Agenda – Council – October 28, 2021

Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks - Notice of Motion

Item No. 1 Establishment of Safe Access Zones for Health Care Facilities and Public Schools

Moved by Councillor Rollins,
Seconded by Councillor Chambers,

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg has seen an influx in protests in front of healthcare facilities in violation of Manitoba's public health orders amid the fourth wave of COVID-19;

AND WHEREAS intimidation, harassment and coercion of patients, family members, healthcare workers and anyone attempting to access these services is an invasion of privacy and distressing;

AND WHEREAS protests outside hospitals cause traffic congestion, block emergency vehicles, and results in the cancellation of appointments, overall putting further strain on the healthcare system;

AND WHEREAS protests outside hospitals are a profound disrespect to healthcare workers who have worked tirelessly over the past 18 months and the family members of over 1000 Manitobans who have died from COVID-19;

AND WHEREAS anti-choice protests outside facilities that offer abortion services have been ongoing prior to COVID-19 and are equally distressing for patients and healthcare workers in these facilities as they are harassed and subject to graphic false anti-abortion imagery;

AND WHEREAS individuals should be able to access healthcare services, whether it be abortion, urgent care, or health screening, free from protesters;

AND WHEREAS City Councillors as municipal leaders have an obligation to protect the health, privacy and safety of all residents they serve and should do all things possible to prevent the intimidation and harassment of healthcare workers, and those attending healthcare facilities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Policy Committee recommendation to Council:

1. That City Council enact safe access zones around any clinic, hospital or healthcare facility that prohibits protestors from coming within 150 metres;

2. That City Council enact safe access zones around public schools that prevents anti-choice protestors from intimidating and harassing young students with graphic imagery and misinformation;

Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks - Notice of Motion (continued):

3. That City Council establish safe access zone fines in the 2022 budget for those in violation and ensure enforcement of safe access zones to protect the safety of patients and healthcare workers;

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