



MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE

REPORT NO. LS-C-003-24

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Director of Legislative Services/Clerk
MEETING DATE: February 12, 2024
SUBJECT: **Marriage Solemnization**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. LS-C-003-24 be received for information;
AND THAT Thames Centre Council agree to “Opt-In” in accordance with Regulation 285/04 made under the *Marriage Act*, to authorize the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to perform Civil Marriages;
AND THAT the Wedding Ceremony Fee of \$300.00 (plus HST) and Witness Fee of \$25.00 (plus HST), be established for the solemnization of civil marriages and providing witnesses to a marriage;
AND THAT a By-law to appoint marriage commissioners for the municipality be brought forward at the next Regular Meeting of Council.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the opportunity to provide Civil Marriage Commissioners for the provision of Civil Marriages, both at the Municipal Office and for the occasional off-site service.

BACKGROUND:

Staff have received inquiries about the options for Civil Marriages and the closest option is the City of London or Township of Zorra. Currently, there is a staff member who provided marriage commissioning at a past place of employment and both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk are interested in providing this service to the public.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk will be the marriage commissioners unless demand warrants having anyone else appointed.

AMCTO is hosting a Civil Marriage Solemnization workshop in March 2024 and staff have signed up for this.

Marriages at Municipal Office – during normal business hours

- Marriage ceremonies without any religious connotations will be conducted by a marriage commissioner from the Legislative Services Department, between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm Monday to Friday, in the Council Chambers.
- Couples are to provide two (2) witnesses who must be present at the ceremony. Should witnesses be required, the Municipality agrees to provide two (2) staff members to witness at a fee of \$25.00 per witness.

Off-Site Marriages

- Marriage Commissioners will receive \$150.00 for each off-site wedding they officiate, outside of normal working hours.
- Should a Marriage Commissioner perform an off-site wedding during normal working hours, they will receive mileage to and from the location.
- Marriage Commissioners will not be required to provide off-site ceremonies outside of normal working hours, this will only be available pending staff availability.

Fees

- \$300.00 (plus HST) for providing marriage commissioners, whether at Municipal Office or at an alternative location, both during regular business hours and outside of normal hours.
- \$25.00 (plus HST) per witness. This is only available for weddings on-site at the Municipal Office.
- Mileage at the rate listed on the Fees and Charges By-law. This applies to off-site ceremonies only.
- \$50.00 (plus HST) for attendance at an off-site rehearsal.
- \$100.00 (plus HST) administration fee will be retained should the booking be cancelled at least 24 hours prior to booking. No refund will be offered if the couple does not arrive on the date scheduled.
- All fees are collected by the Municipality of Thames Centre and are required to be paid prior to the ceremony.

This will provide additional revenue to the Clerk's Office and a service to the community.

COMMENTS:

Attached is a more detailed breakdown of how this new service will be provided, should Council approve.

Staff do have some sample ceremony wording from other municipalities, which to some degree, they are able to customize to each couple.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This would provide additional revenue for the Legislative Services Department.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK

Pillar: *Sustainability*

Goal: *Ensure that the Municipality maintains fiscal prudence, along with affordable and sustainable taxation levels*

CONSULTATION:

S. Henshaw, Deputy Clerk/Lottery Licensing Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Civil Marriage Services – Thames Centre Municipal Office (Service Breakdown)

Prepared by: J. Nethercott, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk

Reviewed by: D. Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer