Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – December 10, 2021

BUDGET REVIEW

Item No. 9 Free Menstrual Products in Civic Facilities

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 30, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development recommended to the Executive Policy Committee:

1. That $58,500.00 be allocated to the Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) to be funded from corporate efficiencies and/or existing department resources.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 30, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development recommended to the Executive Policy Committee:

1. That $58,500.00 be allocated to the Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) to be funded from corporate efficiencies and/or existing department resources.

STANDING COMMITTEE DECISION:

On June 8, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service, as amended, and approved the following:

1. That a one-year Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) be implemented to test effectiveness and efficiency of this initiative in civic recreational and library facilities and based on the Cross-jurisdictional Scan completed as described in this report, at the following locations:

    A. Millennium Library – 251 Donald Street
    B. Fort Rouge Leisure Centre – 625 Osborne Street
    C. Seven Oaks Pool – 444 Adsum Drive
    D. Freight House/Central CC – 200 Isabel Street
    E. Elmwood Kildonans Pool – 909 Concordia Avenue
    F. Turtle Island Neighbourhood Centre – 510 King Street
    G. Margaret Grant Pool – 685 Dalhousie Drive
    H. Westdale Community Centre – 550 Dale Blvd

2. That, subject to approval of Recommendation 1, funding for the FMPPP, estimated at $58,500, be referred to the 2022 Budget Process.

3. That any implementation of the FMPPP commence upon approval of the 2022 Budget and upon completion of the FMPPP, the Public Service analyze and present the results to the Standing Committee within 60 days and propose next steps.

4. That during performance of the FMPPP, the Public Service approach potential public and private sector partners to receive advice and guidance; and explore funding/partnership opportunities to provide free menstrual products in civic facilities.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE DECISION (continued):

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

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Free Menstrual Products in Civic Facilities

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
B. Erickson	G. Patton	C. Kloepfer	M. Ruta, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barriers to accessing menstrual products can pose significant challenges for those needing them. In order to lessen this situation, and improve gender and opportunity equity, this report considers providing free menstrual products in civic facilities. The Public Service is proposing a one-year Pilot Project in six (6) civic facilities, as identified in this report, to effectively determine needs and develop recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a one-year Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) be implemented to test effectiveness and efficiency of this initiative in civic recreational and library facilities (identified in this report) and based on the Cross-jurisdictional Scan completed as described in this report.

2. That, subject to approval of Recommendation 1, funding for the FMPPP, estimated at $58,500, be referred to the 2022 Budget Process.

3. That, any implementation of the FMPPP commence upon approval of the 2022 Budget and upon completion of the FMPPP, the Public Service analyze and present the results to the Standing Committee within 60 days and propose next steps.

4. That, during performance of the FMPPP, the Public Service approach potential public and private sector partners to receive advice and guidance; and explore funding/partnership opportunities to provide free menstrual products in civic facilities.

5. That the proper officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On March 15, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development directed the Public Service to:

1. Report back within 60 days on cost-effective options to provide free menstrual products in civic facilities, including but not limited to, the following options:
    A. All public-facing civic facilities;
    B. Civic facilities that accommodate civic employees;
    C. Community and Recreational Centres, Arenas, Pools and Libraries;
    D. Public facing civic facilities in “Higher Needs Neighbourhood”;

2. Consider within the report noted above, funding initiatives including, but not limited to, partnerships with manufacturers of menstrual products, non-profit organizations and other levels of government;

3. Conduct a cross jurisdictional scan to determine cost effective solutions that provide free menstrual products to young girls and women, and civic employees.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

A one-year Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) will be implemented following approval of the 2022 Budget to assess the City’s ability to provide this service. The FMPPP will:

- Make menstrual products available, for free, in six (6) civic recreational and library facilities identified within this report*;*
- Incorporate and align with best practices of other jurisdictions;
- Yield measurable data on general demand, cost, potential challenges, location, delivery method, etc. for this service.

Funding for the FMPPP will be referred to the 2022 budget process.

The Public Service will approach potential partners to explore collaboration and/or funding/donation opportunities in conjunction with the FMPPP.

Following completion of the FMPPP, the Public Service will report back to the Standing Policy Committee with results and recommendations.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Access to menstrual products has been deemed a basic human right. However, for various social, cultural, and financial reasons, they may not be easily accessible to menstruating individuals, creating an unfair disadvantage in their daily lives. School, work, or recreation is easily disrupted, or not an option when preferred hygiene is difficult. Furthermore, the embarrassment or stigma around not having, or having to ask for these products can be extremely uncomfortable. While toilet paper, soap, and like items are considered required sanitation needs in public washrooms, menstrual products have historically not received the same category status. All of this can be exacerbated for individuals experiencing homelessness, low-income, or marginalization.

Providing menstrual products privately, consistently, and free of charge in public facilities will help alleviate this biological function from negatively affecting life's daily activities. Furthermore, when these products are available for free, the dignity of menstruating individuals can improve, along with their physical and psychological wellbeing.

Recognizing these facts, many countries now provide, or are considering providing, free menstrual products in public facilities such as schools, including the U.K. and New Zealand. Within Canada, many Provinces do the same, including B.C., Nova Scotia, and PEI, with Quebec currently reviewing the idea.

At a municipal level, many Canadian cities are moving beyond educational institutions and offering free menstrual products in public facilities. Vancouver, Victoria, Edmonton, London, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Halifax currently do so, with numerous other cities running pilot projects for same. A Cross Jurisdictional Scan outlining such efforts is further provided in Appendix A.

Free Menstrual Product Pilot Project (FMPPP) in Winnipeg

Within Canada, most municipalities undertook pilot projects before launching free menstrual product programs. In order to be able to assess utilization, cost, potential issues/implications, etc. many cities targeted a select number of recreational facilities frequented by young adults and marginalized individuals, or those most often impacted by lack of access to menstrual products.

Many of these pilot projects began in 2019 or 2020, but have unfortunately been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In many cases, pilot projects have yielded limited results due to closures of facilities and have thus been extended. Sarnia, for example, began targeting nine (9) recreational facilities in 2020, with a budget of $30,000. They have currently extended their pilot program until the end of 2021 to better assess demand.

While a pilot project for free menstrual products will be a new initiative for the City of Winnipeg, local advocacy and staff feedback indicates demand exists. Very few civic recreation centres currently have product dispensers. Only 2 of 12 indoor public pools have dispensers, however, free menstrual products are currently available by request from front desks. Similarly, staff at Millennium Library have provided free menstrual products at a service desk within the Library. These products are made available from City staff donated supplies. While addressing demand, such efforts do not mitigate privacy concerns. Developing discrete ways of making these products available appears warranted, and work to address potential product supply issues can be addressed during a pilot project.

Performing a FMPPP in the City of Winnipeg would permit the Public Service to more accurately assess all factors and implications of providing free menstrual products in civic facilities. For this reason, the following parameters are recommended for implementation of a FMPPP:

- Target young women, marginalized individuals, and those who may be experiencing homelessness. The FMPPP will also provide access to City staff who are in need and assess the implications for future program need and expansion.

- Identify civic recreational (e.g. pools, regional community centres, etc.) or library locations within each quadrant of the City, with attention to those within, or in proximity to, geographic areas of higher need (Defining Higher Needs Neighbourhoods, Community Services Department, January 31, 2020). The availability of the facility to be open to the public during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic will be evaluated at the beginning of the Pilot Program.

- Proposed locations include:
    - Millennium Library - 251 Donald Street
    - Fort Rouge Leisure Centre - 625 Osborne Street
    - Seven Oaks Pool - 444 Adsum Drive
    - Freight House/Central CC - 200 Isabel Street
    - Elmwood Kildonans Pool - 909 Concordia Avenue
    - Turtle Island Neighbourhood Centre - 510 King Street

- Program Deliverables/Parameters include:
    - Provide products in select target facilities, within washrooms or changerooms menstruating individuals may access.
    - A combination of dispensing machines or “baskets” to be used to assess benefits and limitations of each.
    - Develop signage and/or communication strategies so patrons are aware free products are available.
    - Once dispensers/baskets are installed/placed and products available, commence pilot program for one (1) year to assess uptake/utilization. A one-year period is intended to ensure data integrity associated with pandemic status.
    - Ensure machines are consistently stocked and there is privacy in obtaining products.
    - Obtain and analyze data (e.g., amount of product utilized, issues or complaints, vandalism, etc.).
    - Formulate recommendations for next steps/future implementation as warranted.

The estimated total cost for the recommended FMPPP is $58,500 and is proposed to be referred to the 2022 Budget Process. The Public Service will be exploring partnership opportunities with various stakeholders in conjunction with the FMPPP, including public and private sector organizations who may offer guidance, collaboration, discounts, donations, or other forms of assistance.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: May 14, 2021

Project Name:

First Year of Program 2022

Free Menstrual Products in Civic Facilities

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 58,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 58,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ 58,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Direct costs represent the estimated cost of the FMPPP. Presently, there is no budget for this initiative and, as such, it is recommended that a request for funding be referred to the 2022 - 2025 budget process.

Mike McGinn May 14, 2021

Mike McGinn, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Community Services Department
- Legal Services (as to legal issues)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

03-1 **Opportunity**, *Direction 3*: Work with community partners to foster an inclusive and equitable community.

Enabling Strategies:

- Support social inclusion and equitability in the general community and in City programs, services and activities.
- Support community-led initiatives aimed at fostering equity and inclusion or at opposing discrimination.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Assets & Project Management
Division: Municipal Accommodations
Prepared by: J. Hansell
Date: May 20, 2021
File No: MA2021-066

Attachments:

Appendix A: Cross Jurisdictional Scan of Provision of Free Menstrual Products

APPENDIX A: Cross Jurisdictional Scan of Provision of Free Menstrual Products

Jurisdiction	Policy for Provision of Menstrual Products	Free Products?
Govt of Canada	E-petition required Govt to respond to request for free menstrual products in all federal workplaces. As of Nov 2020, "**No Consensus**" was declared, citing budgetary concerns and more pressing priorities (Covid). Unclear what happens now, potentially nothing.	Dispensers currently charge a fee
Provinces		
British Columbia	April 2019 - B.C. government issued a first-in-Canada ministerial order that requires all public schools to provide free menstrual products for students in school bathrooms.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Manitoba	No Policy as yet	Dispensers currently charge a fee
Quebec	Currently exploring provision of free menstrual products in public spaces. (Motion to Province Dec 2020)	Dispensers currently charge a fee
Nova Scotia	Nova Scotia public schools offer free menstrual products to all their students	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
PEI	Provincial government began providing free period products for Island students in Dec. 2020	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Municipalities		
Victoria	Supplied in all city buildings and public washrooms. Exact number of facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Vancouver	March 2020 - Council Motion directed staff to explore a plan for providing free menstrual products in civic facilities. Number of potential facilities unknown. No report back has been posted to date.	Unknown
Coquitlam	Pilot Program 2019, number of included facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Calgary	No Policy as yet	Dispensers currently charge a fee
Edmonton	Will begin providing free products in all city-owned facilities in June 2021, exact number of facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
City of Regina	No Policy as yet	Dispensers currently charge a fee
Ottawa	Pilot Project ongoing, number of included facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Sarnia	Pilot Project ongoing, 9 facilities targeted.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
London	First Canadian City to provide free menstrual products in all city-owned facilities, total number of facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Hamilton	Pilot Project started in 2020 (expected 1 yr duration), number of included facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Kitchener	Pilot Project ongoing, number of included facilities unknown.	Products free of charge in mandated facilities
Halifax	Free products at 22 municipal facilities	Products free of charge in mandated facilities