

## **CAO and Council Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **Key Take-Aways and Considerations for CAOs**

**Presenter: Maria Sanderson**

**Special Guest: Samantha Murphy**

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- Municipal CAOs are expected to deal with a wide breadth of issues including financial management, executive support to council, service delivery and operations.
- Municipalities provide local services, facilities, safety and infrastructure for all residents within a defined geographic region. Municipalities have corporate status and local government powers.
- Provinces in Canada are responsible for municipal institutions. Municipalities are established by the provincial legislatures, which delegate some of their powers to municipal governments. Municipalities only have authority granted to them by legislation.
- The *Municipal Government Act* provides a legal framework and foundation for the establishment of municipalities. Section 2 of the *Act* provides council with authority and flexibility, and ensures that councils are accountable to the people they serve.
- *MGA* Regulations provide principles, standards and other requirements considered necessary for carrying out the purposes and provisions of the *Act*.
- Council is elected by the residents of a municipality to make decisions regarding services, policies and programs. A council decision is the decision of the municipality.
- Section 86 (2) of the *MGA* lists duties of council; however, there are other duties found throughout the *Act* as well. Council has significant authority and related duties regarding conflict of interest and codes of conduct.

- The Chief Administrative Officer is the administrative head of the municipality and Council's principal advisor. The CAO provides information and advises council on: policies, finance, legislative requirements, plans and more.
- Section 93 of the *MGA* lists specific duties of the CAO; however, there are other duties found throughout the *Act* as well. The CAO may delegate certain duties in accordance with Section 94 of the *Act*.
- Policies and procedures play a very important role in human resource management. CAOs should ensure there are proper forms and procedure around confidentiality, expense claims, vacation requests and time keeping.
- CAO must determine which issues to bring to council and ensure council has appropriate information required to make an informed decision in a timely manner. CAOs may be expected to provide information and advice on administrative, executive, legislative, and operational issues.
- Tips for creating helpful briefing documents include: addressing authority/jurisdiction, requirement for bylaw/resolution/policy, need vs. want, and who is responsible. Also, it is helpful to use a readable typeface, maximize white space and highlight ideas with bullet points and headings.
- CAOs must be effective time managers. It is helpful to think realistically about how many hours are available each week to carry out duties, create running lists of goals and priorities, and monitor and adjust as needed.
- In PEI, the Minister of Fisheries and Communities is responsible for advising on behalf of and implementing the *Municipal Government Act*.
- Part 8 of the *MGA* gives broad powers to the Minister to ensure accountability among municipalities. These powers include ability to compel a financial audit, to receive reports of irregularity from an auditor, to inspect records, to inquire into affairs of the municipality, to compel bank statement, and in some cases to direct council to take action or dismiss council (or any member).