COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Friday, April 3, 2020

The Council met at 9:37 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma, His Worship Mayor Bowman, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Eadie, Gillingham, Gilroy, Klein, Lukes, Mayes, Nason, Orlikow, Rollins, Santos and Schreyer.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Would you please read the notice calling the special meeting into the record, please?

Pursuant to Section 79(1) of the City of Winnipeg Charter, The City Clerk was directed by His Worship Mayor Bowman to arrange a Special Meeting of Council on Friday, April 3rd, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. The notice of meeting including a list of all items to be considered was e-mailed to all members of council on April 2, 2020.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. I've been advised by the City Clerk that the delegation that was registered for today, Mr. Derek Balcaen has called and he's withdrawn. He's not able to make it today, so we'll move into our committee reports. We do…this is a special meeting of council, so each item will be introduced separately and voted on after the introduction. And as per our usual council practice, the chair of each committee will be introducing the items and then it will be open for debate by each member given eight minutes and also two minute extension if council wishes. Mr. Mayor, on the report of the Executive Policy Committee.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: First, Madam Clerk, yes, to introduce each item. Thank you.

Item 1 – Temporary Waiver of Penalties and Administrative Fees on Business and Property Taxes and Financial Implications to the City

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And just so I'm clear, I'm introducing each report individually?

Madam Speaker: Yes.

Mayor Bowman: Okay, so I'll introduce the first report which is the temporary waiver of penalties and administrative fees on business and property taxes and financial implications to the City. I will not use the full eight minutes. I want to begin by thanking our public service for the speed at which they've been able to provide this report to members of council. As members of council will know, two weeks ago we voted on our budget and as one of the amendments that budget was a request for the public service to provide this report within 30 days. The fact that we are here two weeks later is really a testament to the dedication and hard work of our public service. And I want to begin by thanking them. The citizens and the businesses that will benefit from this, should it be approved by Council today, certainly is in large part to their efforts. I also want to thank our Finance Chair. He had begun the discussions and the due diligence well before the budget amendment was made. It was an amendment that he led on and I want to thank him for not only his leadership in that respect, but also for the manner in which that he has collaborated with all members of council over the last few weeks. I want to thank each member of council also for doing their due diligence, for their input and their discussions, including our efforts here today. This is a…this measure is unprecedented in our city's history. And we know that many of our residents, many of our businesses are hurting right now and are looking for relief. I want to thank our federal and provincial government partners for their efforts to date as well as those that we know they're working on

and considering. This is one measure that will provide some assistance to those that need help. Now of course, as I mentioned yesterday in a press conference, we are still urging property taxpayers that can pay to pay because of the vital services that the City is responsible for providing over the coming weeks and months. But for those that are unable to pay, this is an effort to provide some relief and I'm hoping it can be supported by Council. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Chambers followed by Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I echo the Mayor's comments. I also would like to thank the members of the public service for preparing this report amidst exigent circumstances that we're currently strained within. I would also like to commend my council colleague, Finance Chair, Scott Gillingham for his leadership in pulling this information together for our comprehensive review and consumption. These are indeed uncertain times in our city, our province and throughout the world. The impacts of…to the health of our citizens and to the health of our economy are unprecedented in this century. How we proceed now in terms of adhering to the call to stay at home and to reduce social contact until we find our way forward and finding a vaccine or cure will ultimately depend and determine how we can…how quickly we can resume our efforts to kick start our economy. The measures outlined in this report provide specific relief to those who are without income or on reduced income during this period of health crisis. The financial modelling provided indicates a variety of scenarios that could unfold over the periods of defined times in the near future. Overall, for residents who have the means to continue their financial obligations including property tax payments, we urge you to please do so. By doing so you will provide the necessary means for the City to provide the service it needs in these critical times. You're also providing great respite for those who have limited means to meet their financial obligations so they can focus on the day-to-day needs of their families. Winnipeggers have traditionally come together to help each other in time of need, whether through floods, Winnipeggers have seized the moment and have lined up to heave sandbags to construct dikes. In times of blizzards, like we're experiencing today and last night, Winnipeggers have helped shovel snow and have pushed cars out so that motorists can continue on their journey. In times of fires in our northern communities, Winnipeggers have opened their homes to provide aid and comfort to those displaced. I know that Winnipeggers will continue to be guided with financial prudence in these times of uncertainty. I support the recommendations of the public service and urge my colleagues to be united in their support as well as in the interests of our city and the citizens that have elected us to serve. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Chambers. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Question period today, perhaps I can ask the...I'm hopeful that the Finance Chair can speak to one point that's in this report. It has improved upon review since the draft was circulated yesterday to members of council. There is a paragraph at the top of page 10 that talks about the police pension plan and the arbitration decision and savings that were incorporated into the multi-year budget. The heading…the organization of this is such that it appears that is not...that $6 million is not incorporated into the...there you are...into the $22 million that's listed as a short-term hit on the financial stabilization reserve. I think that the paragraph that is included in here about police pension plan savings is more in the nature of the discussion of we're trying to find expenditure savings where we can and the department heads have been advised to do that. There is this challenge though if the decision goes through. So I'm hoping the Finance Chair can at least clarify that, otherwise I'm supportive of the support, I'll be voting for the report, but the draft that appeared yesterday made it a little unclear whether that...the 6 million was in with the COVID costs. It's been cleaned up considerably, the report, so my thanks to Mr. Olafson for doing that. But if the Finance Chair can just clarify for us that would be helpful. But the…any potential lost savings are not necessarily going to come out of the financial stabilization reserve, they may, but that number or that calculation would be separate than what we see before us.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Mayes. Councillor Klein followed by Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Klein: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm going to echo quickly the comments made by Councillor Mayes with respect to the police pension. The motion that's before us is one of a good gesture for our residents, at least for the next 90 days providing some relief. However, I'm disappointed with the small print. The small print within this motion is much more. It's not what we've sold to the residents. It's certainly not what appears on media releases. We're basically handing over the keys, if you will, to take money from the cookie jar without any accountability. We have a financial impact that is coming. We all know that. We've all heard other cities across Canada taking steps to prepare for that. The 5.2 million that is talked about certainly doesn't add up to all the other expenses that we're trying to put in here and cover by taking funds from our various accounts, our stabilization funds, reserve funds. The motion defers late penalties as we talked about for three months, but we're not prepared for what will happen in four months or five. The Canadian government when they released their stats on this and their revenue projections and budget analysis, they based this crisis on six months. They took the extra step to be confident that they could cover the impact that was coming. Our revenues are dropping now. We're not prepared. This motion includes a financial strategy to deal with shortfalls in our budget in the small print that simply drains the reserve funds. I would put us all in a room to review

operations and identify cutbacks together that would be launched when the crisis reaches select milestones, so that we're prepared for every issue that comes up and when it comes up. We don't have to introduce the ball, but we should be ready. Today, we should be voting on the cancellation of non-essential spending, non-essential capital, but we're not. We're voting to remove accountability from our spending. Today's motion doesn't give me confidence in the City. It's business as usual for spending and borrowing. I urge you to think about what's happened in the last several weeks, to look at your RRSPs, to look at what is going on with residents, thousands that have been laid off, tens of thousands, but nothing is changing for us in this budget or in this plan, nothing. It's business as usual. Are we really in this together? We can't afford to wait and see how this all plays out or what level of government will provide us a handout. We need to assure residents today that we are focused on fiscal accountability, that we're not simply going to take money from Peter to pay Paul because we're going to have to pay Peter back. I was hoping to see a more robust response to this crisis today and the one that is coming. I would have implemented decisive actions to help sustain our city through these challenging and stressful times. Let's do a little more to relieve the burden for residents. We can eliminate parking fines around hospitals. We've all been receiving messages about that. We've seen it all appearing on social media. It's a small step that we could ask the Winnipeg Parking Authority to implement. We could help by providing meals for children in our at-risk neighbourhoods. We can look after our most vulnerable citizens without costing us more money, by taking funds that we have allocated to a different purpose. We could reallocate it to help. What is before you is a great gesture and I support that gesture, but I'm stuck yet once again having everything tied in so that it slips through the cracks and it gives political positioning statements to others. It's not helping the city. It's eliminating accountability. Allowing the City to continue business as usual. It's not. It's not business as usual anymore. We're told this one attempt, this first pass that offers no consideration of the financial impact that is coming is the best solution. This is the very best solution the full force of the City of Winnipeg could come up with. I don't believe that. I believe they're much more talented. I believe they have much more skill and if we direct them properly, they'll give us what is needed. If you look at the police pension that Councillor Mayes talked about, we're also including the hefty fine in that number. That's all that makes sense to me when I start doing the numbers. So the City was punished with a $600,000 fine and all of a sudden, it's the fault of COVID-19. Does that make sense? Is that a reality? This motion indicates the City assumes that most people will continue to pay taxes on time. It's only going to cost us $5.2 million so why are we allowing everybody to dip into the reserve funds when necessary? Let's identify it properly. Let's talk about it properly. I would have cancelled as I think I said all non-essential spending immediately. I would have cancelled all non-essential capital purchases. Purchases not deemed to be critical. Ask yourself, look through the revenues, look through the budget, do we need to buy $10 million of new vehicles this year? Or could we wait a few months? Could we wait a year? Let's direct the public service together to reduce spending in our non-essential departments by 10%. I know these are small little steps that need much more thought and consideration, but that's why we're all here together to have that consideration to talk about those things, not to be told, not to be said here's the best we're going to do and you're to vote on it. Much more is required. And I'm afraid it's going to be much more drastic if we sit back and wait. I hope for better. And I'm sorry the entire motion does not meet my expectations. I appreciate and I support the deferral of fees and late payments for residents and businesses. But I'm continuously puzzled by how these items pass through chamber time and time again. This is a group of very intelligent people with vast experience in different genres. Surely we can come up and work together on finding ways to be ready for what's coming.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Klein. Councillor Lukes followed by Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It was my understanding this would come later, but I would like to have an explanation please from the acting CAO on the award of contract for the Jefferson east combined sewer relief project.

Madam Speaker: That would be at a later time.

Councillor Lukes: Okay, so that's what I wanted to speak to.

Madam Speaker: It's the agenda item we're on currently. Thank you. Next speaker is Councillor Rollins followed by Councillor Nason.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm going to be very supportive of this relief package for Winnipeg at this time. And we know more is to come, Madam Speaker, with respect to council's deliberations now and into the future with respect to this pandemic. The impacts that are felt on Winnipeggers now is why we're here and why two weeks ago, very short weeks ago, on March 20th we contemplated being here debating this exact package. And I'm glad we're here so early. And I want to echo the statements of so many on council who have thanked our public service, who has really been at the service of Winnipeggers, not only our essential services but debating and crafting this package that we see before us on the temporary waiver of penalties and administrative fees and businesses and property taxes and financial implications to the City. How wonderful that we're here. I'm supportive of this package. I'm supportive because I've been doing, like many councillors, wellness checks on my residents in Fort Rouge-East Fort

Garry. And thankfully, many of them are found to be well and self-isolating at home, but many are not, Madam Speaker. Many are losing income, experiencing job loss, and this package, Madam Speaker, this package is timely and it will help Winnipeg. There will be more that we have to contemplate as a council, Madam Speaker. And I'm up for that and I think my fellow councillors here are, too. So I am not disappointed. I am relieved that we're here today, Madam Speaker. That we have put this work together as a city and that we're coming, not just as the federal government has to the aid of Winnipeggers. The themes that we have here including, and I'll concentrate on but one, the themes that we have here with respect to supporting those in financial need, those that can afford to pay will continue to pay, but those that...those property and business owners that need is what I'd like to concentrate on because some of those owners, Madam Speaker, have lenders that are willing to lend them the money. And so not in here, but for my words today, Madam Speaker, is I want to focus on those property owners that can pass along savings to their tenants. There has been a lot of calls, Madam Speaker, where tenants are really...renters are worried in this city. And a lot of the wellness checks that I've been doing pertains to those that are renting including business owners. And so as a councillor, you know, not found in this report, but just as a councillor, I'm hoping those savings will be passed onto tenants if you're a property owner in the city. And I can only hope, Madam Speaker, that is the spirit that we approach this and that the City will receive it. That those that can pay continue to pay, and those that can pass on the savings that they receive pass them along because we want to make sure that we're there as a whole city to make sure we're there as a team, as a whole city. And I think we've done that in part today and that we will continue on doing that as a council for sure. And thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Rollins. Councillor Nason followed by Gillingham.

Councillor Nason: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also want to thank the many members of the public service and of the general public as well that have been declared essential services that are supporting us, be it shopping or whatever other matter of means that we need to get through life at this particular time. I want to put a few words on the record because I unfortunately wasn't able to be here the last time that Council gathered. I am also not pleased to be here today under these circumstances, but yet here we are. Understanding the deferral and then catch up at the end of September, from my perspective is a short-term gain for this near-term pain. We know many in our communities only have limited resources. Many are two-person working families. Their resources are very scant and now we're looking to defer this a few months down the road. The challenge that will be with that is that when that bill comes due, will they be able to pay that? We're looking at many people who we're expecting to pay, who don't know if tomorrow will be the call that they get, that they won't be returning to work. We're not given enough certainty that we're going to be in a financial state to support them. We were presented a document that was to have a March 23rd view of the state of finances in Winnipeg. The title of the report is simple, yet cooked into this is more sneaky ways to authorize items beyond the intent. I look at specifically Item 5 which basically eliminates the need of state of local emergency because it looks like we're granting those powers therein. The reason this report goes into the matters far beyond those that were presented in the report's recommendation and details only confuse it more. Decisions only revealed in the past few days are entered into this wrong...that being, the wrong head of police pension debacle, the amount of 6.6 million that are around this chamber vote...or sorry, that many around this chamber voted for based on bad advice provided to council and some highly touted political agendas. I've been preaching...I've been preached at long before I got here to trust the public service and many of those hard-working members of the public service I do have trust in. One area that I have little trust in is the math errors we get provided. Be it the five months in preparation of this much touted 2020 four year budget document that nine members selected by, and that including the Mayor, had time with. That only two days before being passed by this very chamber, and through focused efforts, the Chair of IRPW had to admit that the transit administration had math errors. This followed multiple times of public ridicule in delegations…of the delegations and public outcry that there were issues with the City math, our math. So excuse me if I fail to have trust and a willingness to simply hand over the keys and delegate authority of these matters, draining the public purse without one serious look at how operating capital budgets that were forced to pass this chamber only 14 days ago should be trimmed. In less than 90 days, the report states again if you can trust the math that our $178 million stabilization fund will be below the required safety levels put in place. Discretion is off the table here. Mandated reductions across the board must be done now and oversight needs to be there from council and the committees of council to allow this and public participation within safe measures. I believe this rushed report that we've had less than 36 hours to look at should be received as information and not a direction of council, hand over the bank of millions of business and residential dollars of spending. Although I support 100% providing relief on property and business taxes to those that are in need, projected, might I add, to only be in the amount of 5.2 million. I can't see supporting this item as currently presented, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Nason. Councillor Gillingham.

Councillor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to rise to thank the members of the public service as well for their speed with which they have turned this around. It's apparent, Madam Speaker, that there are some, those that have been here for a year and a half who still don't understand what the reports are and what they're not. So the report that we're voting on today is a report that has been brought back because we requested the report be brought back

specific to contemplating the waiver of...or providing relief through tax…business and property taxes. That is what we're voting on today. It's the recommendations that we will and will not implement, ask your public service to implement based on the vote today. The remainder of this report, you can really see it in two parts, is the background. And it's the background that I ask to be provided that sets a larger context. Specific to the matter that Councillor Mayes raised, the matter of the police pension, the $6 million is included in the projections and the calculations. No, it's not COVID-19 specifically related, but it is included in our calculations because it sets the larger framework of what the City is dealing with in the midst of this pandemic. It's not business as usual. We're in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic. Council will have to meet again, I'm sure. I'm confident on making decisions on future measures that will need to be taken to make sure that the City's liquidity is in good standing. So what we're voting on today is a matter before us related to property taxes and business taxes. We're not making future decisions right now because that's not what the administration was asked to bring back to us. They were asked to bring back to us a report specific to providing the relief that is needed for business and property taxes. Now further to that, though as I said, there will be other decisions that we're going to have to make in the future, in the not so distant future, and you can see already in this report some of the things that are already being contemplated, other measures that may well need to be taken in addition to the utilization of the stabilization reserve to ensure that we maintain our liquidity to have good cash flow management as a city through these unprecedented days. The measures to be taken are outlined there and it's not...these are not all the measures. It's not an exhaustive list of what options the City may have to enact, but includes looking at a reduction in our capital program. It includes looking at reducing our cash to capital. It includes perhaps the drawing on other reserves as needed. We're in regular discussion with our Finance team and our finance…our CAO as well. In fact, two days after we passed our budget on March the 20th, I reached out on the weekend to our CAO on March the 22nd and said, we need to come up with a strategy if we haven't already on all the different options that we may need to take, and actions we need to take to make sure that we are remaining in a good liquidity position and we're managing this crisis well. He indicated they are already on it and I know that we will continue to have those conversations. I look forward to all the input of all council to walk us through this unprecedented time. But anything that we bring forward really needs to be costed out. We need to do as best we can, the analysis, to waive, you know, this fee or to grant us other reliefs, to reduce capital spending. We need to have an understanding of the implications of that. I believe that some of that work is going to happen. It's going to have to happen. It's happening now. Those will be council discussions. Those will be brought forward. We've already said that our last Standing Policy Committee on Finance meeting, that we will have regular monthly updates now on the impact of COVID-19 at our Finance Committee. There will be public reporting by our interim CFO on the impact of this pandemic and how it's affecting our finances. There's discussions that happen every day with our Corporate Finance team. And again as I said, I welcome the input of all councillors because there is a lot more to do. It is not business as usual. It won't be business as usual for a long, long time because in our lifetime, we have never experienced anything like we are seeing today. And it's affecting all governments at every level as it's affecting household incomes and it's affecting businesses. And the report we have before us today, I'm glad to stand and support and I appreciate again the efforts of our public service in bringing that report back to us. Because this will offer much needed relief to those who have been so adversely affected at this time. We've been hearing, I think every one of us around this council chamber, has been hearing from businesses in our wards that have been affected. We've been hearing…I've been in discussions with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I've been in discussions with the Winnipeg Chamber, the Manitoba Chamber as many others around this council have. And this is much needed relief at a very…offered in a very timely fashion that...for those that need it. I trust it will assist them in these unprecedented times. So I'm glad to support this report. I really believe that we'll be, as a council, be talking again, not just talking again, I believe there's other measures most likely in the future, not too distant future, that we'll have to make decisions on as a council and we'll make those decisions together. So let's understand what this report is, what we're voting on and what we're not voting on. This report is specific to enacting the recommendations that have been brought forward to us by our department and I look forward to supporting this.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Gillingham. Councillor Orlikow followed by Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Orlikow: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll be absolutely supporting this, people need this. It's not that complicated, people. People are scared. They don't know what is happening tomorrow. This…the first thing we need to do as a city is absolutely we need to look at our books. We have a lot of work ahead of us and we need to do it as a team. We need to calm down some of this language that we're using today because we need to be working as a team. But right now, the people, we have 40%...40% of some industries are wiped out. People are freaking out, rightfully so, where am I going to pay my bills. And so to sit here and say that the heading is not correct, so I can't do this or I'm concerned about this, again, it's a democracy, do what you will. But what I know, and crisis management, the first thing you've got to do is make people feel little less…little more safe. And safe financially, is you know what, you can't make it, we're going to be here to help you out for three months. Again as they readjust, and hopefully they'll come back to work by then. I don't think so. Again, I'm not a doctor, I'm not a health expert, but I think we're in this for the long haul. So we're going to actually need to have other measures. And we're going to have to look at our budget. We're going to have to probably redo our whole budget. Again, we've never really faced this before. It's an astronomical hit on everybody. The City of Winnipeg, you know, one thing they talked about with the groups that have been talking with us

about the business community and that side, is yes, we have to worry about the health of everybody but we also got to remember the economy needs to run again. We can't just shut down the economy and put it in a shed and call it done because people need to get back to work and we need to be getting supplies around. So we have to make sure we focus on the economy. One of the big issues that they said that I've been hearing is, don't go out there and just shoot things against the wall and then change it all the time. But also don't do nothing. So how do you find that balance? And this here is the first step. It's the first step. Here we are, we're going to provide you some relief, people. And as you're now home with your children for the rest of the year trying to figure that out, as you're trying to figure out how to work from home, if you can, if you're lucky enough you can do that. For those people that are going out there, our front-line workers and essential workers who are going out there, if you do get sick we're here for you as well. We thank you so much for doing that. Again, this is a first step people. Together, this is our first step. We had some of the parking done. I think that was good as well. But we have many, many more steps that we have to do. But right now, we want to do one step, one broad step that is not overly cumbersome with requiring stuff like pieces of paper and registering and doing all the other bureaucratic mess that will just hang up our system because we're also having staff that are not coming in right now. So what we need to do is find the simplest, broadest relief measure we can within our powers. This is it. And we're doing it. So I'm very proud. I hope this helps our residents and our people of Winnipeg to at least be able to take a breath, look around, take stock of what they have and then we'll move together forward. And as council, I want us all to do that as well. So we can move together, we're going to have to look at some of what we supply. You know, one of the big things in the industry is, please save Winnipeg, don't stop setting up procurements. We need to keep working. Permits department, keep going. We need to keep construction going. Again, this is very important. We have to first prioritize the health of our citizens, but we also have to keep recognizing that the economy needs to keep moving. So again, I do support this. This is exactly what I've been hearing from the business groups that we've been talking to. This is the type of endeavour that they appreciate. It's quick. It's now in their pocket, they can say, you know what, I didn't know how I was going to make my property tax coming up shortly, now they can say, I've got another month, maybe two months, maybe three months. But for those that can pay, absolutely, we need to provide services. We need, we have…so again, if you can pay, please do. But again as Councillor Gillingham has said, we can talk about, you know, why this report say this, and why…but again, really, it's that front page, right there, 1, 2, 3, 4, those are what we're voting on today. I do fully agree that we're going to have to review our budget and we're going to have to look at essential services and how can we redeploy those services into other areas. And again, I look forward to doing that together as a council and with the residents of Winnipeg. But again, I would be...I will be quite shocked if people don't vote for this today. This is what the people need for Winnipeg today.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Orlikow. Councillor Schreyer followed by Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be supporting this motion today. I do so with trepidation. I hope I'm not the only one, because we're going into, you know, some form of unchartered waters, and so I hope we're doing this understanding that we've got something to learn from this. Not just us, but every municipality essentially in the world and every level of government here in Canada. And on that basis, what is important as well is the process of accounting as we move forward here every month and in six months from now and just to see where we're at. Sometimes you have to do things just because you have to do it, but it's really important that we learn from it. So I can understand people's concerns over this. Having said that, I don't know what else to do, I think it's basically the right thing to do. And we don't really know where we're at at this point anyway. We're only, as far as Winnipeg's concerned, we're only, you know, a month into this. I can't visit my great aunt right now. She's 106 years old, my dad's aunt. Rose Rostick. She's at Fred Douglas Lodge, 106. Some people say we don't have the experience of what happened 100 years ago during the Spanish flu, but my Aunt Rose does. She was alive and well. She was five, six years old. And not…yes, she was young, she survived, we had relatives like many others that perished during the influenza of World War I, post-World War I. And given that it was the largest...it devastated society more than World War I did in terms of the number of deaths, and so there are people alive today that…because of that, as they're born in the era, there is nothing more important to learn about in terms of, you know, what affected the communities than the influenza of 100 years ago. And so we...there are things to learn about...that's my point. There is a lot to learn. We've got to do this. We've got to do something. We've got to offer some sort of relief and confidence. But for people that have confidence in government, they have to know that we're paying attention. And it's just not about offering certain aspects of relief, which is really important, but it is about learning from a process that, you know, we in government today, the administration, elected officials, everyone that is accountable, we don't have experience in. So we have to admit that we're learning every day and every month. And we have to look at other jurisdictions as well. But essentially this is the right thing to do. And will there be mistakes along the way? I believe so. That's why, you know, I do this with trepidation, but one can't be that judgmental about it. We…admitting that we…we're going into unchartered territory and we'll just keep each other briefed, offer each other the knowledge and from other jurisdictions as well as we make our small contribution to this global issue. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This is unchartered territory, of course. It's unprecedented. Winnipeggers are struggling. Small businesses are struggling. What we're doing today is providing people a little bit of time. There is a lot of federal government and the programs coming from other levels of government. If on Wednesday your TIPP payment got rejected because of non-sufficient funds, you're not going to be going down the path of having huge fines and penalties assessed to you right away. We're finding a way to provide a little bit of temporary relief. I think it's a good first step. Later on in this council meeting, we're going to be moving reports to allow for electronic meetings. That's going to be an opportunity for standing policy committees to do their job. We can continue working. We're not all going home and you know, Netflixing all day. This is going to be an opportunity to ask our departments some real questions, like do we need to have Transit operating at 100% when there's only 10 to 20% ridership. You know, we need to provide essential service to the men and women who are, you know, working our grocery stores, that are providing medical care to us and if they need transit, we need to make sure that service is available. But do we need rush hour buses coming to our downtown for office towers that are empty? That probably doesn't make sense right now. So I asked some questions this morning of Transit, we'll be…as a member of Public Works, go look at your areas, if you're in Water and Waste, if you're in Public Works, if you're in Innovation, start you know, thinking about the service areas that are under your purview. Start asking questions so that when we start up our committee meetings just in a couple weeks' time that our public service already has some answers for us. They're looking at it as well. So again, these are some first steps. This is unchartered territory. And I'd like to thank Mayor Bowman, Finance Chair Gillingham and our public service for getting us to this point as quickly as they have. Again, let's stay strong, Winnipeg. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Browaty. Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'll be supporting this report today. I, too, have heard from many residents about concerns that they're having. And I do agree that this is buying time. As we all know things are changing literally by the hour. And this is a start. I'm pleased to see that we'll be doing online or moving to some sort of electronic, digital meetings. It's very important that we keep industry going, that we do the best we can to keep construction going. I'm supportive of that. This report today will give a sense of relief and it will also give an actual relief. So I want to thank the public service for working through all of this and I want to thank Councillor Gillingham, I want to thank the Mayor, and all of council who are working towards...in this unique environment working under the reality is, we do work under a governance model that's set up that a lot of us do not agree with, but it is the model that we work under. I'm pleased to see the opportunity to bring questions forward at more of a committee level. I appreciate all the…actually listening to e-mails that I've been sending to various councillor members here. So I'll be supporting this. I'm...you know, it's unprecedented times. And we're going to do all we can and ensure that our citizens are aware that we're doing all we can to transition into whatever the next realm will be. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak in support of the recommendations, the actual…what is coming out of this report. The rest of the report is just to give us a briefing, a status, and Madam Speaker, I first want to just say that I've questioned our economists and I've questioned our Assessment people, I've questioned many people about various issues about projections and stuff in the past. And I have to say a big thank you to the acting CFO as well as the team that works under them in various divisions and our economists projecting this stuff. I mean, it's not an exact science. And...but I think there is a good solid base of predictions. I do agree though why they...I mean it is a financial risk we have, but it shouldn't have been put in the context of as a result of COVID-19. It's as result of what I would say an inappropriate decision in the first place not to negotiate through the collective bargaining agreement instead of unilaterally making decisions, Madam Speaker. But I digress. So I don't know that the public generally understands and I've heard some of the politicians talking on the radio and stuff, Madam Speaker, you know, to be clear, we, the City, of course have to have a balanced budget. We are not allowed to run deficits. And we do have limited revenue from where it comes and we're making a decision today to delay that money from coming in and what that will mean to the city in that regard. But it's easy to say, well, they have bigger revenue at the federal and provincial level, they, too, will be dealing with much lower revenue in order to deal with the COVID pandemic and so on. So...but they're allowed to run deficits. So we are set with this problem in that, you know, there's other things, you know, some councillor members may or may not want to do to ensure that we're meeting and helping to meet the needs of Winnipeggers as they struggle through this pandemic. And so I just wanted to make that clear. So because we did pass a four-year budget and you know, because...I didn't agree with it. There was a lot of things in there I agreed with that we're doing, but ultimately the direction of that four-year budge while it makes it a little easier to fiscally stabilize the City of Winnipeg so we don't go into deficit, which we're not allowed to do. I don't know why we're...maybe we should be asking for a possibility to maybe do that if things get really bad rather than taking some of the actions. Like people who work for the City in various places that you talk about maybe laying off, Madam Speaker, they are Winnipeggers. They're Manitobans as well for sure. What we do in that respect will affect the economy because those people make up the economy as well, Madam Speaker. So let us not forget that that is the situation. And when we take actions, we also need to meet our

responsibilities to make sure that our citizens as our next motion about the local emergency talks about. So Madam Speaker, all these projections and everything, we leave it up to the City's administration to manage...once we pass the budget to manage and try to work with this. And if there are some really big decisions that have to be made, yes, they should be brought back to council. But for one example, Madam Speaker, we're talking about property taxes and TIPP here and a lot of people who called my office were quite concerned about the Water and Waste utility bills. And we do have an ability to deal with various aspects that we're not having to vote on today because they can proceed under how they have operating rules and so on. So I think that's a good thing for Winnipeggers who are listening. We're trying to do our best to provide you relief as well as at the same time ensure the city stays financially viable. And given the budget that was passed, that becomes even more difficult. All you can do is talk about cut, cut, cut, cut, cut. That's all you can do, Madam Speaker. And it's just not right. Like, you know, it's too bad we reduced the investment in arts because I'll tell you what, those artists are struggling right now and they're going to need some money. We at the City level, we can help that way. We've done it in the past. There is commitments there. We should be doing that. But that's for things in the future, Madam Speaker. Today we're dealing with what we can. And I just wanted to conclude, in regards to TIPP, I've heard from a number of people, and so it's my understanding that the prime minister and the premier of Manitoba have called on banks and credit unions to try to assist the people who are experiencing this economic hit, financial hit, from layoffs and all the other problems that may exist because there is a lot of...well, it always ends up the woman almost always, right, ends up having to take care of family if they get sick and stuff, and so feds have some provision there. But calling on your banks because we are, on our side, we'll get an NSF charge if you don't make your property tax, TIPP doesn't go through. We're not going to charge that back to you which is good. However, on your bank side people, you may get hit, the other side…the NSF on the other side. And in that regard, you'll have to talk to your bank or credit union, whatever financial institution you deal with, mortgage company or whatever to try to ensure that they can help you out, too, in the struggles that you're having because the federal government is making provisions for banks. I believe the premier has made some provisions for credit unions to be able to help. They're doing things to make that industry stable. And so I just wanted to make that point. And I also...I think it's important that we get out the right message, and that was a smoker's cough, Madam Speaker. I wouldn't...we're separated I think enough and we follow a lot of procedures. So in concluding here, we're doing this, I think all of council is going to vote for it. You know, I have voted for the amendment to the budget, so I supported our administration going down this road and they've come back with the recommendations. And so I support this report. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further speakers? Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be supporting the report. I'll try to stay brief. I want to thank the Mayor, the public service too for having…well, and everyone involved, Scott, and everyone who was involved with this report for having delivered it so quickly. I just want to emphasize we're voting on tax relief, tax deferral. That's what we're voting on today and the rest of the report is background for information. And I think it's good information to have. We had a challenging fiscal environment before COVID-19. We have an even more challenging fiscal environment today. I also know that Canadians in general struggle with debt and many Canadians are living paycheque to paycheque and COVID-19 will only be exacerbating this very difficult situation. I want to echo some of the comments made by my colleague Councillor Rollins. In terms of renters, we do not have the statutory power to help renters. We have the tools in terms of property and business tax which is what this report is addressing today. I did see a landlord that I know was encouraging other landlords to be lenient with their tenants. And I think we're all in this together and if we can consider…consider if we're in a position where we can help our fellow Winnipegger who may not be able to pay the rent that month, then I think, you know, we should do so. I think this is an effort where everyone is going to have to maybe not do business as usual and try to help their fellow citizens. And I think compassion is going to be something that we're going to need and helping each other out. As well, on the business side, and it's been mentioned by some of my other colleagues, I was on the phone yesterday with a constituent who is involved with a business and their issue is paying lease payments. So of course, this is the same type of situation, but in this case for a business and not a residential tenant who is living in...so but I mean, the financial issues are just as real for that business owner who can't pay a lease. So you know, we have language in the report saying this...this option is available, but if you can pay, please continue to pay because that's going to allow us to continue providing the services that we need to provide as a city. I'm going to make a few points in French.

Translation of French Spoken:
Councillor Allard: So I would also like to address my colleagues in French. I will support this report. I would also like to thank the public service, my colleagues, the Mayor, in particular, Scott Gillingham too for having created this report so quickly. And I think we are all in agreement this has never been seen. It's hard to know how to work as politicians during this crisis that we have never seen before as a community, as individuals. But in the meantime, I think it's a good report. It will offer a little bit of security for those who can't pay their property taxes or their business taxes for a limited amount of time. And also, in a difficult financial situation for the City of Winnipeg, and at a Canadian level where many people are living, in English we say, 'paycheque to paycheque', sorry, I don't know the translation, but they're living in a situation where if they don't have their next paycheque, they may be in a situation where they can't pay their mortgage,

they can't pay their rent. So we are all stressed right now. And so this report will offer a small comfort for people over the next few months. And if I could also, in French, encourage those that have the ability to help their renters, whether it's residential renters or commercial renters, this measure will help the owners, but many owners have renters so if it's a possibility to help your renters, I think it's a moment where we all need to work together and for those that can pay their property taxes and their business taxes, please do it because the City also needs revenues to continue to operate.

Councillor Allard: So just to conclude, I really hope we can be unanimous in supporting this report today. It is offering temporary relief to our citizens and we've got to get through this together. And I think this is a good interim step and, of course, we're going to need to revisit a number of aspects of our public service, but what we're voting on today is, do we want to give temporary tax relief to those residents and businesses that can't afford to pay. So please support this report.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Allard. Mr. Mayor to close on Item 1.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to my council colleagues for their comments today, and as I mentioned in my introductory comments, for all of their efforts to date. I'm pleased to move adoption of the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service. And I'll just comment and maybe pick up on something that Councillor Gillingham had to say in terms of financial stewardship. As has been commented on by many members of council, there will be a lot more work for Council and the public service in the days and weeks to come. It is important to keep in mind that this report as Councillor Orlikow eloquently stated in plain language that he is…often uses on this floor and elsewhere, that it's pretty simple. What we've asked the public service to do two short weeks ago was to provide a plan that contemplated relief for those that cannot pay their business or property taxes. In addition to that, Council rightfully requested background information and consideration so that we could better appreciate the risks in taking...in taking the steps that we're taking today. And so I appreciate the level of information. I appreciated the opportunity to review it and have a council briefing yesterday with all members of council where our public service was able to answer questions. And you know, obviously, one of the things that I'm mindful of is the fact that the four year multi-year balanced budget process I think positions us as well as we could have hoped going into the circumstances upon which all municipal governments across Canada and throughout our province are facing right now. You know, if we had not balanced next years' operating budget, for example, we would have been facing I believe over $100 million structural deficit that we would need to reconcile in nine months in addition to the reality that governments around the globe are facing right now with the global pandemic. And so as difficult as the decisions will be going forward, they would have been 100 times...100 million times more difficult had we not taken the steps and the difficult measures that we have taken. I believe the number that was projected for 2021's budget was approximately 131.9 million. So you can just imagine that in addition to the uncertainty and risk that we're facing right now. You know, I appreciate the efforts of all members of council and the public service because the budget, which feels a lot longer than two weeks ago was a difficult process and a lengthy process to go through. So today's decision is quite simple. Do we want to provide some relief for property and business tax owners for those that are not able to pay their taxes in the next three months or not? And I would urge all members of council to please support it. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'll call the question. Councillor Nason.

Councillor Nason: Madam Speaker, I'd like to call the question on Items 1 through 4 and 7 and call for recorded vote on 5 and 6.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Nason is asking for…to separate out the vote for 5 and 6 as a recorded vote. And that can be done by request. Okay, so I will call the...Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: If you could just clarify because we do have the...the report has been prepared in a relatively short period of time, I appreciate that. The appendix does list the pension plan as a result of COVID-19, but we're not voting on the appendix, I'm assuming we're voting of the recommendations?

Madam Speaker: Yes, the recommendations 5 and 6. And I will have the Clerk read them out for everyone's benefit. So I will call the question on 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7. All in favour? Contrary? Okay. We'll call for recorded vote on that as requested by Councillor Rollins and the Mayor. All in favour of those clauses, please rise. Every clause except 5 and 6.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Bowman, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Eadie, Gillingham, Gilroy, Klein, Lukes, Mayes, Nason, Orlikow, Rollins, Santos and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillors Schreyer

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 15, Nays 1.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 pass. We'll now have a vote on 5 and 6 together. Councillor Nason, was request to vote 5 and 6 together or separately?

Councillor Nason: They can be voted together, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Pardon me? Yes, we are going to do that right away. Madam Clerk.

Clerk: Recommendation 5, that the public service report back to Council as determined by the Chief Administrative Officer with an update on the projected status of the financial stabilization reserve fund and liquidity with recommendations to implement steps to address reduced liquidity and/or projected draw on financial stabilization reserve fund resulting in balance of less than 6% of tax-supported operating expenditures. And Recommendation 6, that in the event the general revenue fund reports a deficit at year end, the financial stabilization reserve fund to transfer to the general revenue fund the amount required to avoid a deficit in the general revenue fund.

Madam Speaker: All in favour of clause 5 and 6, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Bowman, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Eadie, Gillingham, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Orlikow, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer and Madam Speaker Councillor Schreyer

Nays

Councillors Klein and Nason

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 14, Nays 2.

Madam Speaker: Clause 5 and 6 pass. Moving on to Item 2, Madam Clerk.

Item 2 – Declaration for State of Local Emergency

Madam Speaker: Mr. Mayor to introduce the item.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to move the motion and I'll just keep my comments brief. As Canadians are seeing municipal governments across Canada and in a number of cities including cities listed in the report; Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal, among others have declared a state of local emergency. Essentially, this would provide additional powers if and when they're necessary if the situation worsens in the coming weeks. Obviously, we want to make sure that we have the tools we can have to be able to respond in a way that supports the direction and the leadership of Manitoba Health to do everything we can to make sure that we're protecting the safety and well-being of the citizens that we're all entrusted to serve. So I'm hoping that members of council can provide this so that the public service does have the authorities if and when they're necessary. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I'd like to first start off by thanking the Mayor for bringing this to council for a decision. As I'm not sure if everybody knows, but the Mayor can call a local emergency without consulting council, but this is more I think in preparation, I think the Mayor explained that. So it's important that we do declare this local emergency because it does give a number of levers under our City of Winnipeg Charter that allow us to do more than we normally would be able to do unless we fell under the...at this point I don't think the Manitoba's government, they've called an emergency as well under their...I can't remember the name of the act...but...pardon me? Emergency Measures Act, thank you. I remember the content but not the...anyway. At any rate, the Manitoba government is one in which our City of Winnipeg is working with and I think that's a really good thing. But in terms of local emergency, you know, there are some things that we could do, and I know it's a very fiscally challenging situation here, but ultimately in order for the City to take on what I call our responsibility for our spaces, I think we have to take some measures to try to help our population really understand how serious this is. There are still people out there who are not taking it seriously. There are still people who don't understand the difference between self-isolation and the social distancing. And I know that both levels of...all three levels of government are trying to get that message out. And with this local emergency being called, I believe that gives our...the ability of our administration that works with the Emergency Committee, which I believe is headed by the Mayor, and others are on there, and so...and under this local emergency, Madam Speaker, I know there has been weight given to a number of ideas all the councillors have been sending around. I haven't seen anything where we were told, sorry, we're not going to...we're not going to even consider that idea or anything like that. So Madam Speaker, I support this and I thank the Mayor for allowing Council to move that emergency agenda ahead. Yes, allowing us to vote in that area. Thanks.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Eadie. Any further speakers? Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll just be very brief. This isn't the first time that we have to deal with emergency...declaring a state of local emergency. Before I came to city council, I came directly from the office of the ministry responsible for the emergency measures at the Province of Manitoba. It's sort of normal for municipalities in the province to declare normal states of emergency for floods, droughts, diseases. Usually the diseases are agricultural, such as the...well, the bovine spongiform encephalitis, mad cow as an example. So there are many reasons why we've had to declare states of local emergency. This one, in my experience is unprecedented, well everybody's that's here. And so I support this. Again, we'll have to learn from this. And this is just the beginning. We'll see where we are in six months. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Chambers.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be brief as well. I will be supporting this vote for the local state of emergency. Again, I want to call upon all Winnipeggers to heed the advice of the experts that are out there. There are essential service workers that are required to keep some semblance...some level of semblance during these unprecedented times. Gathering at a soccer pitch to play soccer is not an essential service. We need to practice that physical separation. So when I'm on social media and I see people reporting that people are still gathering, playing sports as if nothing is going on, it's concerning because there are people that are confined, that are observing the call for social distancing, the call for self-isolation, the call for increased hand-washing and the things that we need to stop the spread of this virus. So again, I'm calling on all Winnipeggers, stay home to the extent possible. Yes, I know that...and I've just come off of the 14 days of self-isolation and I know that it can be a little bit stirring because it's so unusual and it's so...we don't know what is coming next. There are supports out there for Winnipeggers, for Manitobans who are experiencing emotional health care crisis that you can tap into and assist us through these unparalleled times. So again, I will be supporting this local state of emergency. There are measures that are needed, but I think it calls upon all Winnipeggers to self-police themselves and stay home so that we can reduce the spread of this coronavirus. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Chambers. Any further speakers? Seeing none, Mr. Mayor to close.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, I'd like to go longer than six months without a declaration of state of local emergency. The last time we did one was about six months ago. I appreciate Councillor Eadie's comments about the ability for the mayor to make the declaration. He is accurate. The declaration can be made by the mayor in situations where it's not practical to reconvene council. Given we were going to meet today on the property and business tax relief measures, and also given the fact that the state of local emergency, there is no immediate plans to exercise the powers under that declaration. I thought it would be entirely appropriate for Council to consider and provide the declaration as has been done in many other cities across Canada. I know in our discussions here we often focus, of course, on you know high level public policy, but I want to just make a few comments about, you know, the fact that we are...we are in a global pandemic. I know I speak for all members of council when I say that we care deeply about our residents and their health and safety and we also are incredibly appreciative of the work of our front-line health care providers who we know are on the frontlines of a battle right now for the very lives of many of the citizens in our community. And the steps we're taking here today, the steps that are taken on a daily basis with an existing authority are

done to do what we can to protect the citizens who we're entrusted to protect. These are our family members. These are our friends. These are our neighbours. And I know that that is something that is felt by every member of council as well as our public service. I'll just conclude my comments by acknowledging and thanking the leadership of Jay Shaw. He is doing remarkable work. I don't know if he's actually sleeping, but he has been incredibly busy. And so much of the work that happens within the existing delegated authority to the public service is being led by Jay Shaw and our interim CAO, Mike Ruta. And they and their teams deserve the appreciation of all Winnipeggers and this council for all of their efforts. I hope that we can don't need to...we don't need to exercise some of the powers under a local state of emergency, but it's important for our residents to know that we're doing everything we can to be prepared, to work collaboratively with other levels of government, to protect the health of themselves and their family members and people that they care about. So I'm hoping that we can obviously support the state of local emergency declaration today, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. With that, I'll call the question on Item 2 – Declaration for State of Local Emergency. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Item 3, Madam Clerk.

Item 3 – Electronic Meetings, Short Term Council and Committee Schedule

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor to introduce this item.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I simply rise to move the motion. You know, when you want to talk about the ability for governments to be nimble and adapt, this is a demonstration that Winnipeg City Council can do just that. Our existing by-law does not allow us to conduct meetings of committees or of council remotely using technology. I know many of us are learning how to use Zoom and other technologies right now in ways that we haven't a few weeks ago. It is incredibly important that the business and the operations of government continue. And that business continuity relies upon the decisions made by members of council. Through the continuity of meetings over the next 120 days and the ability where needed to undertaking those meetings, it's done to protect the health of not only members of council but the clerks and the public service and all those that need to support the work of council. The ability for delegations, the ability to use technologies that we know businesses are using is something that this motion is intended to facilitate. We know that there is going to be a lot of difficult decisions ahead as been acknowledged in the earlier discussion and debate on the business and property tax deferral motion. This is intended to simply provide that business continuity. And I want to thank all members of council. I want to thank Madam Speaker and our clerks for the nimbleness of this motion, the speed at which it was prepared and also for the patience of all members of council. Things are moving very quick. This is something that really was contemplated in the last number of days before this meeting to address the concerns that many had about even assembling here today. So that ability to provide that business continuity using technology, this is a motion that helps facilitate that. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Any speakers? Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Thank you. I just want to commend the Mayor for this motion. I'm happy to second it. And I'm hopeful that some of the trends that we're seeing right now with telework are actually going to stick. We're seeing traffic levels are down, I mean, for reasons related to the pandemic. But you know, one of the things that I've observed over the years is the…is how teleconferencing software just didn't seem to be catching on with, especially with large organizations, but really everywhere and I'm hoping that through this experience, that people, you know, get used to technology. I know speaking from a personal...speaking personally, I never liked the software. I always thought it was weird and awkward to have your…you know, look at your face and everybody else's face on the screen. I much prefer the in-person meetings. But you know, having...necessity is the mother of invention and having had to use it to conduct business, I'm finding what the benefits are. You know, commute time is zero. Well, that's, you know, pressing a button to fire up your software. And of course, there is huge benefits to the environment and I think productivity that is happening. So if we can extend this to formal meetings as we're asking for in this motion, I think it will give us a new tool. And even when things get back to normal, I think some of us perhaps will be able to join in on council meetings when we're travelling on City business. Maybe we'll be able to log in and get our council work in even if we're out of town. So I think this is a really good step in the right direction. And I'm sure there is going to be a whole lot of logistical challenges for the public service to figure all this out, but I think we can do it. And I think we will. And I think we'll be better for it after it's all said and done. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you Councillor Allard. Mr. Mayor to close on Item 2 if you wish. I'll call the question then on Item 2 – Electronic Meetings, Short Term Council and Committee Schedule. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Next, we'll move into by-laws Mr. Mayor, under Executive Policy Committee.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that the following by-laws be read a first time: By-law 40/2020 and By-law 41/2020, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 40/2020, By-law No. 41/2020

Madam Speaker: Mr. Mayor, on the second reading, please.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that the By-laws No. 40/2020 and 41/2020 be read a second time.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried..

Clerk: By-laws No. 40/2020 and 41/2020.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Bowman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that the rule be suspended and By-laws numbered 40/2020 and 41/2020 be read a third time and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. We'll now move into our next committee which is the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment. We will hear from Councillor Gilroy following the Clerk's introduction.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON WATER AND WASTE, RIVERBANK MANAGEMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Item 1 – Award of Contract for Jefferson East Combined Sewer Relief Contract 5 – Semple Trunk Sewer

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to move the adoption of the recommendation of the item that's in front of us here today. And I just want to talk to why it's a little bit important. I know that I have seen some e-mails and some questions from councillors regarding to what we're seeing today. I know that people are scrutinizing our spending. I think that's a good thing. I think we should be having that conversation. I've been appreciating the dialogue that I'm seeing throughout e-mails. But I want to talk to you about why this is important and maybe answer some of the questions that I've received during some of the e-mail exchanges. So first of all, this is critical. We are mandated by the province to do combined sewer overflows. As somebody who represents an older neighbourhood, I actually had a problem with stuff coming out of my pipes this coming…last weekend and I had to deal with that, and so that's why combined sewer overflows is really, really important to make sure that we're investing in that. So during this time when we are looking at cutting, it's really important that we make sure that we do key infrastructure and key infrastructure that we're mandated to do at the Province. This money was earmarked for this project. The money is there. So it's a really good project. I think we should be doing…we should be continuing work at the City. And things like combined sewer overflows are critical, especially when we're looking at the flood forecast that we're seeing. We have to make sure that we are keeping up, doing some of the critical infrastructure work that we need to do to keep our city safe and I think combined sewer overflows is one of them. I know Councillor Eadie had a question about the site occupancy bonus. That was in the report here. And so site occupancy bonus is when the contractor's on site, they usually have to be on site, on City property, it usually interferes with traffic and the neighbourhood, so what they do is provide a bonus so that they can try to get done the work quicker. And we've done it in the past with other construction projects and it has been successful. So I thank Councillor Eadie because that was a really good question. So I do hope that you support it…support this. I know that we will be scrutinizing moving forward on projects and things that we need to do at the City. I think that works that we are mandated to do by the Province, critical infrastructure is key that we do need to keep some stuff going, to keep the economy going, so this is one area where I would support that kind of work. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next speaker, Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you very much. Yes, I copied you, Councillor Gilroy, on all of those e-mail questions that I had. This is the first time that we're seeing a specific report on the Jefferson East Combined Sewer Relief Contract. I recognize that there has been a lot of reports on combined sewer overflow. When I was the Chair of Water and Waste at one point, we did an awful lot of work on public education and awareness of combined sewer overflows. I also understand that the Province is, you know, mandating us to do this. I also understand that I think it's about a $2 billion investment that is going to be...that we're mandated to do. So I guess my question is, and I was thinking, Mr. CAO, Mike Ruta would come down and answer it, maybe Councillor Gillingham can or Councillor Gilroy can or Gillingham when it comes to Finance, I don't think he's on the agenda here though. Yes, we're mandated to do CSOs. We're mandated to do $2 billion of CSOs. Yes, I know this is in the queue. Yes, for sure if it's delayed, it will cost more money. It's got nothing do with the flood that's coming right now, sure, maybe in the future. It's just…it's a $17 million report in front of us that we've not had any discussion on at any committee level before. We've talked about the high level of CSOs and I just am really hesitant at this point in time supporting a $17 million investment that we really have not had a chance to talk about. I appreciate the e-mails that I sent back and forth to Water and Waste, but you know, I guess the question is that I'm not getting an answer out of is if it's delayed six months, you know, I've been using the phrase, this is the end of the world, but if it's delayed six months where we have a better understanding of the situation that's unfolding before us, is that not doable? Yes for sure in six months' time, it will cost more money, but I don't know, it's a $17 million investment that I just don't really have a lot of information on and that I don't really understand the impacts of delaying it six months other than, sure, it will cost more money. Yes, we know we have to do CSOs we're mandated to do it. It doesn't say we're mandated to do it today. Maybe we can do it in six months and still have this $17 million that is available to us. Yes, I know it's in the budget, but I also know everything is changing. And you know, I don't see anything that says it's that critical that we have to do it now versus looking at it in six months' time. And I honestly would like to hear from the Chair of Finance on this. I don't know if that is possible. If Mr. Ruta has anything that indicates that we have to get this done in the next six months, I'd like to hear that because we've not had any opportunity at any committee to discuss this. So I would like that. I would like to understand the six-month time frame.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Lukes, are you asking a specific question to clarify…for clarification? What is the specific question, please?

Councillor Lukes: Sure, I'd like someone to answer. And I'd like Mr. Ruta to come down, I guess.

Madam Speaker: And the specific question. I'll call Mr. Ruta down.

Councillor Lukes: Sure. And Madam Speaker, just to be clear, I've copied Mr. Ruta on all my questions on this. Hopefully, he's had time. I know Mr. Patton has responded, but he didn't really respond to the fact that, you know, can this not be delayed for six months or a year? Because we do have $2 billion worth of CSOs that we're mandated to do, so I'm just challenged on this.

Madam Speaker: Come to the podium, yes, thank you. So Councillor Lukes, question, clarification questions only. Go ahead.

Mike Ruta: Thank you, councillor. The bid went out and there is numerous as set out in the report, numerous bids that came through. We have advantageous pricing that has to be awarded by June 5th. So waiting six months, likely we would have to deal with, you know, some of our trade agreements that require us to follow a certain process. And that is why we're proceeding with the award right now. The work needs to be done. There is no question. I know you've discussed it and Councillor Gilroy discussed it as well. So that's the reasons why we're asking for approval. And as you know, the amounts exceed the contract value that the public service can award.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Lukes, second question.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you, Mr. Ruta. I am clear that the work needs to be done. There is a lot of work that needs to be done on CSOs. I guess I want clarity on the question of, other than the financial implications of possibly a cost increase, what are the negative impacts of delaying this $17 million investment for six months?

Mike Ruta: I have to kind of send that back to the department to comment on. I do want to mention the trade agreements in our respective requirements when we do approach our, you know, RPs or bid documents, we have to follow certain processes.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Final question, Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: So I'm not really hearing...and I'm aware of the trade agreements and that's the fact that we have to put it out…that we have to put it out broader. I understand that. But I'm really not hearing why we can't delay this $17 million investment for six months and maybe…maybe what we could do till we get a more thorough answer is amend or is to put forward on amendment that we lay this over to the next council meeting. It's just it's a $17 million investment. I wasn't part of any discussion on this. And it concerns me because I'm not hearing why there is a negative impact of delaying it for six months.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Ruta.

Mike Ruta: Just one further comment, and I certainly wouldn't want to put words in the mouth of our department, but six months would take us into the winter months and I'm not sure how that would impact the work that is being done.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Nason, you have a question? Clarification.

Councillor Nason: Actually, if the CAO wants to remain for a moment, he might be able to clarify this. But just…in Item No. 2, we passed a motion that had an appendix on there that does have standing committees that are part of this. And I'll note that on Thursday, April 23rd, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee of Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment. Additionally, there will be a second one on Thursday, May 14th of the same said committee. I also note that as part of the information put forward to us today, that this bid, this offer is open for acceptance until June 5th. So I see no need for this to be standing today, but better yet, to be stood down and referred to the standing committee to be heard.

Mike Ruta: I think the only response I would have to that, councillor, is that the department wanted to move forward. This is an opportunity. I think Councillor Gilroy also put forward the concept that during this time we want to keep construction projects continuing on. It's certainly something that if council decides to do something different, that's their prerogative, councillor.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Nason, do you have a specific question?

Councillor Nason: I'd like to have clarification on why this isn't an opportunity to set aside what we have as far as direction for operations of standing committees. This matter should be at a standing committee and not here.

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you Councillor Nason. I think the questions have been asked and answered.

Mike Ruta: I just might mention one further thing. During that time, it was I think the intention to go that route, but then there was cancellations of standing committee meetings over the last little while. And so there was…maybe that's the reason why it was coming forward now.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Councillor Klein.

Councillor Klein: Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, thank you Mr. Ruta. These are intriguing questions from our colleagues. My one question would be what is the negative impact of one year? What is that?

Mike Ruta: Councillor, that's an operational question. I really have to refer back to the department.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Thank you. Councillor Lukes, last question.

Councillor Lukes: I don't have a question.

Madam Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ruta. Councillor Lukes, your speaking time. Did you want your allotment now or we'll move on? You just had questions.

Councillor Lukes: So I'll speak to the report now. So I am not going to support this report. And basically yesterday, you know, when we first came out with the reports, I was very focused on COVID-19. I didn't have a chance to ask questions really until early this morning. And I appreciate Mr. Patton getting back to me, but I'm still not clear on understanding why, what the detriments will be if it's delayed a year…six months or a year. We do have committee meetings coming up and I would really like people to wait until we hear further on this $17 million investment. I don't know about how everyone feels about the timeline of COVID-19, but I personally feel that it is going to take a long, long time to get through this. I recognize that the sewer and water underworks and the combined sewer overflow is very important, but I also recognize we've got $2 billion worth of combined sewer overworks to produce. I know that Mr. Ruta, I appreciate him coming down, and I know he doesn't have the clarity from the department that he would like to provide to us. And

that's why I...I'm not going to be supporting this. I would like to have more clarity from the department at the committee meeting and maybe this is just a fact. Maybe this has all been discussed, you know, through the EPC plus 2 model that we operate under and that's fine. It's just, I don't have any of that information and I'm concerned about a $17 million investment just showing up on the agenda with no other conversation about it. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Schreyer: Madam Speaker, point of order. Do we not need some sort of suspension of the rules of two-thirds to hear this? Just because it comes from the recommendation…recommendation from the administration…

Madam Speaker: No.

Councillor Schreyer: What process here through what says the standing committee…

Madam Speaker: We do not need two-thirds. Councillor Eadie is the next…Mr. Clerk.

Councillor Schreyer: How does it end up coming through the standing committee?

Madam Speaker: This is a special meeting. Mr. Clerk, if you can clarify.

City Clerk: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, all items on the agenda are directed to be placed on the special meeting of Council agenda by the Mayor as part of the notice.

Madam Speaker: And that is in order. Councillor Eadie followed by Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Eadie: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me provide a little clarification about Jefferson east CSO project which has been ongoing now since before I was elected in 2010. They started the work along Scotia, having extra relief valve for water to go out of the land drainage sewers that are in place and will have more in place. This particular Semple construction has actually been delayed from my perspective. As the city councillor for the area and a person quite concerned about the spilling of sewage into our rivers, I've made this project one of my main things that I constantly question. And I used to serve, Madam Speaker, on Water and Waste. And if anybody wants to refer to the questions that I've asked of Water and Waste in regards to moving ahead with various aspects to the Jefferson east CSO area, which is a sizeable area and still has so much more work. So this particular trunk that they're doing on Semple, this is a main…this is a bigger sewer for land drainage, which is an issue in my ward along the river. There are still people who don't have sump pumps and stuff in some of their houses and various aspects as well. This will actually help this neighbourhood, but this trunk for Jefferson has to happen before the many other sewers that are to be separated in Jefferson east sewer separation area. So this project has been on the plate now for quite some time. They completed the Scotia work about…actually, it's almost two years ago that they finished the Scotia work where the bigger drainage happens into the Red River. It's not tied to any flood thing. In order to get this contract done, they need to award it now so that they can get ready and do the work. And this is setting the stage for the future. I believe it's actually a 17 million...or is it a 7...I believe it's a $17 million contract to do the trunk from...I think they already...they may not have done the east side of Semple, but this is going from Main Street all the way to Powers, which is…Powers I believe is the cutoff of Jefferson east. There is a neighbourhood called Jefferson and that would be on the west side. I don't know what is happening in terms of those combined sewers, but that is what we have there. So Madam Speaker, awarding this contract is good now. There is no need for, I think, for Water and Waste to explain the importance. It's been explained. I've talked about it. And actually, to slow this down also is to slow down the repair of Semple Street, which frankly people, there are a number of blocks there that are so bad I'm hoping they're actually taking the top off so that when they are finished, we'll actually have the roads done at the same time, which the neighbourhood wants fixed. So if you want to talk about priority, Madam Speaker, we also don't want to hurt the construction industry here, Madam Speaker. Just because COVID-19 is on, we can't delay everything because we need to support that economy that is falling apart because of COVID. For us to stop all work, and that's what you're really saying, because to stop this one which has been planned for a very long time is ridiculous in the face of COVID. So I just urge everybody, let's just vote for this. We explained to me what the site occupancy bonus is and I think that's really good because you know the neighbourhood also wants to get all this work over and done with as soon as possible because Semple has faced quite a bit of disturbance as well as the whole Jefferson east in doing sewer separation. And the sooner we get it done, the better. There is a contractor there. We're awarding it. Let's get it done.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Klein.

Councillor Klein: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to move referral to the Water and Waste, Riverbank Management Committee of this item, please.

Madam Speaker: Okay. We will now vote on the referring motion. And that is in order. Councillor Gilroy can get up and concur or rebut for a few minutes. Councillor Gilroy. There is no instructions with a referral motion. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: So I will be in support of referring this back to the committee. You know, I think that we have some time to kind of look at this a little bit further. And you know what, I think it's important that we do ask...that doesn't mean that the project isn't going to happen. I want everyone to know that. I am a big believer that this project needs to go forward. I just think that we…in light of the conversation here, there just needs to…some more questions to the administration on this. I would like to have that dialogue. I'd like to figure out, you know, any costs of delaying it. I think Councillor Eadie made some really, really valid points that we need to listen to and hopefully he'll be able to share that at the committee level as well.

Madam Speaker: Thank you Councillor Gilroy. With that, we'll vote on Councillor Klein's referring the item back to the standing committee. This is the Award of Contract for the Jefferson East Combined Sewer Relief – Contract 5 – Semple Trunk Sewer. All in favour of the referral? Contrary? Okay, we'll have a recorded vote. I see three wanting to be recorded in opposition. So all those in favour of the referral, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Bowman, Councillors Chambers, Gillingham, Gilroy, Klein, Lukes, Mayes, Nason, Orlikow, Santos, Schreyer and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillors Allard, Browaty, Eadie and Rollins

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 12, Nays 4.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Item 1 will be referred to the standing committee. That passes. Moving forward to the next Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works. Councillor Allard will introduce the item following the clerk reading it out.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS

Item 1 – Agreement between the Transit Department and the Province of Manitoba for the Sharing of Personal Information

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Yes, I'll keep this brief. My understanding in terms of this report is formalizing the need for an agreement between Transit and the Employment and Income Assistance Department of the Province of Manitoba. Currently there is...there are different ways to check people's income in terms of eligibility requirement…eligibility for a low-income pass and this will facilitate the information sharing between Transit and EIA and give them a new tool in order to implement the low-income pass. That is it on a high level. The report states no financial implications. And if there's any questions from my colleagues, I'm happy to hear them.

Madam Speaker: Any speakers on this item? Councillor Nason.

Councillor Nason: Madam Speaker, I rise again on this matter because it's much the same as the last one we just passed. We have an upcoming Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works meeting on April 21st. I see no reason that this matter should not be referred to there so that opportunity to discuss perhaps the reasons why this again was not part of a standing committee matter when this matter came forward. It should have been included as part of the planning. Is there some gaps that we have? Is there some concerns that the public may have with regards to privacy information-sharing and/or the design of the program and any shortcomings therein? We've only recently learned that the U-Pass that was recently removed, that you know, it was strongly encouraged that members of the university and educational area could apply for the low-income pass except if they were here on a visa, they would not be eligible. But I think there

are opportunities to go and speak to this matter. I would ask that we consider to refer this matter to the Standing Committee of Infrastructure and Renewal and Public Works to the April 21st meeting, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Nason, you were to move referral at the beginning of your speech, so I don't believe that is in order. I will move on to the next speaker, though. Okay. A referral needs to be moved at the beginning. Any further speakers on this item? Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: I move referral as explained by Councillor Nason.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Councillor Schreyer is moving referral to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works. Councillor Allard, do you wish to speak?

Councillor Allard: Well, not having had the opportunity to ask the public service what the implications are to a deferral, there may be logistical considerations. This may delay the implementation of the low-income pass. I mean, at this time I would prefer voting on this at this time, but it's subject to the will of Council.

Madam Speaker: Okay. All in favour of the referral? We can't speak to it at this time. All in favour of the referral? Contrary? Referral is lost. And that wraps up that standing committee. Councillor Gillingham, will you move adjournment. Pardon me? Yes, we're still dealing with this item. That was too quick. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: To close?

Madam Speaker: You can open up on the item. He did? Did you do that? Okay. Are there any other speakers? Councillor Gillingham.

Councillor Gillingham: Thank you, and I'm not motioning adjournment just yet, but good try, Madam Speaker. I just appreciate the report being here. And it's…I think in the broader context, what is important to remember is that this continues in small ways to move the city forward. I think we have to be cautious. I did support the referral motion on the last item, but I think we have to be cautious as a council in the midst of this to not be making one-off decisions on the fly that will impact, you know, the economy. Let's trust in the process that we are putting together to make sure that the decisions we're taking are being analyzed and will be analyzed by our public service with the appropriate information coming to us, specific to this financial impact. The reason I did not support the referral of this is, if you look at this report, it says there is no financial impact with proceeding. So I'm glad to support this report that is before us today. But I just…in a broader sense, I would encourage my council colleagues that when we are looking at, whether it's capital projects or other items, where possible let's get our public service to provide the financial analysis that is necessary to make a decision rather than just kind of abandoning capital projects on the fly. That is not good management. So I would ask us just to...even though we're in crisis, just to do what we can to, you know, get our answers from our public service, thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. As a member of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works, I'll be clear that I've been fairly vocal in opposition to the low-income pass. One of the earlier versions of the administrative reports pointed out that one of the concerns was the high cost of administering the program and that there was no guarantees that the Province of Manitoba would be willing to work with the City to provide information on people who have low-income so that that information could work together. That is what we're only approving here today, just making sure that that's there. So I thank the Province to…you know, for making agreement with the City. Again, I question that this is the best way to invest more in our transit program, the low-income pass. But this particular piece of housekeeping I think is important and I will be supportive.

Madam Speaker: Thank you Councillor Browaty. Any further speakers? Seeing none...Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: May I speak?

Madam Speaker: Yes.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yeah, I wasn't…I don't have the impression that anyone was looking at abandoning capital projects. That's for another discussion. It is an issue of priorities. I guess it was mentioned earlier by Councillor Klein, you know, what are our priorities as we move forward given that we are changing our priorities. Having said that, following process in terms of the roles of the standing committees, in terms of doing their jobs, following due diligence before items come to Council, you know, we didn't invent that. It's a process we basically

agree with. Given the circumstances, a couple of issues were deliberated on in terms of whether they should be sent through the traditional method of process of going through standing committee. When I voted in favour of the Jefferson east combined sewer relief contract going through standing committee, I wasn't trying to abandon the contract. Madam Speaker, just a thought as others did that we felt it was worthwhile that it go through standing process of standing committee and possibly become a better motion. That is the same reason why I voted in favour of Councillor Nason's concerns about the issue of the Transit Department, the Province of Manitoba sharing information regarding low-income bus passes, things like this. Certainly wasn't about trying to stop a capital project. But nonetheless, I do see Councillor Gillingham's point that there are no financial implications in this case. It does make it different. Nonetheless, we have processes for very good reasons here. And we should second-guess ourselves at this point whether, you know, the reasons why we wish to shift process. And that is not always necessary. However, it's been a good meeting. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: I rise in support of this. This has been a long time coming and I don't want to slow any of this down. All this is is agreeing to work with the Province on sharing data. I think it's really important that we make it as easy as possible for people to apply for the low-income bus pass and making sure that we share that data is key in doing that. So they have a lot of data that we would require, and if we can make it easier for residents to be able to apply, that is good for Winnipeggers. So I really support this. I think there are things that we just need to move on with. And so I support this moving forward. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Now Councillor Allard to close.

Councillor Allard: Yes. Thanks to all the speakers. I understand from the Clerks I'm to read this language. I'd like to move the adoption of the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service.

Madam Speaker: Thank you Councillor Allard. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Councillor Gillingham, will you move adjournment? All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Thank you. Madam Clerk, roll call.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma, His Worship Mayor Bowman, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Eadie, Gillingham, Gilroy, Klein, Lukes, Mayes, Nason, Orlikow, Rollins, Santos and Schreyer.

Council adjourned at 11:37 a.m.