

TOWN OF SHELBURNE OPERATIONAL REVIEW

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Introduction

The purpose of this Operational Review is to establish existing conditions and identify the risks to the Town of Shelburne's vision¹ and long-term sustainability. The Operational Review provides a starting point and context for examining governance options. The information in this report may also be used to develop and test potential solutions and monitor progress.

Approach

Five areas of municipal operations were examined to confirm current conditions, forecast future needs and identify potential risks to the Town's vision and long-term sustainability:

- i. Governance,
- ii. Financial Capacity,
- iii. Service Delivery ,
- iv. Human Resource Management,
- v. Municipal Facilities.

The following data and information sources were used to conduct the Operational Review:

- Best practice research,
- Information provided by the Staff and Council, both through interviews and formal SWOT exercises,
- Existing reports,
- UARB water rate submissions and decisions,
- Annual Municipal Statistics Reports and Municipal Indicators, produced by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations,
- Financial statements and budget documents,
- Related municipal legislation,
- Town policies,
- Collective Agreement,
- Site visits
- Review of websites and telephone discussion with the benchmark municipalities.

Summary of findings

Overall, the most significant risks to the Town of Shelburne's vision and long term sustainability are that:

- The steadily decreasing population (16.5% decrease between 1991 and 2006) will continue to decline and assessment values will follow over time;

¹ The vision as defined in Shelburne's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) is: " *Shelburne is a full-service community where a diverse population can live, learn and play while enjoying a peaceful and well-balanced quality of life. We welcome friends and guests to enjoy Shelburne's natural and historic beauty*".

- The relatively high commercial tax rate in the Town of Shelburne² (more than twice the commercial rate in the neighbouring municipality) will discourage new businesses from locating in the Town and existing businesses to consider relocating outside the Town.

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the Town has no resources dedicated to either economic development or planning, both of which are central to addressing these risks.

Other findings include:

- i. *Governance* – Most town roles and responsibilities are clear from a day to day operational perspective but given that committees are operating without terms of reference, role clarity around accountability and decision making needs to be improved. Also, there is an opportunity to make improvements and move Town Council into a much needed strategic and policy role.
- ii. *Financial Capacity* - The Town is in sound financial condition. It has the ability to influence or control most of its financial drivers (assessment, population, attractiveness of community, debt, services), but must reverse the population trend to maintain and grow the commercial and residential assessment base over time.
- iii. *Service Delivery* - Municipal service levels are similar to those in benchmark communities except in planning and economic development and finance and administration. Current levels of service are not sustainable in the long term due to a decreasing population and increasing costs.
- iv. *Human Resource Management* – Decreasing population, demographic trends, critical skill requirements and external competition will make it challenging for the Town to attract, retain and motivate employees in the long-term.
- v. *Municipal Facilities* – Improvements are needed to some municipal facilities to support efficient and effective service delivery.

GOVERNANCE

Shelburne governance was assessed from a best practice perspective. The following categories were used to determine as is conditions and potential gaps, risks and opportunities:

² Compared to the benchmark towns used in the Operational Review, the commercial tax rate of the Town of Shelburne is in the mid-range. The commercial tax rate in the towns of Lockeport and Clark's Harbour are significantly higher than the Town of Shelburne (Shelburne: \$3.81 versus \$5.28 and \$5.14 for Lockeport and Clark's Harbour in 2009/10). It is interesting to note that the former town of Liverpool's commercial tax rate (including an area rate of \$1.00) was \$3.96 for the same time period.

- Vision,
- Roles and responsibilities,
- Working relationships,
- Decision making and management,
- Accountability.

Shelburne has a recently prepared and endorsed vision and accompanying plan (ICSP) to guide future work and priorities. This is a major positive achievement for the town. There are some issues with the Town's ability to implement the plan in that there are more recommendations and costs than can realistically be achieved. An economic development plan which builds on Shelburne's world class quality of life and potential for 'new economy' businesses is needed as the number one priority – the Town needs to invest in a plan that will give a return on investment before taking on new expenses.

Most town roles and responsibilities are clear from a day to day operational perspective but given that committees are operating without terms of reference, role clarity around accountability and decision making needs to be improved. Also, there is an opportunity to make improvements and move Town Council into a much needed strategic and policy role. Council wisely stepped back from their day to day work in taking on this study and asked how they could facilitate the Town's future sustainability. Currently Council has a very operational role as they have a Committee of Council and Clerk / Treasurer system. Councillors are very involved in day to day business, leaving them little or no time to set long term direction and develop the sustainability they strive for. Moving to a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) system would assist in addressing this situation and may enable a reduction in the number of Councillors. In a CAO system, the CAO is the head of the administration for the municipality and is responsible for directing a team of department heads, supervisors, technicians and support staff in order to manage the affairs of the municipality and to deliver public services.

Shelburne has more Committees than any of the bench mark communities. Reducing the number of Committees and moving to a Committee of the Whole system is recommended. None of the Committees have terms of reference, although the Waterfront Development Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission do have by-laws. Terms of reference should be developed for all committees that Council wishes to keep. Given the significant decision making roles these committees have in the current governance system, the lack of clearly defined mandates, decision making processes and roles presents a risk.

Two roles that are key to the Town's future sustainability – land use planning and economic development – are missing. Future work needs to address this gap.

The Town of Shelburne has good working relationships with most key stakeholders. They are building an improved working relationship with the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (MDS). Working relationship on the Shared Services Board could also be strengthened. An option may be to review the terms of reference, set goals and develop a joint business plan for shared services among participants.

Council /staff relations have room for improvement. There is a sense among some staff that their contributions are not always valued. Staff do not write reports to Council and there is a sense that their input and expertise are not sought in decision making. Building this role and relationship between Council and staff is encouraged.

There are no staff performance and evaluation plans, leaving a gap in accountability and opportunities to build a joint vision between Council and administration.

Records management improvements are in progress and additional resources have been sought to address needs. Records storage space is not efficient and may present some risks to records.

On a final note regarding governance, a culture of diversity and inclusiveness is important in retaining residents and attracting new people, but there does not appear to be any proactive work being done in this area.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Town of Shelburne is on a solid financial footing. There are no high peaks or deep valleys in the financial indicators that create financial viability concerns. Shelburne faces the same pressures as other towns and municipalities to achieve the right balance of keeping taxes down and providing as many services as possible. This pressure is not in itself an indicator of a poor financial condition, instead it is a reflection of the ongoing need to meet resident's needs for as small a tax burden as possible.

The following commonly used municipal financial indicators suggest that the Town of Shelburne is in good financial condition relative to the benchmark communities:

- Shelburne's residential tax burden (RTB) is 2nd lowest of the benchmark towns (\$1,159)³. However, with a variation of just under \$250 between highest (Berwick - \$1,398) and the lowest (Middleton - \$1,149), having the second lowest RTB is positive, but does not bring much actual benefit. Council will always feel pressure to keep taxes down and whether residents feel they receive value for the taxes they pay is another matter.
- Commercial assessment as a percent of total assessment in Shelburne is 29% compared to the average (and in this case the median too) of 26%. In the benchmark towns Shelburne has the highest commercial assessment as a percent of total. This measure indicates how much assistance residents get from the commercial tax base when it comes to covering operating and capital expenditures of the town.

³ Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, 2009 Municipal Indicators, <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/muns/indicators/public/ProfileRpt.asp>

These are not short-term concerns; rather they present a medium to long-term risk of an increasing tax burden. Coupled with a significant commercial tax burden differential between the Town of Shelburne and the rural Municipality of the District of Shelburne (typical of towns and rural municipalities), if the town begins to experience a loss of commercial assessment, the impact on tax revenues will be negative and immediate and will rest entirely on residents. The current financial situation is not the challenge; it presents opportunities to avoid problems in the future.

SERVICE DELIVERY⁵

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008⁶ Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 12.9% | 2/5 |

The Town of Shelburne provides a suite of municipal services typical of similar sized municipalities in Nova Scotia. Service levels are comparable to those of the benchmark municipalities in most areas except in planning and economic development and finance and administration. Each service will be examined in more detail below.

Shelburne’s service costs are generally in the mid-range compared to the benchmark communities. While total operating expenditures increased by 12.9% between 2004 and 2008, Shelburne’s operating costs on a per dwelling unit basis are the second lowest of the municipalities examined. All of the benchmarked municipalities experienced an increase in operating costs between 2004 and 2008 – ranging from a low in Middleton of 3.9% to a high in Stewiacke of 26.3%. This trend is reflected across Nova Scotia municipalities and can at least in part be attributed to increasing regulatory requirements (water and wastewater treatment and solid waste standards etc.) and expanding public service expectations. The residents of Shelburne bear the second lowest portion of residential service delivery costs of any of the benchmark municipalities.⁷

Community and organizational size present service delivery challenges for the town – in some instances limiting the ability to take advantage of economies of scale. Small organizations often struggle with the

⁵ Data source for service delivery cost information:

- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, 2004 & 2008 Annual Municipal Statistics Reports, <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/muns/info/>
- Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Index, provinces, not seasonally adjusted, historical data, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/62-001-x/2008003/5207876-eng.htm>

All dollar figures are adjusted to 2008 dollars

⁶ Service costs per dwelling unit were compared to/ranked against the benchmark communities (towns of: Berwick, Digby, Middleton and Stewiacke), a rating of 2/5 indicates that Shelburne has the 2nd lowest costs per dwelling unit of the benchmark communities.

⁷ In 2008 Shelburne’s residential tax revenue was 36.4% of total operating expenditures. In the benchmark municipalities the range was 33.9% to 41.9%.

inability to reduce their level of effort and associated costs below the minimum required and therefore face the fixed costs to deliver a service with little or no opportunity to further reduce without jeopardizing service. Another challenge in a small staff group is having sufficient coverage for specific functions when there is so few staff. This also presents challenges in internal controls which rely on segregating some duties between different employees to ensure no one person has access to too many pieces of a transaction which might put the town at risk. These issues do not necessarily have to be addressed with additional staff, compensating controls can be put in place and local, short-term resources including those in neighbouring towns and municipal units, can all be a part of an effective back-up plan.

Fire Services

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 35.0% | 2/5 |

As is the case in all of the benchmark communities, fire services are provided in Shelburne through a volunteer fire department. The department provides fire protection to the residents of the Town of Shelburne as well as to some areas outside of the Town: Sandy Point, Jordan Bay, Jordan Ferry, Jordan Branch Road, Woodlawn Drive approx, Lower Ohio, Birchtown, Beaver Dam area and Welshtown / Upper Clyde Area.

The cost of providing fire protection increased significantly – 35.0% growth – between 2004 and 2008. This was the highest cost increase of the benchmark communities. Although service costs have been increasing, Shelburne still had the second lowest costs on a per dwelling unit basis.

Police Services

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↓ | -1.1% | 3/5 |

Police services are provided to the Town of Shelburne on a contract basis with the RCMP through the Nova Scotia Provincial Policing Agreement. All of the benchmark municipalities provide policing through RCMP contracts. The cost of police services (on a per officer basis) has grown on an annual basis as per the Policing Agreement, but Shelburne’s costs have decreased because the officer complement was down one member (from 4 to 3). Shelburne’s policing costs are in the middle of the range compared to the benchmark municipalities.

Once the officer complement is fully staffed, policing costs will continue to rise on an annual basis, but the increase will be predictable. There are no feasible alternatives to the RCMP. The Provincial Policing

Agreement expires in March 2012, there is a high probability that the current funding formula will change and result in increased policing costs.

Transportation

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 23.2% | 3/5 |

Transportation services are delivered in Shelburne by the Town’s Public Works staff (4 full time and 2 seasonal). They maintain, repair and remove snow on the Town’s streets (40 kms paved, 2.5 kms gravel), sidewalks, (7 kms) ditches and culverts.

The cost of delivering transportation services is trending upward, with transportation expenditures increasing by 23.2% since 2004. On a per dwelling unit basis, Shelburne is in the middle of the five benchmark municipalities.

On the plus side, the Town’s Public Works staff is relatively young and a new Supervisor was recently hired, which will hopefully decrease the need to fill a significant number of vacancies in the near future.

Shelburne is unique amongst the benchmark communities, in that parks and fields maintenance is provided by Recreation staff, rather than Public Works staff. There are opportunities to realize efficiencies by sharing/amalgamating maintenance resources with the Recreation Department (the Town is currently taking action in this area).

Sewage Collection & Treatment

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 11.8% | 3/5 |

Public Works staff operate the Town’s wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment plant and carry out operations and maintenance.

Although the Town is currently meeting the Department of the Environment (DOE) requirements, new provincial requirements will soon be released, it is expected that these regulations will be more stringent than what is currently in place in regard to acceptable levels of overflow, infiltration, wasting and sludging.

On 20 May 2010 (when this report was presented) Shelburne was meeting DEO certification requirements. Since then, the Plant Operator has left his position with the Town and the Public Works Supervisor has solely been responsible for wastewater treatment as well as his regular supervisory duties⁸. Obviously this situation is not sustainable in the long term. Once contract negotiations are completed, the position of plan operator will be advertised and the position hopefully filled. This situation highlights the need for back up coverage. An option that should be explored is to develop an emergency backup plan resourced jointly with MDS.

Sewage collection and treatment costs increased between 2004 and 2008, although not significantly and on a per dwelling unit basis Shelburne's costs are in the mid-range of the benchmark communities.

Solid Waste Collection

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 33.9% | 5/5 |

Garbage, recycling and organics are collected bi-weekly through a local Joint Services Board (comprised of representatives from the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne and the Town of Lockeport). The level of service in Shelburne is similar to all of the benchmark municipalities, who all have bi-weekly pick-up and participate in some form of shared/joint services arrangement for solid waste collection and disposal.

The cost of solid waste collection increased by 33.9% since 2004. This represents the largest service cost increase of the benchmark communities and Shelburne has the highest cost on a per dwelling unit basis. Changes have recently been made to the costing structure and solid waste costs are expected to decrease by approximately 10% - although even with a 10% decrease, Shelburne will still have the highest solid waste costs on a per dwelling unit basis. Additional opportunities/options for decreasing service costs should be explored.

Planning & Development

| <i>Cost Trend 2005-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2005-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 23.8% | 2/5 |

Land Use Planning and Development services are provided to the Town by the Clerk/Treasurer without any professional planning assistance or support. There is no active land use planning in Shelburne and development activity is minimal. The Municipal Planning Strategy was prepared in late 1980s and the associated bylaws are used to guide decision making. An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

⁸ The Public Works Supervisor has Level 2 Certification and is the Direct Responsible Charge (DRC).

(ICSP) was developed in 2009, although without dedicated resources implementation will be challenging. Shelburne is the only benchmark community without dedicated planning resources, all of the benchmark communities either have a planning firm on retainer or are members of a regional planning commission. The Town has a part time by-law enforcement officer.

As a result of the disbanding of the local Regional Development Authority (RDA) on 31 March 2010, Shelburne has no resources dedicated to economic development. All of the benchmark communities are members of their local RDA.

Shelburne's expenditures for planning and development were the second lowest of all of the benchmark communities, in terms of both total costs and on a per dwelling unit basis. While in some instance low service delivery costs would be considered a positive, in this case it represents a serious risk to the realization of the town's vision.

Recreation & Culture

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08⁹</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| ↑ | 19.6% | 5/5 |

Shelburne residents have access to a well rounded selection of recreation and cultural services provided by a combination of local governments (Town of Shelburne and MDS), community groups and associations (Shelburne County Recreation Society, Shelburne County Arena Association, Community Uses Program etc.). Service levels are similar to the benchmark communities, with the exception of the Town of Stewiacke who has no recreation staff and does not provide any direct programming.

In large part, the Town uses a community development approach (facilitating and supporting programming of other organizations) to deliver recreation and cultural services and provides limited direct programming. There are many recreation and cultural events available to Shelburne residents throughout the year such as the Lobster Festival, Christmas Parade, Whirlygig Festival, Communities in Bloom, Founders Days etc. The Town supports these events both financially and with planning and logistics resources. Town also owns and maintains a playground, ball field, tennis courts and walking trail. The Town supports a number of local recreation and cultural facilities financially and through representation on boards and committees, including: the Shelburne County Arena, Museum Complex, Community Use of Schools etc.

Shelburne has the highest recreation and culture expenditures both on a per dwelling and total cost basis of the benchmark communities (even if the 'Community Use of Schools' is not included). There is potential to realize efficiencies by sharing resources with Public Works, i.e. parks maintenance staff and equipment.

⁹ With Community Use of Schools Costs backed out

The Town could also benefit by increasing the organizational capacity in this area through the move to the CAO system and a new emphasis on strategic financial management including identifying medium to long-term opportunities and risks.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Shelburne's organizational structure and human resource management were examined from a best practice perspective, using as a guide the Human Resource Accountability Framework developed by the Society of Management Accountants of Canada. According to this framework the key outcomes or deliverables of an effective human resource management function are¹⁰:

- To *deliver* employees to the organization in the right numbers, with the right skills, at the right time,
- To *improve* employees' qualifications,
- To *motivate* employees to improve their effectiveness and efficiency,
- To *retain* qualified employees.

Decreasing population, demographic trends, critical skill requirements and external competition will make it challenging for Shelburne to attract, retain and motivate employees. The most significant gap in Human Resource management is a lack of formal policies and programs to support and guide activities. The Collective Agreement and Employee Code of Conduct provide some guidance and direction for developing such policies. There are also many human resource handbooks and templates available that would provide a good starting point for developing the required policies and programs.

Workforce planning, recruitment and orientation are largely ad hoc in Shelburne. The Personnel Committee hires staff and the collective agreement does provide some guidance for union employees (which is also generally applied to non-union employees) but there are no formal policies or procedures documenting how potential employees will be identified, screened and selected. Parks and Recreation conducts a formal orientation for summer staff that includes the Employee Code of Conduct and Occupational Health and Safety, this process could be enhanced and expanded to all departments within the Town. There is no formal succession planning process or policy, such a program need not be complicated, but planning needs to be undertaken to:

- Identify individuals within the organization who hold the skills and potential to rise within the organization and to nurture their advancement,
- Ensure high quality replacements for those individuals who currently hold positions that are key to the organization's success.

¹⁰This framework also contains an additional outcome "to separate employees" this refers to activities related to termination, lay-off, job search, outplacement etc. Because of the small number of Town staff and the relatively low turnover rate this aspect of the framework was not considered.

Improving employees' qualifications requires training, development and career management. At this time, there is no training plan in place and training and employee development is ad hoc, with most training being undertaken based on the training opportunities staff are aware of, rather than the needs of the organization. Public Works licensing and safety requirements are addressed through the OHS Committee. A Town Training Plan should be developed annually and integrated with corporate priorities, succession planning needs and employee performance plans. Given the small size of the staff complement, some additional resources may be required to develop and implement a training plan, but they would not be significant. The Training Plan should also consider whether there is training required by Council.

Employers typically use a combination of tools to motivate employees: incentives, quality of work life, organizational development and performance appraisals. Currently there are no incentive programs for town employees, and it can be challenging to implement such initiatives in a public sector environment. There are no formal performance plans or appraisals for town staff. These are essential components of effective human resource management – they can be used to create shared understanding about expectations and increase the chance that they will be met. An annual performance planning and appraisal tool and process should be implemented in Shelburne.

Shelburne does have some programs in place to enhance the quality of work life for its employees: there is an employee code of conduct which articulates expectations and a physical activity incentive is available to provide financial assistance with the cost of participating in physical activity. There is a host of other quality of work life initiatives that would be pursued by the town for little or no cost such as: flexible work arrangements (i.e. earned time off etc.) walk breaks, some coverage of expenses related to weight management and nutrition counseling etc. One of the most serious impediments to quality of work life for some staff is the poor physical working conditions within the town office. This issue is discussed in more detail in the section of this report on Municipal Facilities.

According to the CMA framework, the key activities for retaining employees include the provision of: compensation and benefits, recognition and rewards, health/safety programming and employee/labor relations.

Shelburne provides employees with health benefits, paid vacation and a pension plan as per the collective agreement. Non-union employees are provided with the same benefits as union employees.

Aside from an annual Christmas dinner and retirement receptions and presentation of gifts from the union and Town, Shelburne does not have a formal Employee Recognition Program or Policy. Such a policy would provide guidance for recognizing employees for long service and/or outstanding achievements. There are many cost-effective options for rewards and recognition, including a wide range of non-monetary incentives. Again, there are many examples that Shelburne could examine from other municipalities in Nova Scotia.

The Town has an active Occupational Health and Safety Committee who undertakes regular safety auditing and provides monthly reports. Council and staff are represented on the OHS Committee, with

rotating membership. If any staff person has a safety concern they may take it to their supervisor or an OHS Committee member. While there is no formal safety orientation for new members, there is an OHS binder made available to them which documents the Town's safety policies and procedures. Mandated safety training is provided to staff.

All town employees – except the Clerk, deputy Clerk and RCMP secretary – are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1928. Contract negotiations are underway and the Town is negotiating to move the Public Works Supervisor out of the union and change some reporting relationships. Regardless of whether these changes go through, the current organizational structure and reporting relationships should be examined, documented and communicated to staff and Council.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

Shelburne Town Hall is in need of repairs and renovations to make it a functional and efficient work space. It may have potential to be renovated to contribute to the beauty of the historic streetscape and be a welcoming and functional space for staff. Council directed that an Engineering / Structural Review be done of Town Hall (approximately a year ago) and it is still pending. This study, when completed, will provide the detail needed to make a decision as to whether the existing building should be renovated or a new space sought.

The three administrative staff working in the front office are too crowded and the space does not meet suggested Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety guidelines. These guidelines are available at: http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/ergonomics/office/working_space.html

The Clerk has traditionally occupied two offices to the rear of this space. One may suffice, providing additional space for the other office staff.

Town Hall needs additional phone lines to create more efficient working conditions, i.e. too much staff time is spent taking messages and transferring calls when the time could be better spent on other things. The Town Hall offices are conveniently located with the genealogical society, achieving synergies in records management.

The labeling of Gentlemen's and Ladies meeting rooms in the Fire Hall meeting space is not welcoming to visitors or female firefighters. While this may be an historical practice in the Town perhaps the idea could be portrayed with a display, i.e. pictures of the old signs, and a more welcoming and inclusive signage program be adopted for public spaces.

The Shelburne Public Works Facility is located in an old building which is fairly open; adequate heat for staff to work on equipment is an issue. There is no internet and the Supervisor, who has significant responsibilities, must go to Town Hall for internet, email, printing, etc., causing very inefficient use of his time.

Shelburne has a beautiful, modern Fire Hall with accompanying auditorium and meeting rooms – a great community asset. Opportunities should be explored to use the Fire Hall to address some of the facility issues identified above.

Legislative Services

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↑ | 32.0% | 3/5 |

Shelburne’s legislative representation consists of six Councilors and a Mayor who are almost midway through a four year term. Shelburne has .73 legislative representatives per 100 dwelling units, which is second highest of the benchmark municipalities with a high of 1.18 in Stewiacke and a low of 0.63 in Digby. Shelburne is the only benchmark community with a Clerk/Treasurer system and as such has the largest number of committees (29). Regardless of the type of system (Clerk /Treasurer or CAO) there is an opportunity to streamline the committee structure and possibly to decrease the number of Councilors.

Legislative/governance costs in Shelburne are in the mid-range of the benchmark communities and costs have increased by 32.0% since 2004.

Administration & Finance

| <i>Cost Trend 2004-08</i> | <i>Cost % Change 2004-08</i> | <i>Benchmark 2008 Cost / Dwelling Unit</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ↓ | 10.3% | 2/5 |

Four full time staff deliver Shelburne’s administration and finance function. Shelburne has the second lowest ratio of administration and finance staff per 100 dwelling units (0.41) of all of the municipalities considered. Administration and finance services are provided from Town Hall Monday to Friday 8:30-4:00 pm.

The Town of Shelburne is the only Clerk/Treasurer system of the benchmark communities. The Clerk/Treasurer is responsible for budget development and management. There is a gap in Human Resource management, the Town does not have any specialized Human Resource support and there are gaps in Human Resource policies. There is a Personnel Committee of Council whose focus is hiring and firing, but it does not provide policy guidance.

Finance and administration costs have increased by 10.3% between 2004 and 2008. Shelburne’s costs are the second lowest on a per dwelling unit basis. Technological improvements present an opportunity to decrease costs and improve service delivery. Options that should be explored include: web site improvements, additional/better telephone system, increased internet access for staff (particularly Public Works Supervisor), web based services (i.e. bill payment, licenses and permits etc.).