

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

APPROVAL DATE: March 24, 2025

CAO Signature: _____



POLICY STATEMENT

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the only direct employee of Council and is the connecting link between Council and municipal operations. This position derives its authority under Sections 28, 30 and 31 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

- The chief administrative officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the municipality and is responsible to the council for the proper administration of the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the municipality and the policies adopted by the council;
- The council shall communicate with its employees of the municipality solely through the chief administrative officer, except that the council may communicate directly with employees of the municipality to obtain or provide information;
- The council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the municipality to the chief administrative officer; and
- No council member, committee or member of a committee established by the council shall instruct or give instruction to, either publicly or privately, an employee of the municipality.

Regular performance reviews ensure that the CAO is provided with accurate and appropriate feedback with goals for the purpose of enabling and achieving corporate objectives and improving municipal performance.

PURPOSE

The performance evaluation of the CAO is a valuable instrument which can serve any or all of the following purposes:

- To formally discuss the relationship between Council and the CAO;
- To ensure that there is clarity with regard to the position expectations of the CAO;
- To provide an assessment of the performance of the role, responsibilities and authority as set out in legislation, Town policy and job description;
- To set objectives and criteria for future evaluation; and
- To serve as the basis for salary adjustments.

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The annual performance review is part of an ongoing performance management process by which Council and the CAO work together to plan, monitor and review the work objectives and overall contribution to the organization. This is part of a continuous process of setting objectives, assessing progress and providing on-going feedback. The annual review of the CAO's performance should include the development of measurable criteria that:

- Align with the organization's strategic direction and culture;
- Are practical and easy to understand and use;
- Provide an accurate picture of expectation and performance;
- Include a collaborative process for setting goals and reviewing performance based on two-way communication between the Council and CAO;
- Monitor and measure results (what) and behaviours (how);
- Ensure that administrative work plans support the strategic direction of the organization;
- Identify and recognize accomplishments
- Support administrative decision-making

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Chief Administrative Officer as the only employee of Town Council.

POLICY

There shall be a CAO review committee of Council to facilitate and support excellent communications and positive collaborative effort between the CAO and elected officials. The Committee will consist of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the most recent Deputy Mayor. Where the most recent Deputy Mayor is not a member of Council, Council shall appoint another member of Council instead.

The review will be completed by December 31 annually, or another date as mutually agreed by the Committee and the CAO. The review will provide Council with the opportunity to assess the CAO's performance for the prior year and to clarify goals and expectations for the upcoming year.

Should the review not have been scheduled by March 31 of the following year, the CAO shall initiate the scheduling of the meeting.

Scheduling the date and time of the review shall be the responsibility of the Mayor in consultation with the Committee and the CAO.

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Meetings of the CAO Review Committee and any meetings of Council regarding the CAO's performance review shall be held in-camera.

The process to be followed will be as has been agreed in section 4 of the CAO's employment contract (excerpt at Appendix 1 of this Policy).

The CAO shall be assured that any comments regarding performance shall be strictly confidential and will not be released to any other staff member or the public.

A comprehensive appraisal form based on the core competencies of the job description and annual corporate goals and priorities should be jointly developed and agreed upon by the Committee and the CAO.

The CAO shall be given sufficient time to prepare for and respond to the performance appraisal. The appraisal shall be conducted at a time that is convenient to both the Council and CAO.

Council shall convene an annual strategic planning session in the fall of each year to determine and/or confirm the Town's strategic direction for the coming year. The Town's strategic direction, as approved by Council, shall be documented and forwarded to the CAO within 30 days of the annual strategic planning session.

The CAO shall draft a list of goals, objectives and training requirements for discussion during the review process.

The completed appraisal document shall be signed by the Mayor and CAO and be placed in the confidential personnel file.

Council may meet periodically throughout the year to discuss performance with the CAO, to review progress achieved on goals and priorities previously established and approved by Council.

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APPENDIX 1
PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
(Excerpt from CAO Employment Contract)

4. (a) The Employee shall perform their duties in a professional manner that is expected of a CAO.
- (b) If the Employee successfully completes the probationary period, the Town of Amherst shall perform an annual review (the “Performance Review”) of the Employee’s performance.
- (c) The parties agree that clearly articulated, mutually agreed and measurable performance expectations are fundamental to an effective, efficient, and healthy employment relationship. Thus, the parties commit to using a goal-setting process for the CAO’s performance evaluation. The process shall be similar to the process utilized for Town staff, and it shall commence with a goal-setting process, with specific expectations, as well as commitments by the Town, to provide the support and communications that shall provide mutual commitment to success.
- (d) Council shall appoint a CAO Review Committee to oversee an annual Performance Evaluation and Development Plan. The objectives of the Performance Evaluation and Development plan are:
- (e) To ensure that Council and the CAO understand the responsibilities and priorities of the position as included in the approved position description; and to provide the CAO an opportunity to discuss such responsibilities to increase efficiencies and effectiveness of the organization.
- (f) To provide an opportunity for the Town and the CAO to dialogue on the organization’s priorities, operations and objectives.
- (g) To provide feedback to the CAO regarding the Town’s evaluation as to the CAO’s performance in carrying out the assigned responsibilities.
- (h) To discuss and obtain mutual agreement for long-term objectives and goals for the CAO and the position in the organization.
- (i) To discuss and identify both short- and long-term training requirements, based on position responsibilities and organizational objectives.
- (j) To provide a forum to discuss the factors that are considered in the approval of salary scale increments.
- (k) To discuss revisions to this Employment Agreement.

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- (2) It is explicitly agreed that the annual goal setting process shall result in reasonable and achievable goals along with adequate resources from the Town, to support their achievement. The goals shall be accompanied by reasonable, mutually agreed upon annual measures and indicators.
- (3) The Town agrees that the process will be completed in writing and annually (by December 30, or at another date as mutually agreed, each year and in writing by the parties).
- (4) The CAO Review Committee shall present Council, in an *in camera* session, with a report that summarizes its findings and recommendations.
- (5) Upon completion of its work, the CAO Review Committee is to give all documents it reviewed or generated as part of this process to the Mayor to be retained in the office of the Mayor, with a duplicate copy given to the CAO.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Mayor	The Mayor will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lead and oversee the CAO performance review process; b. Ensure the review aligns with municipal goals and objectives; c. Provide feedback based on Council priorities and strategic initiatives; d. Work with the Review Committee and HR Director to prepare and deliver the final performance evaluation each year.
CAO Review Committee	The CAO Review Committee will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participate fully in the annual review process; b. Assess performance and set goals for the upcoming year; c. Align the review with Council's strategic direction.
Chief Administrative Officer	The Chief Administrative Officer will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide self-assessment and updates on progress toward municipal objectives; b. Engage in the review process to discuss performance, achievements, and challenges; c. Implement feedback and improvement strategies as required.
Director, Human Resources	The Director of Human Resources will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist in facilitating the review process by providing best practices for performance evaluations; b. Ensure the review is conducted fairly, consistently and in compliance with applicable HR policies; c. Supports Council with relevant HR metrics, data and/or feedback mechanisms.

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For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Policy Review: correct grammar errors, update Appendix 1 to align with current CAO contract	Director, HR	Council	March 24, 2025

Minutes Reference Dates: October 3, 2016 March 24, 2025