

## Who's going to foot the bill

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By Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- Clarington has spent just shy of \$400,000 on peer reviews on work done to date on siting Durham's proposed incinerator.

But Clarington Regional Councillor Charlie Trim, who chairs the Region's works committee, wants to know whether Clarington had authority to spend so much money on the work.

The Region had agreed to providing "adequate funding" to any potential host community. The funding was to include "the costs of all necessary studies and legal advice incurred by the potential host community to investigate and complete its due diligence in arriving at its decision whether or not it will become a host community for the EFW (energy from waste) facility," said a motion passed by the Region in April.

The Region would be upfronting the money, with the money later being deducted from any royalties Clarington might receive as a result of hosting the facility.

Two months later, the Region capped the amount it would give Clarington at \$200,000, "with an additional amount of up to \$100,000 contingent upon Clarington finalization of terms of reference for local impact studies." According to that resolution, the contingency could be spent on approval from the Regional treasurer and Works Commissioner, who were to regularly report back to their council.

Spending beyond the \$300,000, now estimated at \$79,000, would come from one of Clarington's reserve funds, said a staff report.

Clarington staff said they have assurance from Regional staff that the entire \$300,000 would be paid, but Coun. Trim said he believes it was "quite clear" Regional council approval was needed before the \$100,000 contingency would be cleared.

"Right now, as I see it, Clarington is on the hook," he said.

That's not the impression of Clarington staff, said Finance Director Nancy Taylor.

"My understanding is that they (the Regional treasurer and Works Commissioner) have the authority to approve that and then they report back to council," she said. "My interpretation and theirs is that they have the ability to do that."

Ms. Taylor is to report back to Clarington council on the matter.