



THE INTEGRATION OF CROSS- FUNCTIONAL TEAMS INTO A SILO-IZED MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Municipalities are part of Canada's multi-level system of government, and are the level of government closest to the public. Faced with a demand for increasingly complex and costly services and operations, municipalities are adopting private sector systems and tools to improve their service delivery and outcomes.

Municipalities need to move away from their narrowly focused vertical organizational structure toward horizontal collaboration between departments through the integration of teamwork. Specifically, municipalities should embrace cross-functional teams, where team members from a variety of departments come together to work on a project or reach a common goal, for the benefit of the municipal organization.

Going further, municipalities should acknowledge the intrinsic value of the skill set possessed by the staff in legal departments, including both the lawyers and the support staff, such as organizational, time management, attention to detail and drafting skills, and ensure that, where possible, the legal department plays a significant role in any cross-functional team.

INTRODUCTION

A periodic perusal of the employment section of the AMCTO website suggests an uptick in the number of variously sized municipalities adding to or creating legal departments. While municipalities are increasingly the target of litigation, it appears that municipal organizations are acknowledging the intrinsic value of the skill sets possessed by lawyers and legal administrative staff, such as written and verbal communication, negotiation, attention to detail, and organization.

As the Deputy City Solicitor for the City of Greater Sudbury (CGS), the author is admittedly biased. However, having practiced municipal law in both the public and private sectors for almost twenty years, she understands the role that legal departments play, and **could play**, in municipal organizations.

Municipalities, like all organizations, “make an important contribution to various aspects of social and economic life” (Mills, 2011, p. 38). While some citizens expect municipalities to operate in the most efficient and effective ways possible, others just hope that their municipality will operate in ways that give them as few problems as possible (Mills, 2011). Municipalities, as the level of government closest to the public, should do better than that.

Local governments must meet the ever-growing needs of an increasingly diverse range of clients despite reduced provincial and federal funding, downloading and attacks on their property assessment base (Piercy et al, 2013). In attempts to provide services more effectively and efficiently, municipal organizations are adopting private sector tools like Lean Six Sigma and performance management systems with varying degrees of success.

Regardless of size, municipalities are organized into narrowly focused vertical silos, which negatively affects their ability to deliver effective and efficient services, and to solve complex problems (Urban, 2018). Problems that will undoubtedly become more complex and plentiful moving forward. The organizational structure of a municipality is important in terms of outcomes, including organizational performance. Although good organizational structure does not produce good performance by itself, a poor organizational structure makes good performance impossible (cited in Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). As well, an organization's structure affects the "ability of workers to learn, to innovate, and to participate in decision-making" (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 459).

To counteract the impact of silos on organizational performance, municipal corporations, in particular the CGS, should actively integrate cross-functional teams (CFTs), making sure to include lawyers and legal administrative staff on those teams, where possible.

SCOPE

In this paper, I propose the integration of CFTs, particularly groups including lawyers and legal administrative staff, at the CGS. To support my proposal, I will first define and apply organizational behaviour in the local government sphere. Next, I will explore the role of organizational structure and design in municipal corporations, including a description of the organizational structure at the CGS. Then, I will discuss the function of teams and groups in municipal organizations with a particular focus on CFTs.

With respect to CFTs, I will overview the success of CFTs in Innisfil, as well as analyze the success of a current CFT at the CGS, including the organizational mechanisms that supported or thwarted its implementation and operation. Here, I will overview the current legal services provided by in-house counsel and legal administrative staff to the CGS.

In support of my proposal to integrate cross-functional teams, particularly groups including lawyers and legal administrative staff, I will identify strategies for the success of CFTs at the CGS and suggest two (2) more CFTs that would contribute to the more efficient and effective provision of services at the CGS.

DISCUSSION

Organizational Behaviour

Organizational behaviour is the “study of the impact of behaviour in organizations on organizational (e.g., effectiveness), individual (e.g., self-esteem) and social (e.g., racial discrimination) outcomes” (Mills, 2011, p. 37). Although the study of organizational behaviour also helps us to comprehend what organizations, including municipalities, mean to people and how to address the impact those organizations have on people’s lives, the focus of this paper is the use of the study of organizational behaviour as a way to improve the delivery of municipal services (Mills, 2011). More specifically, this paper posits that the current organizational structure of municipalities, particularly of the CGS, impedes the efficient and effective delivery of services to the public. Further, the integration of CFTs, specifically including a lawyer and possibly a legal administrative

staff person as part of those CFTs, would improve organizational performance and potentially produce creative and unique outputs (Piercy et al, 2013).

Organizational Structure

An organization's structure is the system that outlines how work and labour are directed to achieve the organization's goals, more specifically who does what and how "what" is coordinated and controlled (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). Regardless of its size or objectives, an organization's structure is important because, *inter alia*, "structure enables management to define lines of responsibility and authority, control work activities, and accomplish organizational goals" (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 259).

At the macro level, municipalities "divide work horizontally into tasks that need to be done, into departments" (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 458). The horizontal division of labour allows a large task, like providing a multitude of municipal services, to be split into multiple smaller, more manageable tasks. For example, at the CGS, there are four (4) main service groups, namely Corporate Services, Community Services, Emergency Services, and Growth and Infrastructure. Corporate Services is then further divided vertically down one (1) level into six (6) departments split horizontally: Clerk's Services, Legal Services, IT Services, Fleet and Assets, Human Resources and Finance Services, which, among other groups, includes procurement. The General Manager of Corporate Services oversees the six (6) departments with all of those departments being equal in the structural hierarchy.

The tasks in Corporate Services' departments or silos are then divided vertically. The vertical division of labour creates a hierarchy of command within the organization by apportioning authority for planning, decision making, monitoring, and controlling, as well as setting out who will tell whom what to do (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). With specific respect to its legal department, at the CGS, the Chief Administrative Officer oversees the General Manager of Corporate Services, who oversees the City Solicitor, who oversees the Deputy City Solicitor, who then oversees the Legal Services staff.

Unlike the departments under Community Services, Emergency Services and Growth and Infrastructure, each of the Corporate Services departments provides key services to all of the CGS' other departments. For example, the legal department does not provide legal services to the public, but only to CGS departments, and IT supports all internal staff with their software and hardware requirements. Unfortunately, while each department generally works collaboratively with each other out of necessity, there are no formally sanctioned CFTs in Corporate Services.

While the managers of each Corporate Services department meet monthly with the General Manager, none of the managers or any of their staff work together formally on any initiatives at the CGS. For example, the COVID pandemic necessitates remote work environments for the majority of CGS staff, and the evolution of many office tasks, such as the execution of documents. Legal Services and IT Services worked separately on electronic and digital signature protocols, only to discover that they had duplicated efforts, and that each had created a process that disregarded the considerations of the other

department. A CFT dedicated to resolving this corporation-wide issue comprised, at a minimum, of IT Services, Legal Services and procurement staff from Finance Services would likely have created and implemented an effective protocol in less time. CFTs span the gap between the silos.

Organizational Design

Where organizational structure refers to the “formal division of work or labour and the formal pattern of relationships that coordinate and control organizational activities” (Mills et al, p. 458), organizational design refers to the “process of creating a structure that best fits a strategy, technology, and environment” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 459).

As noted above, while a “good organizational structure does not by itself produce good performance... [a] poor organization structure makes good performance impossible, no matter how good the individual managers may be” (cited in Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 459). Different organizational structure configurations can affect productivity and outcomes as well as employees’ “job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and perceptions about expectations and obligations” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 459).

Successful Municipal Redesign

Municipalities need not be afraid to redesign their organizational structures. For example, in 2015, Innisfil integrated a process called “Place Making” into its Official Plan review. According to Project for Public Spaces, Inc., the non-profit planning, design and educational organization behind the process, “Place Making” is a “collaborative process

that engages people in creating and sustaining the public destinations at the heart of their community” (Project for Public Spaces, 2015). The Town’s success with its Official Plan review spurred Innisfil to reorganize its departments, including “removing an entire layer of senior management, shortening the distance between staff and decision-makers” (Project for Public Spaces, 2015).

The Town’s eleven (11) department managers, who work with staff every day, now report directly to the CAO. The new structure means that all of the municipality’s decision-makers are generally in the same room at the same time, which leads to a “freer flow of information, stronger input and trust between departments, reduced duplication of effort, fewer interdepartmental snafus, and closer contact with reality” (Project for Public Spaces, 2016).

The Town’s collaborative environment is supported through a CFT, specifically a “Placemaking Cross-Functional Team, which brings together managers and staff from the Planning, Engineering, Building and Community Standards, and Operations Departments to make choices that work for everyone involved” (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). The Town’s Planning Department no longer deals with new development applications in isolation nor does Operations then inherit a development or a concept that does not work (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). Innisfil changed the way it looked at service delivery, and its service delivery changed for the better.

Innisfil fundamentally changed its traditional, hierarchical organizational structure into a “flatter and friendlier” one (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). Granted, what works for Innisfil, with its population of 32,000 over 262.7 square kilometres (Focus on Geography, 2016), might not work for the CGS and its population of 161,531 spread around 3,630 square kilometres (Population by Area, 2016). However, it is possible to integrate CFTs throughout the CGS organization on a smaller, more project-specific basis for the municipality’s benefit.

Teams in Organizations

Very simply put, a team in an organization comprises individuals “who perceive themselves to be in a group, who have a shared sense of collective identity and who relate to each other in a meaningful way” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 270). Large bureaucratic organizations, like many municipalities, including the CGS, can “undermine innovation, flexibility, and threaten to make organizations non-competitive” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 270). While the utilization of teams in private sector organizations is not a new idea, their effective use in local government is rarer. However, teamwork, particularly clearly conceived and supported teamwork, can transcend the “problems of inflexibility, poor quality, low employee commitment, and motivation” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 270) at the CGS.

Cross-Functional Teams

A team is a “small group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves

mutually accountable” (cited in Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 273). For example, the lawyers in the CGS’ legal department are a team - they are committed to the common purpose of providing legal services to other CGS departments with the goal of protecting the CGS’ interests, and are accountable to each other, their supervisors and City Council. However, the lawyers, despite specializing in different aspects of municipal law, are not a CFT. Rather, a CFT brings together team members from a variety of departments with different skill sets to work on a project or reach for a common goal (O’Neill, 2018).

Benefits of CFTs

While CFTs can be challenging and their implementation daunting, there are a number of benefits to an organization when CFTs are successful, specifically CFTs:

1. build a collaborative culture between different departments that are now working together, sharing decision-making, and working toward a common goal;
2. encourage staff to learn from one another and about the work that other departments are doing;
3. promote staff engagement and help individuals feel connected to a common goal and to each other;
4. develop leadership skills where different individuals lead on different projects;
5. keep work interesting and stimulate staff by disrupting the *status quo* and promoting innovation; and

6. produce more and better results through the sharing of best practices among the team members allowing the CFT to leverage the knowledge of the whole team (O'Neill, 2018).

CFT Dysfunction

While there are benefits to CFTs, there is also the potential for dysfunction. In 2015, Behnam Tabrizi, a consulting professor at Stanford University's Department of Management Science and Engineering, conducted a detailed study of ninety-five (95) teams in twenty-five (25) leading corporations, including communications, software, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, agricultural, chemical, manufacturers, retail, utility, consulting, internet software, **government**, insurance, and banking (*emphasis added*). The study found that nearly seventy-five per cent (75%) of those CFTs were dysfunctional, specifically they did not have clear goals, or, if they had them, they did not meet their specification, schedule or budget, and they were unable to attain returns expected by management. Tabrizi (2015) also observed that many team dynamics problems were amplified because of the CFT environment.

Interestingly, Tabrizi (2015) noted that CFTs often fail because silos tend to perpetuate themselves. For example, in the private sector, engineers might not work well with designers thereby quashing the collaborative culture between departments and dooming the CFT. This finding is particularly concerning for municipalities where silos are the norm.

Taking the “Dys” out of CFT Function

Despite his findings, Tabrizi did not close the door on CFTs as an organizational performance improvement tool. Instead, he recommended that organizations keen to implement CFTs create a “Portfolio Governance Team (PGT)”. A PGT is comprised of high-level leaders in the organization who make complex decisions on the various projects in their portfolio **together**, and as they learn to work together as a **team**, that attitude **perpetuates itself in the teams under their purview** (Tabrizi, 2015) (*emphasis added*). Try to visualize the PGT sitting around a table sorting and sharing their “employee hockey cards”, like “I’ll loan you a Gretzky (lawyer) for project A, but I need a Crosby (IT support) for project B, and then bring in a Lemieux (Finance) for both projects”. Top end buy-in is critical to the success of CFTs. While informal collaboration and collegiality among staff is important, to maximize their value to the organization, CFTs should be formal work groups created and endorsed by the PGT to permit collective action on assigned tasks (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 271). The description of the PGT’s role and its impact on staff on the organization also harkens back to the importance of the study of organizational behaviour and the relationship between the behaviour of people in organizations and organizational outcomes.

With respect to a PGT, Tabrizi (2015) set out four (4) “Golden Rules” for CFTs:

1. *Every project should have an end-to-end accountable leader*

Tabrizi recommended that in organizations, where the hierarchy can be multi-layered like at the CGS, CFTs benefit from a mirroring structure. For example, if the CGS PGT includes

the General Managers of Corporate Services, Community Services, Emergency Services and Growth and Infrastructure, the CFT could include managers and staff from each of those groups. However, it is critical that there be only one (1) end-to-end accountable leader overseeing each function, and only one (1) end-to-end accountable leader overseeing it all.

2. *Every project should have clearly established goals, resources, and deadlines*

Before the beginning of any project, the PGT should set an approved budget, and clearly establish priorities, desired outcomes, and timeframes.

3. *Teams should have the project's success as their main objective*

Different departments and their staff may have competing priorities that conflict with the goals of the project. The project's success is the CFT's objective, and not the objectives of any particular department or individual.

4. *Every project should be constantly re-evaluated*

The PGT should track projects and priorities and routinely cut those that are not working or that do not align with the organization's goals.

Ultimately, not only is it imperative for an organization's leaders to buy into CFTs, it is vital that those leaders pay attention to the way CFTs are set up and how well they work for the organization.

Group Dynamics

As described above, it is recommended that the CGS actively redesign its organizational structure to include CFTs to improve its service delivery and operations, and that those CFTs should each include and would benefit from the inclusion of a lawyer and legal administrative staff. However, redesigning organizations like the CGS around work teams will not necessarily lead to improved outcomes on its own. It is important that any PGT acknowledge the human element, specifically how those humans behave in groups (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011), and select team members accordingly. For employees, joining a CFT means learning new skills and knowledge as well as how to work together effectively and efficiently in a group (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). It is imperative that a PGT consider group dynamics when creating CFTs.

Group Context

When creating and integrating CFTs for specific projects, a PGT must consider that, while the CFT is a structure in itself, it is also a subset of the municipal organization, and must therefore operate within the overarching organizational structure (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). The implementation of CFTs might require some tweaking of the traditional organizational control systems. For example, who owns the project on which the CFT is working and to whom the team members are accountable. This is why Tabrizi's first Golden Rule is important. Leadership and direction are critical.

Group Structure

Each CFT will have a structure that “influences the way members relate and interact with one another” (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011, p. 281). Again, it is imperative that a PGT create CFTs with care and consideration to objectives and membership. A PGT, possibly with the input of team members, should clearly define each team member’s role and responsibilities. Another consideration is workers in a unionized environment. For instance, contract rules negotiated by union and management can constrain managers’ ability to mobilize the skills, creativity, commitment, and values of their staff (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011). Therefore, the oversight of a PGT, considering the interplay between union and non-union staff, is essential. Again, Tabrizi identified this aspect of group dynamics as his second Golden Rule.

Group Processes

Generally, CFTs cycle through five (5) stages of development:

1. **forming** - where individuals are first brought together as a team and there remains ambiguity about roles and tasks;
2. **storming** - where team members jockey for position and there may be some initial conflict;
3. **norming** - where team members become more comfortable with each other, recognize and accept differences of opinion and cooperate;
4. **performing** - where the productivity occurs now that team members are established in their roles, and are now working together collaboratively; and

5. **adjourning** - when team members leave the team, are replaced or the team is disbanded (Bratton & Chiaramonte, 2011).

Throughout the foregoing processes, the CFTs leader(s) and the PGT should be monitoring and re-evaluating the CFT pursuant to Tabrizi's fourth Golden Rule.

Group Outcomes

In order to integrate CFTs as a long-term, effective system in a municipal organization, it is important that the organization, through its PGT, examine and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the CFTs. Even so, the success of any CFT is highly dependent on how it was created and supported. CFTs created with an eye on their role within the organization, and the composition of the team members and the clear definition of their roles and responsibilities, and routinely evaluated, are far more likely to succeed. Again, formal CFTs created and supported by the senior leadership of the municipal organization are a more sustainable tool for the redesign of the municipal organization.

Cross-Functional Teamwork at the CGS

Overview

To understand the potential for CFTs at the CGS, it is important to understand the CGS. The City is now a single tier municipality, having been created on January 1, 2001 under the *City of Greater Sudbury Act, 1999*, S.O. 1999, c. 14, Sched. A. The CGS is an amalgamation of the City of Sudbury and six (6) towns, Capreol, Nickel Centre, Onaping Falls, Rayside-Balfour, Valley East and Walden, which previously comprised the Regional

Municipality of Sudbury, and nine (9) unincorporated townships (History, n.d.). The geographic size of the CGS is 3,630 square kilometres, with just over fifty per cent (50%) of its population of 161,531 residing in the former City of Sudbury (Population by Area, 2016).

The CGS is one (1) of the largest employers in the community, employing approximately 3,000 people on a full-time, part-time or seasonal basis. The CGS provides fifty-eight (58) lines of service (Municipal Budget, 2021), including social housing and assistance, transit, airport, library services and the operation of a long-term care home. The CGS' 2021 Operating Budget is \$641 million while its 2021 Capital Budget is \$144.1 million (Municipal Budget, 2021).

Leadership

The CGS Council is comprised of twelve (12) ward councillors and a mayor. The chief administrative officer (CAO) manages the municipal corporation and directly oversees four (4) general managers - Corporate Services, Community Services, Emergency Services and Growth and Infrastructure. The CAO and the general managers along with the Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives, the Director of Communications and Citizen Services, and the Director of Economic Development comprise the CGS' Executive Leadership Team (ELT) who meet regularly to set the direction for the municipality.

Legal Services

Legal Services is part of Corporate Services. The City Solicitor is also the City Clerk and oversees both Legal Services and Clerk's Services, and reports to the General Manager of Corporate Services. The Deputy City Solicitor directly manages Legal Services' staff and reports to the City Solicitor.

Legal Services currently comprises three (3) lawyers, two (2) paralegals, dedicated solely to the prosecution of provincial and by-law offences, two (2) law clerks, and two (2) legal secretaries. There is also one (1) part-time law clerk paid for by Finance Services, who is tasked primarily with the administration of tax sale work as described in Part XI, "Sale of Land for Tax Arrears", of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended. The part-time law clerk reports to the Deputy City Solicitor, rather than the Manager of Taxation in Finance Services, to ensure compliance with Rule 6.1-1 of the Law Society of Ontario's "Rules of Professional Conduct", specifically that "a lawyer shall in accordance with the by-laws... (b) directly supervise non-lawyers to whom particular tasks and functions are assigned" (Law Society of Ontario, 2019). The nature of this part-time law clerk's work requires supervision by a lawyer or lawyer(s).

The City Solicitor, the Deputy City Solicitor and the three (3) lawyers are non-union employees, while the remainder of Legal Services' staff are unionized employees.

Allocation of Tasks in Legal Services

While all three (3) lawyers are capable of providing legal services on most matters, each is currently dedicated to a specific field and/or services area. For example, one (1) lawyer primarily practices real estate law, and drafts grant and services agreements and by-laws. Another lawyer deals primarily with Emergency Services, including paramedic and fire services, Greater Sudbury Police Services matters, IT, airport matters, and Pioneer Manor, the CGS' long-term care home. The third lawyer works almost exclusively with Growth and Infrastructure Services in relation to operational and construction matters, including roads, street lighting, waste management and environmental initiatives. The Deputy City Solicitor practices law to the extent possible, but focuses primarily on managing the Legal Services' staff, dealing with Council matters and other administrative functions.

As for Legal Services' staff, the paralegals only prosecute provincial and by-law offences and do not currently provide any other legal services to the CGS. The two (2) full-time law clerks work exclusively on real property matters, including real estate transactions, and planning matters such as site plan and subdivision agreements. One of the two (2) legal secretaries supports all of the lawyers, while the other legal secretary supports the paralegals. Both paralegals are licenced by the Law Society of Ontario, and each of the administrative staff hold a law clerk designation, regardless of the title of their position. All staff have extensive experience working in the legal field in both the public and private sectors. Staff from other CGS departments frequently seek assistance from Legal Services' staff in relation to organizational matters, drafting and dealing with the public.

Current CFT

Overview

As for the current CFT, in 2018, the CGS' Property Assessment Representative (PAR) approached Legal Services for help with drafting appeal materials for the Assessment Review Board (ARB). Concerned that a non-lawyer had been routinely drafting and submitting legal documents and arguments on behalf of the CGS to the ARB and to opposing counsel, Legal Services designated a lawyer and a legal secretary to assist the PAR. At the time, Legal Services had three (3) legal secretaries. The third legal secretary was overhauling Legal Services' antiquated paper filing system with a view to upgrading the system to an electronic one once IT Services could support it, and had capacity to take on the additional task of assisting the PAR.

While the PAR, as a former property assessor for the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), possessed a very particular set of highly sought after skills, he possessed no legal drafting ability or organizational skills, and had no support staff. Initially tasked only with reviewing the appeal materials, the lawyer and the legal secretary quickly recognized the PAR's predicament, and set to work. The PAR had fallen significantly behind on checking correspondence resulting in missed timelines and the CGS losing appeals, which meant lost income for the CGS. The legal secretary reviewed written and electronic correspondence to the PAR and created an electronic filing system and tracking system for all correspondence and materials. The lawyer then reviewed all correspondence with the PAR to determine which matters required legal input and then began drafting templates and precedents for future use.

Within a few weeks, it was apparent that informal assistance from Legal Services was insufficient. The CGS' property assessment base is the main source of the City's income so its protection is vital to the organization. Historically, the CGS, like most municipalities had not aggressively fought property tax assessments at the ARB, due in part to apathy but also to lack of resources and expertise, as well as a rather naïve reliance on MPAC (O'Melia, 2003).

With the PAR's hiring and Legal Services' attention and advice, the City now had an opportunity not only to guard its property assessment base, but also to appeal actively those property assessments unfavourable to the CGS, such as those appeals by retail chains and large-scale mining and industrial companies. Consequently, the Deputy City Solicitor and the lawyer met with the PAR and the Treasurer to discuss the creation of an informal CFT to be comprised of the lawyer, legal secretary, the PAR, and the Treasurer (**forming**). The four (4) CFT members met at least weekly to define roles and responsibilities (**storming**), and settled into working (**norming**). The dynamic of the team worked well and the roles and responsibilities were clearly defined. The lawyer was knowledgeable and eager to learn from the PAR, the legal secretary was extremely competent and creative, the PAR was now able to focus on his primary role of property assessor and consultant to the CGS' Manager of Taxation, and the Treasurer, the end-to-end leader of the CFT, approved tasks, allocated funding and retained legal and appraisal experts. The CFT was **performing**.

Within a few months, the legal secretary moved to another position in another CGS department so the part-time law clerk took on the legal secretary's role (**adjourning**). The legal secretary was also extremely competent and creative and worked well with the established CFT although only part-time. In fact, the CFT was so successful for almost a year that Finance Services hired an administrative assistant just to work with the CFT. It is here that the CFT broke down.

Retroactive Review of the CFT

When the author submitted the proposed thesis for this paper, she was inspired by the success of this CFT. The CFT members had created and maintained a comprehensive filing and tracking system, drafted and continuously updated subject-specific legal precedents and templates, and had been successful in multiple ARB appearances. The CFT worked collaboratively and spanned the gap between Legal Services and Finance Services.

The author still strongly supports the integration of CFTs at the CGS and the inclusion on those CFTs of a member of Legal Services, usually a lawyer. However, it is now clear why this particular CFT is now struggling. The CFT will now be evaluated using Tabrizi's findings, his four (4) Golden Rules, and group dynamics.

First, there was no buy in from the CGS' senior leadership, namely the ELT, and, consequently, no PGT. No one was sitting around a table, trading hockey or even Pokémon cards for this CFT. The CFT was informal, despite the best efforts of the

Treasurer and the Deputy City Solicitor, who, at the end of the day, are both upper middle managers. Despite the value of the CFT to the organization and the Corporate Services General Manager's encouragement for staff to collaborate and cooperate, there was no clear endorsement or support from CGS' senior leaders or an end-to-end leader overseeing the CFT in relation to the other work being done in the organization. Almost in spite of the senior leaders and the CGS' organizational silos, the CFT members learned to work together for the benefit of the municipality.

Next, the recent addition of a new CFT member, the administrative assistant, and the paring back of the law clerk's involvement so that she could undertake the duties actually described in her job description, created havoc. Now, not all of the CFT members have the project's success as their main objective. The new CFT member is not a member of Legal Services and does not possess the same skill set as someone trained to work with lawyers. As she was not involved in the early phases of the CFT (forming, storming or even norming), the administrative assistant is demonstrating conflicting priorities and an unwillingness to cooperate or acknowledge differences in opinion. Put bluntly, the new CFT member does not know her place, which is problematic since role and responsibility definition is key to a CFT's success. The lawyer is now taking on some of the administrative assistant's role, such as maintaining a master file list and data entry, which represents a further breakdown of the CFT members' roles and responsibilities and is not a valuable use of his time. With a new group member, the group process begins again and returns to the forming phase, which is negatively affecting the performance of the CFT.

Finally, with no PGT, there was no continuous evaluation of the CFT. Frankly, even the CFT members failed to take objective stock of their processes. For example, an evaluation of the CFT would quickly have demonstrated that the CFT should have included the Manager of Taxation. The Manager of Taxation reports directly to the Treasurer, but the PAR and now the administrative assistant both report directly to the Manager of Taxation. The Manager of Taxation now faces staffing concerns because of group dynamic issues between the administrative assistant and the lawyer, but has no information about the CFT and its members' roles and responsibilities. Another example is the addition of a team member who does possess the requisite skills or attitude for the project. Ongoing evaluation of the CFT's group dynamics and performance would have supported returning the part-time law clerk or adding another member of Legal Services' administrative staff.

Other CFTs

Despite the struggle of the Legal Services/Finance Services CFT, CFTs remain a valuable tool for municipalities to bridge the gap between silos. It is still important for CFTs to include Legal Services because of the skill set which lawyers, law clerks and other legal administrative staff possess, such as legal knowledge, drafting skills and negotiation. Historically, Legal Services is a last resort for most departments and staff approach the legal department only when problems arise. However, including Legal Services in CFTs and early in operational and service delivery discussions, often avoids problems later in the project or process. For example, implementing senior leadership-endorsed and monitored CFTs, comprising staff from the department purchasing the

goods or services, the procurement department and Legal Services, dedicated to large municipal procurements would benefit the CGS by ensuring, at a minimum, value for money, clear terms and specifications, and trouble-shooting for potential litigation.

As well, the CGS has a real estate department separate from Legal Services staffed by a manager, a property appraiser, two (2) property clerks and an administrative assistant. While Legal Services and the real estate department collaborate frequently, there is significant duplication of tasks and sometimes lack of clarity with respect to roles and responsibilities. Rather than Legal Services absorbing the real estate department, it would be beneficial to create a short-term CFT dedicated to defining the groups' respective roles and responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

Municipalities are facing increasingly complex challenges in service delivery and operations, and solving these problems requires innovative thinking and openness to change (Urban, 2018). The traditional hierarchical organizational structure of municipalities inhibits efficient and effective performance. Municipal organizations must move away from narrowly focused vertical silos toward horizontal collaboration, specifically including CFTs (Urban, 2018).

This paper demonstrates that, while even a partial redesign of a municipality's organizational structure is challenging, the outcomes can be impressive. For example, Innisfil has fundamentally changed the manner in which it provides services to the

community. Enduring change management at any organization starts at the top with forwarding looking senior leaders. Where those leaders actively support and foster a collaborative work environment, CFTs can flourish.

The tools and models for effective and efficient horizontal collaboration are readily available to municipalities. For example, many municipalities, including the CGS, already have the staff and skills at their disposal to support CFTs. Municipal organizations must recognize and utilize the particular skill sets of certain departments and employees within the organization, such as legal departments and lawyers, and ensure that they play a significant role in CFTs. Lawyers fulfill an important function in any organization, including municipalities, and could contribute even more to an organization when part of an innovative and collaborative CFT. Horizontal collaboration, through CFTs, is the key to municipalities successfully moving forward in the twenty-first century.

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