Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – January 19, 2022

REPORTS

Item No. 8 Support for Legal Challenge Against the Province of Quebec Bill 21

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the Council Motion of December 16, 2021, as amended, and recommended to Council:

1. That Council reiterate its support for the current legal challenge against the discrimination of freedom of religion in Quebec's Bill 21 - An Act respecting the laicity of the State.

2. That Council acknowledge that respective members of Council may provide support to the joint legal challenges of Bill 21 by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM, the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) in various ways including, but not limited to, public condemnation of Bill 21 and/or contributing financially through discretionary funds as they may deem appropriate

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

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

The Chairperson called Councillor Mayes to the Chair in order to move the following motion:

Moved by His Worship Mayor Bowman,
That the Council Motion of December 16, 2021, be concurred in and forwarded to Council with the following amendment:

- Delete the second resolve and replace it with the following:

  "That Council acknowledge that respective members of Council may provide support to the joint legal challenges of Bill 21 by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM, the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) in various ways including, but not limited to, public condemnation of Bill 21 and/or contributing financially through discretionary funds as they may deem appropriate."

Yea:	Bowman, Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	7
Nay:		0

Carried

His Worship Mayor Bowman resumed the Chair.

David Grant submitted a communication dated January 18, 2022, in opposition to the matter.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On December 16, 2021, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Executive Policy Committee:

Moved by His Worship Mayor Bowman,
Seconded by Councillor Nason,

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg Council has demonstrated their commitment to the protection of human rights with the creation of the Human Rights Committee of Council, and their ongoing efforts to protect the rights of all individuals and improve on equity, diversity and inclusion;

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

AND WHEREAS Bill 21 and the restricting of citizens from wearing religious symbols is not consistent with the protections afforded to all Canadian with respect to human rights, diversity, equity, peace and inclusion;

AND WHEREAS on October 24, 2019 City of Winnipeg Council unanimously passed a resolution opposing Quebec's Bill 21, and supporting in principle, the constitutional challenge to Bill 21;

AND WHEREAS Canada's big cities are aligning their efforts to fund the joint legal challenges of Bill 21 by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council reiterate its support for the current legal challenge against the discrimination of freedom of religion in Quebec's Bill 21 - An Act respecting the laicity of the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Winnipeg provide a one-time 2021 contribution of up to $100,000 to the joint legal challenges of Bill 21 by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM, the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA).