Municipality of Meaford Candidate Questions

Week of September 14, 2026

1. **Can staff please provide details on the decision matrix used to assess and prioritize road rehabilitation projects, including the factors and weighting applied (e.g., road class, traffic data, surface type, underground infrastructure age/condition, road condition rating, distress points, and water/sewer break history)?**

   Please also advise whether there is a written policy or procedure outlining this process, what software or asset management tools are used, and the rehabilitation methods available and the criteria/thresholds for selecting each (e.g., crack sealing, micro surfacing, shave and pave, pulverize and resurface, or full-depth reconstruction).

   If applicable, please provide the corresponding matrix scores or thresholds for each rehabilitation method.

   The Municipality completes resurfacing, rehabilitation and reconstruction of asphalt and surface treatment roads as part of the capital plan utilizing recommendations from the Road State of the Infrastructure report.

   The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) data is used when prioritizing road work along with traffic counts, road features, and operational knowledge. All road sections that fall within each type of road construction method based on PCI are ranked from highest traffic count to lowest traffic count. The list is reviewed and roads with operational concerns including significant maintenance requirements are prioritized. Below is a table that outlines the road construction methods and corresponding PCI values.

Surface Treatment Roads		
Rehab/Replacement Method	**Description**	**PCI**
Resurfacing	Place an additional LCB coat on existing surface	70-85
Rehabilitation	Remove existing surface and place new LCB (no base reconstruction)	Below 70

Asphalt Roads		
Rehab/Replacement Method	**Description**	**PCI**
Micro resurfacing	Micro resurfacing on top of existing asphalt	70-84
Resurfacing	Remove top layer or asphalt and replace	55-69
Rehabilitation	Remove all asphalt and replace	35-54
Reconstruction	Remove asphalt and base and reconstruct	0-34

To allow for the road budget to be used most effectively, the capital plan includes prioritizing similar projects each year. This has allowed for more competitive unit pricing as there are high quantities of material and reduced mobilization and decommissioning costs.

This methodology was provided to Council for approval as part of the 2024 capital budget process and included a 5-year capital plan.

2. **How many times did Council formally deal with TCE as a major staff report or actionable legislative voting item over the past term (2022-2026)?**

   Council has considered 25 items respecting TCE within the current term.

3. **How many Council meetings were convened in each of the years of the term?**

Year	Number of Meetings
2022 (from November 21 onward)	7

2023	48
2024	51
2025	46
2026 (to-date September 16)	30
TOTAL	**182**

4. **Can staff please provide an update on the status of the following policies:**
    - **Insurance & Risk Management Policy**
    - **Waste Management Policy**
    - **Internal Financial Controls Policy**

    Does the Municipality have any previous or outdated versions of these policies in place? If so, can they be provided?

    Please also advise on the status and anticipated timeline for developing or updating these policies.

    The Municipality doesn't have the listed policies however we do have an Internal Controls – Financial Reporting operating guideline which has been attached as Appendix 3. Policies are reviewed and updated as per the change cycle as included in each policy.

5. **Please advise the status of the Stormwater Masterplan.**

    The Stormwater Master Plan is planned for 2027.

6. **What tax credits will be offered to tenants the come to the new industrial park on HWY 26?**

    There has been no consideration of tax credits to date.

7. **The Municipality has a Project Charter for Climate Change Mitigation and Resiliency. Are there any other climate change initiatives currently being discussed, planned, or implemented across areas such as roads and infrastructure, water and**

wastewater, parks and culture, planning and development, or asset management?

The climate change initiatives currently being implemented are:

- Installation of EV chargers
- Design of solar panel
- Installation of LED lighting in administration facilities, arena and community centre

8. **Can a copy of the June 1, 2020, CAO report and the answers provided by TC Energy on January 31, as referenced below, be provided?**
   - **June 1, 2020: At a special Meaford Council meeting, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) presented a report regarding the Project, outlining concerns primarily related to environmental protection. The report recommended that the Municipality submit a letter to DND supporting the Project proceeding to the applicable environmental assessment approvals process, subject to conditions. Council unanimously supported the recommendation.**

     The referenced report is available as part of the public agenda package from the June 1, 2020 meeting: https://meaford.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=1462

     There is a letter provided as Appendix 3 to the above-noted report. While not dated January 31, staff believe may be what you are requesting.

9. **Please provide any related meeting notes, correspondence, reports, or other documentation regarding the subsequent discussions between the CAO and TC Energy referenced below?**
     - **May 9, 2022: Following the January 2022 delegation to Council and TC Energy's response to the CAO's 2020 report, Council unanimously directed the CAO to discuss potential community betterments with TC Energy and provide regular updates to Council. Subsequent discussions between CAO and TC Energy took place in May and June 2022.**

As this request involves correspondence and records potentially containing confidential business or third-party information, it is not possible for staff to provide a comprehensive response through this informal Q&A process. If you are seeking additional records, please proceed through the access to information process under the Municipal Freedom of Information & Access to Information Act. More information is available here: https://www.meaford.ca/freedom-of-information/

10. Please provide a copy of the Project Charter, as well as the original and revised Terms of Reference (TOR), as referenced below.

- **November 13, 2023: Council approved the 2022–2026 Strategic Priorities, which included the Ontario Pumped Storage Project Charter. This directed staff to establish:**
    - **An informal Ontario Pumped Storage internal working group; and**
    - **A formal Municipal Committee comprised of local residents, referred to as the OPS Community Steering Committee, with Terms of Reference to be brought forward in 2024.**

Specifically, please provide:

- **The initial TOR presented by staff for the PSAC Committee on February 12, 2024;**
- **Any comments or presentation provided by TC Energy regarding the initial TOR draft, including the date and timestamp of the deputation so it can be reviewed; and**
- **The revised/final TOR and any documentation outlining the changes made from the original draft.**

The February 12, 2024 report, including Draft TOR as Appendix 2, is available at the following link: https://meaford.civicweb.net/document/162289/CAO2024-05%20-%20Pumped%20Storage%20Project%20Update.pd?handle578C5D5407C14B37B99AA83318ED9F86

Documentation outlining the changes made between the original draft and final adopted version is not available.

Staff searched Council agendas between February 12, 2024 and the adoption of the first TOR for deputations from TC Energy and none were located.

Original TOR adopted by Council: By-law 2024-13 (repealed by 2025-54)
Revised TOR: By-law: By-law 2025-54 (repealed by 2026-33)

11. **Please provide copies of the minutes and related documentation from the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) established by TC Energy in November 2020.**

The Municipality cannot disclose records belonging to a third-party through this Q&A process.

Week of September 7, 2026

1. **Please confirm the extent of TC Energy's liability and financial responsibility for damages resulting from accidents or incidents associated with the project throughout its operational lifetime, including whether TC Energy has stated that it will assume zero liability for such damages, and provide the relevant documents, agreements, project descriptions, correspondence, or other supporting materials that establish or clarify TC Energy's liability commitments.**

Further information regarding the details of the Ontario Pumped Storage project is available at ontariopumpedstorage.com

2. **Please identify all companies, individuals, or unions that provided third-party funding or in-kind support to candidates in the 2022 and 2026 elections, including the amount and/or estimated value of any financial or in-kind contributions provided.**

Financial reporting for the 2026 election will take place following the end of the campaign period; staff do not have any information about election spending in 2026 to-date.

The tables below details the monetary and in-kind donations made to candidates in the 2022 election. In addition to candidate-specific donations made below, Tom Bumstead registered as a third-party advertiser on behalf of Save Georgian Bay and reported spending $2,986.42 on brochures/flyers. The Financial Statements filed by each candidate and third party advertiser are public documents that can be viewed in person at the Clerk's Office. Appointments are recommended.

Monetary Donations to Candidates (2022 Election)		
Candidate	**Donor**	**Amount**

Ross Kentner	Robin Lambe	$	414.19
Ross Kentner	Jim Sullivan	$	104.31
Steven Bartley	Lorraine Vansen	$	500.00
Brandon Forder	Heather Shipway	$	1,200.00
Brandon Forder	Larry Shipway	$	1,200.00
Brandon Forder	Lorne Forder	$	1,000.00
Brandon Forder	Lee Anne Forder	$	500.00
Brandon Forder	Jodie Hawker	$	75.00
Eric Ennis	Peri Taylor	$	150.00

In-Kind Donations to Candidates (2022 Election)			
Candidate	Donor	Description	Value
Shirley Keaveney	Elizabeth Keaveney	Brochure	$ 326.57
Brandon Forder	Anne De Haas	Photography	$ 600.00
Brandon Forder	Canadian Pet Connection	Billboard Space Rental	$ 226.00

12. **Please identify all financial or in-kind contributions, sponsorships, donations, advertising, or other forms of support that TC Energy has provided to the Municipality or for events held on Municipal property, including contributions toward the Chamber of Commerce's Christmas on the Bay, the Cenotaph, and other community events, and provide the amount and purpose of each contribution.**

The Municipality received $1,500 in sponsorship funding towards the replacement of the lights for the Christmas tree in downtown Meaford.

The contributions or sponsorships from TC Energy for other community events are the responsibility of the event organizer, i.e. Christmas on the Bay, Meaford Chamber of Commerce, etc.

TC Energy advertising at the Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre is related to sponsorship of the Knights of Meaford Hockey Club by TC Energy and is not part of a Municipal advertising program.

3. **Please provide a breakdown of the costs associated with online/telephone voting compared to in-person voting, including the total costs.**

The cost of the internet and telephone voting system is approximately $25,000. The total budget to administer the 2026 election is $148,810.

Staff estimate that the cost to administer an in-person, paper ballot election in 2026 would have exceeded $180,000. In comparison to internet and telephone voting, costs that could be saved in a paper ballot election include those related to contract services for the voting system. Conversely, additional costs would be added in staff time (i.e. poll workers, additional staff time for recruitment, training and coordination of poll workers), print materials (i.e. ballots), and vote tabulators (recommended to achieve smallest margin of error in vote counting).

Here is the report that went to Council in April 2025 outlining various options for the voting method, which provides more information: [CAO2025-03 - 2026 Elections - Selection of Voting Method]

- Please note: The $70,000 budget identified at the writing of the above-noted report was based on funds available in the Elections Reserve at that time and did not include the addition of a part-time Elections Assistant, internal chargebacks for staff time and the contribution made to the Elections Reserve, all subsequently approved as part of the 2026 Operating Budget.

Week of August 31, 2026

1. **Would you please provide copies of all MOUs, agreements, and correspondence between the CAO, Council, and TC Energy (TCE), including the initial agreement between the CAO and TCE and the complete package related to the Pre-Development Agreement?**

The public documents related to the Pumped Storage Project are available at meaford.ca/pumped-storage-project/

As this request involves correspondence and records potentially containing confidential business or third-party information, it is not possible for staff to provide a comprehensive response through this informal Q&A process. If you are seeking additional records, please proceed through the access to information process under the *Municipal Freedom of Information & Access to Information Act*. More information is available here: https://www.meaford.ca/freedom-of-information/

2. **Please provide the YouTube link and corresponding timestamp from the 2024 Council meeting at which Councillor Tony Bell spoke about the military and the sacrifices made by members of the military to our country. He subsequently expressed his support for TC Energy (TCE) and used the term "sacrifice."**

Staff are not aware of this specific comment. All past livestreams are available at https://www.youtube.com/@municipalityofmeaford for candidates to review.

3. **Please provide any by-laws, policies, or applicable standards relating to green building requirements, including those established by the Municipality, provided by the County, or referenced in the Provincial Planning Statement.**

The Municipality follows the Grey County Green Development program. Details of the program are available at grey.ca/government/special-projects/green-development-program

4. **Please provide a breakdown of the funding allocated to the Municipality by the Province for each of the 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 fiscal years, including the total amount received in each year**

and the specific services, programs, or initiatives for which the funding was provided.

The Municipality's Financial Statements for 2022, 2023, & 2024 that show the Provincial funding received by the Municipality are available at meaford.ca/budget/.

5. Is the Fire Service Standard Policy equivalent of a Fire Department Establishing and Regulating By-law?

No. The by-law to establish and regulate the Meaford Fire Department currently in effect is By-law 2023-74.

6. Is the Disconnecting from Work Policy the equivalent of an Electronic Monitoring Policy?

No, these are two separate policies. Disconnecting from work covers communication boundaries, while electronic monitoring covers surveillance and tracking. These are two separate legal requirements.

7. Can you advise if the following policies exist but may be named something different:

Policy in Question	Status
Hiring Policy	Included in the Human Resources Policies Manual and falls under By-Law 040-2014
Council-Staff Relations Policy	Currently Council-Staff Communications Protocol (under review)
Public Notice Policy	Legislative Public Notice Policy (under Review)
Delegation of Council powers and duties Policy	Does not exist (see Delegated Authority By-law)

Fire Prevention Programming	Fire Department Establishing & Regulating By-law 2023-74
Commissioner of Oaths & Affidavits Policy	Does not exist (not being proposed at this time)
Tax Billing & Collection Policy	Tax Rate- By-law 2026-49
Water & Sewer Billing and Collection Policy	Does not exist
Council Information Technology Usage Policy (this is not the Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes but for general use throughout term)	Does not exist
Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy	Included in the Communications Policy

Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy	Included in the Human Resources Policies Manual
Internal Financial Controls Policy	Does not exist
Disposal Of Municipal Assets Policy (used for anything other than land)	Does not exist
Insurance & Risk Management Policy	Does not exist
Fire Department Honorarium Policy	Does not exist
Waste Management Policy	Does not exist

Week of August 24, 2026

1. **Have the Sale and Disposal of Municipal Property Corporate Policy been updated to reflect current practices? If so, when was the most recent update approved?**

The Sale and Disposal of Municipal Property Policy was adopted by By-law 104-2007 on October 9, 2007.

2. **Based on the current implementation of the Administrative Penalty System and the staff reports previously presented at Council, what is the current projected variance from the approved $200,000 budget?**

The process of the Administrative Penalty System program was delayed significantly due to some shifting of priorities along with the determination of how Council wanted to deal with the Short-Term Accommodation Licensing program. This question was and still is "If Council wishes to increase the number of Bedrooms from more than 3 to determine occupancy". Staff also projected that a Sewer Discharge By Law would be brought forward in 2026 that would have been helpful in the challenges with Inflow and Infiltration.

3. **The Corporate Management budget includes $1.5 million in anticipated revenue under account 4170 (Sale of Assets), as well as $437,750 in new principal and interest debt repayment expenditures under accounts 6350 and 6355. Could you please provide a link to the public report, approved budget document, or budget meeting materials that clarify (1) how the remaining $1,062,250 of the anticipated sale-of-assets revenue has been allocated, including how these proceeds were directly connected to the repayment of debt associated with the 2025/2026 acquisition of commercial and industrial lands near Highway 26 and Muir Street; and (2) the rationale and supporting documentation demonstrating the understanding that using proceeds from the sale of municipal land to reduce the tax levy is not considered a sustainable long-term practice?**

Council will have the opportunity to provide direction on how the revenues from the sale of municipal lands should be allocated. At the time of the land acquisition, the financial impact identified that, ideally, the proceeds from the sale of other lands deemed surplus could be used to offset the purchase cost. However, the ultimate funding approach, whether through the sale of municipal lands or long-term debt, remains at Council's discretion, as identified in the CAO2025-37 report considered in November 2025.

At the time of purchase, consideration was also given to the potential future sale of the acquired lands, with the Municipality retaining control over their future use through the disposition process. Since the acquisition, however, the potential development of a permanent OPP detachment has emerged as an opportunity. As a result, if the OPP detachment project proceeds, the potential sale of the commercial lands and the allocation of any resulting sale proceeds will need to be reconsidered.

4. **Please provide the justification, based on the approved Development Charges Background Study (DCBS) and/or applicable Development Charges legislation, supporting the eligibility of the Edwin Street purchase as a development-charge-funded project, particularly given that the public information contained in Staff Report CAO2026-14 indicates that the purchase is intended to replace existing municipal space.**

The purchase of the Edwin Street property provided an opportunity to consider the use of development charge funding, as the additional space is specifically intended to address growth-related requirements for parks and trails. The potential eligibility for development charge funding is therefore based on the portion of the acquisition that supports identified growth-related parks and trail needs.

5. **Can I see a list of all active policies approved by Council and those still in force from prior Councils?**

A list of all active policies approved by Council is attached as Appendix 1 to this document. The current term of Council began on November 21, 2022; any policies preceding that date or noted as "undated" can be taken as remaining in force from prior terms of Council.

Please note that a Policy Governance Framework was adopted by Council in July 2026, which you can read more about here: By-law 2026-58 – Adopt a Policy Governance Framework. As part of the enactment of the Policy Governance Framework, a comprehensive review of the Municipality's policies is currently underway.

Please provide a copy of the Corporate Customer Service Policy.

The Customer Service Standards Policy is attached as Appendix 2.

Appendix 1

Municipal Policies (Council Adopted by By-law)

Active as of August 26, 2026

By-law Number	Short-form Title
2004-58	Tax Sale Cancellation Fee Policy
2005-74	Amend Cancellation Fee Policy
2007-104	Policy - Sale of Real Property
2009-26	Policy - Site Plan Control
2009-98	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2011-50	Policy - Recreation space as condition of development
2012-48	Policy - Council Conference and Workshop
2013-50	Policy - Municipal Investment
2013-111	Policy - General Reserve and Reserve Fund
2014-66	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2014-76	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2015-42	Policy - Debt Management
2016-11	Policy - Formal Complaints
2016-20	Policy - Development Charges Deferral of Payment
2016-58	Policy - Anti-Idling
2017-19	Policy - Streetlight Installation
2017-42	Policy - Integrated Accessibility Standards
2017-58	Policy - Records and Information Management
2018-23	Policy - Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes
2018-39	Policy - Fire Service Standard
2018-44	Policy - Communications
2018-45	Policy - Social Media
2018-52	Policy - Council Parental Leave
2018-59	Policy - Flag & Water Tower Lights
2018-63	Policy - Specialized Transit
2018-87	Policy - Appointments
2019-25	Policy - Tree Canopy
2019-37	Policy - Community Builder Award
2019-52	Policy - Strategic Asset Management

2019-84	Policy - Business Recognition Program
2020-09	Policy - Cannabis Retail Store
2020-14	Policy - CAO Annual Performance Review Process
2020-19	Policy - Capital Donor Recognition for the Meaford Public Library Project
2020-33	Policy - Recreation Programs & Facility Cancellation
2020-76	Policy - Street, Park and Facility Naming
2020-83	Policy - Tangible Capital Asset
2021-38	Policy - Streetscape Banner
2021-43	Policy - Roadside Vegetation Management
2021-75	Policy - Cost of Living Adjustment
2021-76	Policy - Land Acknowledgement
2021-86	Policy - Council Remuneration
2022-28	Policy - Commercial Patios on Municipal Lands
2022-54	Policy - Purchasing
2022-61	Policy - Community Well-being Bursary
2022-66	Policy - Infrastructure Renewal Fee
2023-66	Policy - Customer Service
2023-68	Policy - Significant Weather Event
2024-50	Policy - Staff Communication Protocol
2025-27	Policy - Recreation Fund
2025-63	Policy - Municipal Alcohol Risk Management
2026-27	Policy - Municipally Significant Events

Municipal Policies (Council Adopted by Resolution)

Effective Date	Policy Name
2011	Policy - Access to Municipal Records
Undated	Policy - Accountabilty and Transparency
Jan-13	Policy - Disaster Recovery for Vital Records
29-May-06	Policy - Indemnification
Undated	Policy - Issuance of Correspondence and Use of Corporate Letterhead
19-Apr-04	Policy - Legislative Public Notice
28-Mar-11	Policy - Media Relations
Jan-13	Policy - Municipal E-mail Policy and Procedures
May-22	Policy - Disconnecting from Work
Jul-09	Policy - Property Standards Enforcement
Undated	Policy - Special Events
2012	Policy - Tobacco-Free Recreation
Undated	Policy - Video Surveillance
Undated	Policy - Winter Service Operations

Municipality of Meaford Corporate Policy

Policy: **Customer Service Standards Policy**

Division: **Legislative Services**

Last Revision: **October 2023**

Policy Statement

Purpose

Definitions

Scope

Policy Requirements

Review

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Authority

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Change History

Policy Statement

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to providing a positive, fair and consistent standard of service that is timely and accessible, delivered by staff who are knowledgeable and courteous at each point of contact and in every interaction.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance on minimum standards in the area of customer service to reinforce staff communication with the public that is effective, efficient, consistent and respectful.

Definitions

“Contact Us” is the resident request management software, including the online portal where customers can ask a question, submit feedback or report a concern into the case tracking system.

“Customers” include staff, residents, business owners, visitors, tourists, investors and other stakeholders.

“Customer Service Team” includes staff who are directly interacting with members of the public as part of their regular municipal duties.

Scope

The Customer Service Standards policy sets out clearly defined expectations regarding the minimum level of customer service expected to be delivered by municipal staff and provides standards for delivery of services through in-person, telephone, electronic/written correspondence, and through the resident request management software (“Contact Us”).

This document provides comprehensive minimum standards. Divisions may institute higher standards in alignment with statutory and non-statutory requirements.

The standards outlined in this document aim to:

- Provide a consistent and positive customer service experience;
- Enhance communications with customers and staff;
- Reduce calls and inquiries from being “bounced around” internally; and

- Focus on the key drivers of customer satisfaction at all levels of the Municipality to:
    - Respond and acknowledge receipt of customer contact within a reasonable time frame;
    - Provide accurate information and/or the avenue for the customer to receive it;
    - Provide a response and ensure completeness of service or request;
    - Provide fair and consistent treatment; and
    - Be polite and respectful.

Policy Requirements

Responsibilities

This policy applies to all employees of the Municipality of Meaford, including full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, casual and students. It is important to recognize that customer service is the responsibility of all municipal employees.

Employees

Employees are responsible for:

1. Adhering to the standards set out in this policy;
2. Acting as ambassadors and providing guidance to customers and other staff in meeting the policy standards;
3. Participating and engaging in training opportunities that support the Customer Service Standards policy; and
4. Discussing any difficulties or barriers encountered in meeting the objectives of this policy with their immediate supervisor.

Staff should do what is necessary to help a customer even if it is not their area of responsibility or if they have no personal knowledge of the subject matter. This may involve taking down relevant details relating to the issue as well as contact information to be inputted into "Contact Us" for tracking and follow-up. There should be no circumstances where employees respond with "that is not my responsibility".

Directors and Managers

Directors and Managers are responsible for:

1. Ensuring staff are aware of the Customer Service Standards policy and relevant procedures;
2. Providing and supporting attendance at the necessary training and providing coaching to help staff understand and meet the standards; and
3. Continuing to monitor the standards through the performance evaluation process.

Chief Administrative Officer

Chief Administrative Officer or delegate may approve reasonable deviations from this policy on an exception basis.

Members of Council

Members of Council are responsible for:

1. Directing inquiries and complaints that require corporate action to "Contact Us" for tracking and follow up;
2. Adhering to the Staff/Council Relations policy when addressing inquires and complaints.

If required, the Mayor will respond on behalf of Council if the correspondence is sent to all members of Council.

Principles of Customer Service

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to the following customer service principles:

1. Delivering a positive and consistent customer experience, focused on building trust and credibility with all customers;
2. Proactively responding to customers and their changing needs, including leveraging opportunities to modernize services to improve customer convenience and enhance efficiencies; and
3. Ensuring staff have the appropriate knowledge, skills and resources to deliver successful customer service.

In-person Customer Service

Two primary customer service desks are the main point of contact for in-person customer service, 21 Trowbridge Street West (main Administration office) and 15 Trowbridge Street West (Development Services office).

In-person customer service is provided in these two locations Monday to Friday, except holidays, from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Every effort will be made to provide as much notice as possible if service will be temporarily unavailable by posting a closure notice on the door. Closure notices may be accompanied by social media notices or other forms of additional communication based on the level of closure (or disruption to service) and the resources available.

A number of secondary customer service locations across the Municipality are open to the public including Meaford Hall, Meaford Museum, Meaford Public Library and Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre. Operating hours for these locations may vary seasonally or be based on events or other factors. Current operating hours shall be posted on the municipal website and every effort will be made to provide as much notice as possible regarding changes to operating hours at these locations.

For both primary and secondary customer service locations, customer service team members will aim for wait times to be less than 10 minutes unless otherwise advised, serving people in the order that they appear. The only exception is for customers who have scheduled appointments with staff.

Telephone

Customer Service staff are available by phone at 519-538-1060 with the aim to answer calls live and provide resolution on first contact where possible. If needed, callers will be directed to the correct staff member to have their issue resolved by involving as few municipal staff as possible. Alternatively, the customer service staff may take down relevant details relating to the issue as well as contact information to be inputted into “Contact Us” for tracking and follow-up. Where the call is not answered live and the customer leaves a voicemail, calls will be returned as soon as possible and within one business day.

For all other staff members, calls that are not answered live and where voicemails are left are expected to be returned within 2 business days. Depending on the nature of the call, staff’s response within two days may not always provide a complete resolution. If this is the case, there shall be an acknowledgement that the message has been received within this time frame and an outline shall be provided of when a more detailed response or action can be expected.

Text messages may be received but are not tracked as a formal customer service inquiry. To ensure a timely and appropriate response in writing, customers shall contact the Municipality through e-mail.

Written and Electronic Correspondence

Written Correspondence

Written mail (letters) and fax correspondence are monitored at all municipal facilities daily Monday to Friday. Correspondence received through these means are date stamped and forwarded to the relevant division to be processed.

Staff will ensure correspondence is responded to within five days of receipt by the Municipality (ie mailing a reply).

Electronic Correspondence

Customer Service staff monitor the general email (info@meaford.ca) daily and will provide a resolution or acknowledgement within one business day. Where appropriate, the email query will be inputted into "Contact Us" and assigned to the appropriate staff member for tracking and follow-up. Upon the case being created, an email will be sent which shall serve as the acknowledgement.

For all other staff members, an initial response to an email inquiry shall be provided within two business days. Depending on the nature of the written or electronic correspondence, staff's response within two days may not always provide a complete resolution. If this is the case, there shall be an acknowledgement that the message has been received within this time frame and an outline shall be provided of when a more detailed response or action can be expected. If a different timeframe for response is required by law or for other reasons, staff should meet that timeframe.

For written or electronic correspondence that represent comments or feedback regarding large projects and applications, for example planning applications or official plan review comments, submissions will be acknowledged as received but not addressed individually. Instead, feedback will be summarized and concerns will be addressed through a staff report or other appropriate capacity to the process.

Electronic and written correspondence does not include text messages.

"Contact Us"

The Municipality of Meaford uses a resident request management system called "Contact Us". A file can be opened by staff or my members of the public through the municipal website at www.meaford.ca/ContactUs .

This system allows staff to log requests made to customer service staff that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, and where a request is made to a staff member outside of the responsible division. This applies to in-person requests, telephone/voicemails and written/electronic correspondence.

Upon creation and where an email address has been provided, "Contact Us" will send out a confirmation email that includes a case tracking number. Cases shall not be closed by staff until the issue has been resolved. Upon resolution and where an email address has been provided, a confirmation e-mail shall be sent indicating the case has been closed with staff notes on action taken to resolve the case. If an email has not been provided, staff shall call back the member of the public or otherwise notify them of the action taken to resolve the case and confirm it is closed.

Staff shall adhere to the same standards as outlined in electronic correspondence for responding to requests received through "Contact Us".

Extended Absences

When staff members are going to be absent for longer than two consecutive business days, their voicemail and email out of office messages shall reflect their time away and shall provide the contact of an alternate staff member where possible.

This standard shall not apply to unexpected absences such as the staff member being absent due to illness. In this instance, Human Resources will coordinate an update with Information Technology as soon as practical.

After-hours Inquires

All after-hour high priority or public safety issues received through telephone will prompt the caller to engage with the Municipality's after-hours emergency call handling service.

Unacceptable Behaviour or Conduct

Providing high quality customer service is important to delivering programs and services in the Municipality. Municipal staff, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the Municipality are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.

Equally, customers are responsible for behaving in a respectful manner to promote a safe and positive environment.

For the purposes of this policy, unacceptable conduct is any action by a customer, which because of its nature or frequency, has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on the Municipality, staff, other customers, services, time and/or resources.

Dissatisfied Customers

Dissatisfied customers are encouraged to work with municipal staff in an informal manner to resolve the situation. If an issue cannot be resolved in this way, customers should be directed to the Formal Complaints process (www.meaford.ca/FormalComplaints). This process is designed to address major dissatisfaction with actions, or lack thereof, of the Municipality of Meaford regarding operations, facilities or services provided, or the conduct of a municipal employee.

Service requests, general feedback or dissatisfaction with a Council-adopted policy are not formal complaints.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed every term of Council.

Monitoring

The Chief Administrative Officer shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy.

Authority

This policy is established pursuant to Section 11 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 which provides for the passing of by-laws and adoption of policies pertaining to the accountability and transparency of the Municipality.

Contact

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Change History

Policy Name	Effective Date	Significant Changes	By-law No.
Customer Service Policy		New policy	

Municipality of Meaford Operating Guideline

Subject:	**Internal Controls – Financial Reporting**
Department:	**Financial Services**
Last Revision:	

Overview

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Overview

1.1. The Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford is committed to establishing, implementing, and monitoring effective internal controls to ensure the following:

1.1.1. That the Municipality's assets are safeguarded;

1.1.2. That day-to-day operations are efficient and effective;

1.1.3. That accounting and financial information is reliable and complete; and

1.1.4. That the Municipality operates within applicable laws and regulations.

2.1. This guide shall ensure that the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford will be well managed, with prudent stewardship of public funds, and the effective, efficient and economical use of Municipality resources.

2.2. This guide provides fundamental reference information on internal control processes and the reporting of internal control compliance.

2.3. This guide presents reliable reporting mechanisms, providing transparency and accountability for how the Municipality spends its public funds to achieve results, and deliver services to the residents of Meaford.

Scope

3.1. This guide applies to all activities that are under taken by Administration in regards to the use of assets, whether those assets are financial or non-financial in nature.

3.2. This guide shall be reviewed every two years from the date it becomes effective, and/or sooner at the discretion of the Director of Financial Services/Treasurer.

3.3. Any reference in this Guide to any statute or any section of a statute shall, unless expressly stated, be deemed to be reference to the statute as amended, restated or re-enacted from time to time. Any references to a By-law or Municipality guide shall be deemed to be a reference to the most recent passed guide or By-law and any replacements thereto.

Definitions

4.1. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford, which includes the roles and responsibilities as laid out in Section 229 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

4.2. Council refers to the current elected Council for the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford. This includes, as an entirety, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

4.3. Director is the person responsible for direction and operational control of a division as defined on the Municipality's organizational structure.

4.4. Deputy Treasurer is the Deputy Treasurer for the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford, which includes the roles and responsibilities as laid out in Section 286 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

4.5. Internal Controls are a process by which the Municipality attempts to prevent or minimize the likelihood of accounting-related errors, irregularities, and illegal acts. Internal controls help safeguard funds, provide efficient and effective management of assets, and permit accurate financial accounting. Internal controls cannot eliminate all errors and irregularities, but they can alert Council to potential problems.

4.6. Staff is any person employed with the Municipality of Meaford, including any union or nonunion, regular or temporary, full-time, part-time, seasonal or casual staff member, including but not limited to permanent staff, temporary staff, students, recreation staff, contract employees, and paid work placements.

4.7. Municipality is the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford.

4.8. Treasurer is the Treasurer for the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford, which includes the roles and responsibilities as laid out in Section 286 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

Responsibilities

5.1. Council has the authority and responsibility to:

5.1.1. Receive reports from Financial Services provided in response to this guide.

5.1.2. Thoroughly review reports from Financial Services to gain complete comprehension of the Municipality's financial position.

5.1.3. Request clarification of reported items if forecasts are unclear or if further explanation is required to ensure comprehension of financial reports.

5.1.4. Request additional financial reports from the Director of Financial Services/Treasurer as required.

5.2. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has the authority and responsibility to:

5.2.1. Ensure that all actions undertaken by employees are consistent with this guide.

5.2.2. Support the Municipality's control and risk management activities.

5.2.3. Ensure that the Financial Services Department provides to Council all yearly and quarterly reports, as indicated through this guide.

5.3. Director of Financial Services/Treasurer has the authority and responsibility to:

5.3.1. Provide to Council all yearly and quarterly reports, as indicated through this guide.

5.3.2. Ensure the establishment, maintenance, monitoring, and review of internal controls to mitigate risk in the following areas:

5.3.2.1. The effectiveness and efficiency of programs, operations and resource management, including the safeguarding of Municipality assets;

5.3.2.2. The reliability of financial reporting; and, 5.3.2.3. Compliance with legislation, regulation and policies and delegated authorities.

5.3.3. Monitor compliance with this guide and its supporting directives and standards through periodic audits and other reviews to ensure their effective implementation.

5.3.4. Ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken to address significant issues relating to the system of internal controls and reporting.

5.3.5. Provide reports or information on the system of internal controls as requested by Municipality Council.

5.3.6. Act as the ultimate source of information in regards to the Municipality's financial reporting mechanisms and processes.

5.3.7. In the absent of the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer shall assume the roles and responsibilities of the Treasurer.

Specific Procedure

6.1. Risks relating to the stewardship of Municipality resources will be adequately managed through effective financial reports to properly mitigate any potential human errors that may occur.

6.2. An effective risk-based system of reporting shall be implemented throughout the organization in accordance to this guide.

6.3. Reporting will be properly maintained, monitored, and reviewed, with timely corrective measures taken when issues, or potential issues, are identified.

6.4. Financial reports will be provided to Council and the public by the Department of Financial Services in the form of Quarterly and Yearly reports.

6.5. The following financial reports will be provided to Council Monthly:

6.5.1. Budget to Actuals – Operations Fund

6.5.2. Budget to Actuals – Water Fund

6.5.3. Budget to Actuals – Wastewater Fund

6.5.4. Capital Spending

6.6. The following financial reports will be provided to Council Yearly:

6.6.1. Audited Financial Statement

6.6.2. Financial Information Return

6.6.3. Budget for Operations

6.6.4. Budget for Water

6.6.5. Budget for Wastewater

6.6.6. Reserve and Reserve Funds

6.6.7. Outstanding Debt

Forms/Templates

- Not applicable

Reference Documents

a. **Internal**
Internal Controls Guideline

b. **External**
Municipal Act, 2001

Contact

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Change History

Guideline Name	Effective Date	Significant Changes