Minute No. 336
Report – Governance Committee of Council – April 4, 2018

Item No. 3 Scent Free Workplace

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council and adopted the following:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer and the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back to Council within 90 days with a policy on establishing a scent free workplace prohibiting the use of scented products in City of Winnipeg workplaces.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Governance Committee of Council – April 4, 2018

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gilroy,

That the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE:

On April 11, 2018, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council and submitted the matter to Council.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On April 4, 2018, the Governance Committee of Council passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg Administrative Standard on Safety, Health and Organizational Wellness recognizes that "every employee can expect to work in a safe, healthy work environment that supports well-being.";

AND WHEREAS the current City of Winnipeg practice / guideline, as attached, only provides methodologies for dealing with incidents involving scents rather than establishing a workplace policy;

AND WHEREAS environmental sensitivities can occur when individuals are exposed to scented products such air fresheners, cleaning products, perfumes, hairsprays, cosmetics, lotions and body sprays, which may contain respiratory irritants that can trigger sensitivities or aggravate asthma and allergies in certain individuals such as headaches, dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, and skin irritation;

AND WHERESAS the Canadian Human Rights Commission Policy on Environmental Sensitivities identifies environmental sensitivities as a "disability and those living with environmental sensitivities are entitled to the protection of the Canadian Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.";

Report – Governance Committee of Council – April 4, 2018

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

AND WHEREAS the Canadian Safety Council lists that "chemicals used in fragrances can cause health problems such as shortness of breath, headaches and migraines, nausea, muscle pain, and cold-like symptoms. Asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, and allergies can all be adversely affected by the chemicals found in scented products. According to the Lung Association, one study found that 72 per cent of people with asthma had adverse reactions to perfumes."

AND WHEREAS large organizations including Universities and Health Organizations in Manitoba have implemented scent free / clean air policies to deal with this issue;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back to Council within 90 days with a policy on establishing a scent free workplace prohibiting the use of scented products in City of Winnipeg workplaces.

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Further, On April 4, 2018, the following persons submitted communications in support of the matter:

Nancy Boni, Manitoba Anaphylaxis Information Network (MAIN)
Neil Johnston, The Lung Association, Manitoba