



CORPORATE REPORT

To: Fraser Valley Regional District Board of Directors

From: Suzanne Gresham, Director of Corporate Initiatives

Date: September 25, 2018

Subject: *Proposed Draft Board Policy – Assignment of Corporate Email Addresses to FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors*

File No: 0340-30

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

[2018 09 18 Internal Affairs Committee] THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board endorse and adopt draft *FVRD Board Policy – Assignment of Corporate Email Addresses to FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors*;

AND THAT this item be set to the post-election FVRD Board Orientation and circulated to all in-coming FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors.

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS

Provide Responsive and Effective Public Services

BACKGROUND

As set out in the Board resolution below, the FVRD Board previously endorsed the recommendation of the Internal Affairs Committee with respect to the assignment of corporate email addresses for all Directors and Alternate Directors. It is anticipated that the time frame for implementation will be when the new Board is installed after the 2018 general local election:

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board endorse the assignment of corporate email addresses for all Municipal Directors, Electoral Area Directors, and all Alternate Directors for use when conducting FVRD business as a data security measure and for purposes of protecting privacy and confidentiality;

AND THAT staff be directed to draft a Board policy which addresses the requirement for Board Directors and Alternate Directors to be assigned a corporate email address for purposes of conducting FVRD business;

AND THAT the on-boarding and orientation for incoming FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors include the assignment of a corporate email address.

DISCUSSION

It is recognized that our organizational reliance on technology extends to our Board Members. There is an increasing expectation that Board Members have the means to access and utilize technology in all its many guises and platforms for purposes of community and stakeholder engagement and in their day to day communications as an elected official – the use of email being perhaps the most widely utilized communication platform.

While the use of technology by Board Members in their day to day affairs is growing, there is also a growing awareness around the need to take adequate measures with respect to network and data security in an effort to reduce potential opportunities for cyber-crime, identify theft and security and privacy breaches. From a best practices perspective, appropriate data management and data security practices and protocols are essential. One of those protocols is to require Board Members and Alternate Directors to use an FVRD corporate [vs personal] email address when conducting any FVRD business via email.

Historically some Board Members and Alternate Directors have used personal email accounts to conduct FVRD business and this is not a best practice from a number of perspectives: privacy and the protection of personal information, confidentiality and data security being key considerations.

As Board members will know, elected officials are bound by the confidentiality provisions under the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter* of British Columbia and are also obligated to protect privacy and personal information in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act [FIPPA]* of British Columbia. Towards these ends, and in consideration of best practices with respect to corporate data security and privacy management, it is furthermore recommended that all Board Members and Alternate Directors ***be required*** to use an assigned FVRD corporate email address when conducting FVRD business via email. From a risk management perspective this will help mitigate the risk of data security and privacy breaches and will also assist in managing FVRD [email] records should we receive a request for information under *FIPPA*.

Please take specific note that the proposed policy expressly disallows the use of personal email by Board Members and Alternates when conducting FVRD business. Please find attached a Guideline from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of BC entitled *Use of Personal Email Accounts for Public Business* which provides some additional context in this regard.

In terms of practicalities, as a convenience, current practice allows that some Municipal Directors use their municipal email address for purposes of attending to some FVRD business, e.g. Notice of Meetings and links to the FVRD website for purposes of accessing meeting agendas. This is not particularly problematic, however, it is recommended that this practice be formalized in some fashion between the respective IT and corporate administration departments. However, to extend this practice to allow Municipal Board Members to conduct FVRD business through their municipal email address would negate the spirit and intent of the policy. Going forward, the intent is for all FVRD Directors to use an assigned FVRD email address for purposes of conducting FVRD business, again for reasons of data security, protection of privacy and confidentiality. From a strictly governance and business perspective, as a corporate entity, the business of the FVRD is separate and distinct from that of our member municipalities and should be kept separate and distinct as a best practice [and vice versa]. While it is seemingly logical that the business of one corporate entity be undertaken on their own respective communication platforms, staff do recognize that some Municipal Directors may find it cumbersome to communicate via 2 email platforms but hope the need for this has been rationalized.

The proposed policy is a first step in establishing expectations around the use of technology by FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directives. It is anticipated that the proposed policy will be followed up with companion policies that speak to related issues regarding:

- Acceptable usage of emails, cell phones and other devices
- Data Security
- Records Management
- Access to Information
- Privacy
- Deployment of Devices, Cell Phones and Other Technologies
- *Use of Social Media by Elected Officials as a communication platform*
- Bring Your Own Device protocols

On the matter of the use of social media by elected officials, this has become quite a common practice and does serve many purposes. There is a down-side however and there are privacy implications that need to be considered by way of a separate social media policy.

CONCLUSION

In anticipation of the incoming Board of Directors and associated Board Orientation, it is important to have Board Policies in place that address expectations around the use of technology by elected officials while conducting FVRD business. The requirement that FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors be assigned a corporate email address for use when conducting FVRD business is an important first step from a policy and best practices perspective.

COSTS

Nominal costs are associated with the assignment of corporate email addresses to FVRD Board Members and Alternate Directors – these costs are largely in staff time and will be borne out of the Information Management budget.

COMMENTS BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Reviewed and Supported