day and beyond. Additionally, all three have extensive experience offering their software for multiple elections. Their software allows residents to vote online, by telephone, or using a paper ballot on election day. Furthermore, they all offer bilingual options to accommodate our French-speaking residents.

The total budget for this item as proposed in the initial draft was $21,000, and $10,000 was received through Acadian Affairs to pay for the bilingual option, no matter the option selected.

Due to the amount of the investment, there was no requirement to go to tender, and obtaining quotes from each organization would suffice. All three suppliers were made aware of our size, population and potential number of officials seeking election and quoted based on that information.

Recommendation:

Deputy CAO recommends that we enter into an agreement with Intellivote for the following reasons:

1. It is the lowest cost.
2. It is a known supplier. We did experience an issue with the Tri County Election in 2016, but that was not the fault of the supplier, rather a misunderstanding from the electorate.
3. Our IT support and other support staff are familiar with the software, there would be an ease of use.
4. We have received positive feedback from our neighboring municipalities about Intellivote.
5. Some neighboring towns and municipalities have also chosen to go with Intellivote, and others are contemplating using it.

Suggested motion:

Move that council approve to enter into an agreement with Intellivote for the use of their software for the 2024 Municipal election.

CAO approves the recommendation and the motion.