

Delivering Time Savings and Improved Accuracy to the City of Port Coquitlam



Operating Budget:
\$90 million

Solutions:
CaseWare Working Papers
GAAP Financials

Port Coquitlam is a vibrant community of more than 57,000 people. Blessed with a picturesque natural setting, an educated workforce, progressive business opportunities, and a strategic location near Vancouver BC, the city is flourishing.

The City of Port Coquitlam and its approximately 400 employees provide a wide range of services to the town’s citizens, including: fire and rescue, parks and recreation, engineering and operations, and police services. The City of Port Coquitlam takes its fiduciary responsibility very seriously, and recently implemented CaseWare Working Papers and Canadian GAAP Financials to aid it in meeting that responsibility.

Lots of Spreadsheets

Up until this past year, the City of Port Coquitlam generated its financial statements in a largely manual fashion.

“We used spreadsheets. Lots of spreadsheets,” recalls Karen Grommada, CPA, CMA, Director of Finance for the City of Port Coquitlam. “The financial reporting tools in our accounting software were burdensome and very difficult

to use, so we relied on spreadsheets and Word documents to generate our financial statements and our annual reports.”

CaseWare was the chosen solution

Grommada, who joined the City’s workforce last year, had worked in an organization that successfully utilized CaseWare, and she quickly moved to implement the solution at the City. “We never considered another solution,” she says. “I knew what CaseWare could do, and it was just what we needed.”

While attending a Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) conference, Grommada met F.H. Black & Company, CaseWare Authorized Consultants.

“They know the solution extremely well,” says Grommada. “And they were very flexible to work with. They gave us the options of having them handle the entire implementation, sharing the tasks with our team, or letting us do the work ourselves. We chose the shared option, and it has worked out very well for us.”

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CHALLENGE

The multiple spreadsheets and text documents the City relied on to generate its Annual Financial Statements proved too time-consuming and potentially error inducing.

SOLUTION

The City of Port Coquitlam selected the professionals at F.H. Black to spearhead the implementation of CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials as its reporting solution.

RESULTS

Time spent to produce the Annual Financial Statement is reduced, and the City has greater confidence in the overall accuracy of the process. Other reports will similarly benefit.



City of Port Coquitlam

"We have eliminated almost all of the manual steps involved in the creation of our Annual Financial Statement."

Karen Grommada, CPA, CMA
Director of Finance
City of Port Coquitlam

Targeted Training Empowers Staff

F.H. Black & Company provided two days of classroom-style training followed by targeted one-on-one training to ensure Grommada was equipped with the skills and tools to be productive with CaseWare. "I really appreciated that the training was conducted over the Internet and over the phone, so we didn't need to pay for travel," she says. "Plus, they recorded the training, so I could go back and review it as needed. That was very helpful."

Push-Button Financials

F.H. Black & Company's consultants built the financial statement templates based on the prior year's data. They then trained Grommada on how to map the City's accounts into the template. "From there we were ready to just roll the data forward to complete the current year's statements," she recalls. "We just export current data from our accounting application to CaseWare. From there, it is really almost as simple as pushing a button."

Time Savings and Improved Accuracy

The two most significant benefits the City of Port Coquitlam is realizing as a result of its CaseWare implementation are time savings and improved accuracy.

"We have eliminated almost all of the manual steps involved in the creation of our Annual Financial Statement. CaseWare saved us many days of labor and streamlined the process significantly," explains Grommada. "And, when you take spreadsheets out of the equation, you remove a potential opportunity for error."

Auditors Recognize the Value

CaseWare is a leading supplier of software for accounting and audit firms, and is used by a majority of such firms in Canada.

Grommada notes that while the City's audit firm does not use CaseWare, they still recognize the value of the software. "We use CaseWare to generate the lead sheets and backup we give to them," she says.

By including notes and annotations in the CaseWare file, the City is building a repository of organizational knowledge, accessible by the auditors and by staff members, now and into the future.

Beyond Annual Reporting

Grommada has plans to use CaseWare in the production of the City's quarterly, variance, and provincial reporting tasks as well. "CaseWare is capable of doing so much more than annual reporting, and I'm looking forward to expanding its use to other strategic areas," she says.

A Valuable Tool

"CaseWare is able to take data from a complex system and turn that data into presentation-quality reports with very little effort," concludes Grommada. "It's a valuable tool for the City of Port Coquitlam."



For 25 years, F.H. Black & Company Incorporated has worked with finance and budget departments in government, education and corporations across North America to crush waste, & eliminate inefficiency.

Our mission is to ensure that our finance & budget departments do more with less, do it better than it was done before and do it in less time.