

November 16, 2012

Report to Council re FIR,MPMP and MIDAS workshops.

As per Council's authorization, I attended the FIR (Financial Information Return) the MPMP (Municipal Performance Measurement Program) and MIDAS (Municipal Information and Data Analysis System) workshop sessions held in Sudbury on November 8th.

My objective in attending was to increase my knowledge of these systems and their potential beneficial uses in our Municipality.

The workshop participants were mostly Municipal professional financial staff (60%), other Municipal staff (20%), and the remainder were MMAH staff and consultants to MMAH. I believe I was the only Councillor there.

We have no option but to supply to the best of our ability the information mandated by the province. It is important for our Municipality to measure our performance and results because we can't change what we don't measure. FIR and MPMP are tools that we can use to do that.

MIDAS is a tool developed and maintained by AMO. It uses the FIR and MPMP data and allows comparisons to be made with other Municipalities. The program is available to staff and Council members. You just have to get a user name and password from AMO to use the system. It is not easy to use and I gathered from discussions with others at the workshops that the smaller Municipality, the less relevant the comparisons become.

I completed an online evaluation of the workshop that could best be described as somewhat brutal.

In summary, I have a better understanding of FIR, MPMP and MIDAS.

My recommendation for this Municipality is that we continue to supply the mandated data paying particular attention to any aspects that may impact funding from the province and that we not use MIDAS as it bears little relevance to a Municipality as small as ours. The staff time involved at becoming proficient in its use would, in my opinion, never be earned back.

As I stated in the online workshop evaluation, our ratepayers care much more about how we spend their tax dollars, than how we compare to other Municipalities.

Jim Gibson