

March 7, 2018

Report To: Mayor and Council

From: Travis Rob, Manager of Operations and Facilities

RE: Changes to the Amended Blue Box Program Plan and Timeline for Implementation

For about a year, changes to the Blue Box program has been an important topic in the Municipal World. In August of 2017 the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change directed the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (formerly Waste Diversion Ontario) and Stewardship Ontario to work collaboratively with Ontario Municipalities to develop an amended Blue Box Program Plan and submit that plan to the Minister by February of 2018.

Through the fall of 2017 numerous webinars and seminars were held to present proposals and gather feedback from the municipal sector. Information was gathered from Municipalities regarding their current programs and assets so that the changes could be implemented without a reduction in service or without resulting in stranded assets. All of this work was in an effort to align the Blue Box program with the new Bill 151, Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act 2016 which replaces the Waste Diversion Act 2002. The impacts of Bill 151 will see the blue box program transition from its current funding model where Municipalities should see 50% of their recycling related expenses funded by way of a grant from Stewardship Ontario to a full producer responsibility model. This will mean that the producers of products will be responsible for the production, collection and recycle of their products including all costs associated with each phase of the products life.

The completion of this work within the prescribed timeline was nothing short of ambitious but was meant to ensure that an amended Blue Box Program Plan could be passed prior to the election in June of 2018 to keep the process moving forward. On December 19, 2017 a draft plan was posted for comments on the Ontario Environmental Registry. Given the quantity of comments received to the draft plan, Stewardship Ontario chose to not submit a plan to the Minister prior to the February 15 deadline. Stewardship Ontario, instead will go back to work more with Municipal input to further develop the transition. The original transition was supposed to start in 2020 with full implementation within 5 years, however with the delay in presentation of the amended plan, the implementation timeline is, at this point unknown.

The Operations and Facilities Division will continue to be involved in the planning and collaboration efforts surrounding the changes to the Blue Box Program and further updates will be brought forward to Council as pertinent information is available.

Respectfully Submitted



Travis Rob, P.Eng
Manager of Operations and Facilities

Council approval of this is not required as it is presented as information
