Minute No. 192
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment – January 12, 2022

Item No. 2 **Pilot Project for the Provision of Water Bottle Filling Stations to Vulnerable Populations During Extreme Heat Season and Waiving of Water and Sewer Charges for Temporary Water Supply Trailers and Water Bottle Filling Stations**

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works and adopted the following:

1. That the Public Service implement a pilot project for the provision of water bottle filling stations to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season.

2. That the waiving of water and sewer charges related to the use of temporary drinking water supply trailers and water bottle filling stations designated by the Office of Emergency Management for the provision of drinking water to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season, be approved.

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

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment – January 12, 2022

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Mayes,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 19, 2022, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 12, 2022, the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: **PILOT PROJECT FOR THE PROVISION OF WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS DURING EXTREME HEAT SEASON AND WAIVING OF WATER AND SEWER CHARGES FOR TEMPORARY WATER SUPPLY TRAILERS AND WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS**

Critical Path: **Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment – Executive Policy Committee – Council**

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
Yvette Cenerini, Manager of Customer Service and Communications	M. L. Geer, CPA, CA, Director, Water and Waste Department	C. Kloepfer	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of the Office of Emergency Management, the Public Service has been using existing temporary water supply trailers to increase public access to drinking water in high needs areas during Extreme Heat events, which typically occur between June and September, as a way to provide additional supports to vulnerable populations.

As an alternative to using only temporary water supply trailers, the public service is recommending that Council approve a pilot project in which three water bottle filling stations will be deployed during the extreme heat season, at locations to be determined by the Office of Emergency Management.

The budget for the pilot project is approximately $10,000, with funding made available in the 2022 preliminary operating budget of the Water and Waste Department.

The Public Service is also seeking Council approval to waive water and sewer charges related to the use of temporary drinking water supply trailers and water bottle filling stations designated by the Office of Emergency Management for the provision of drinking water to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season. The waiver for both water bottle filling stations and temporary drinking water supply trailers is estimated at $300 per season.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Public Service implement a pilot project for the provision of water bottle filling stations to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season.
2. That Council approve the waiving of water and sewer charges related to the use of temporary drinking water supply trailers and water bottle filling stations designated by the Office of Emergency Management for the provision of drinking water to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season.
3. 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

Council approval is required to approve the waiving of water and sewer charges.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Funding for the pilot project to purchase three water bottle filling stations is available in the 2022 current operating budget account distribution 443-541040-201201-999.

Funding for the water waiver is available in the 2022 current operating budget account distribution 443-586010-200001-999.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Extreme Heat is identified as a hazard in the City of Winnipeg Emergency Plan. The Extreme Heat Annex is activated at the discretion of the Office of Emergency Management.

The current Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) guidelines issue heat alerts for two (2) or more consecutive days with temperatures above 32º C or humidex above 38º C. The humidex criteria take into consideration factors such as temperature, humidity and wind. In some situations, the Extreme Heat Response may be activated before ECCC criteria is reached if actions are deemed necessary. The extreme heat season includes any months where an Extreme Heat event occurs or is likely to occur, but typically falls between June and September of each year.

When an Extreme Heat event is identified, the Office of Emergency Management will activate its Extreme Heat Annex plan, to mitigate the impacts of the Extreme Heat event and provide additional supports to citizens, with a particular focus on increasing access to clean drinking water in populated areas with limited access, and serving populations

most vulnerable during Extreme Heat events. Vulnerable populations may include older adults, young children, people with chronic illness, socially disadvantaged individuals, newcomers to Canada, transient populations, outdoor occupational groups with high physical requirements and individuals who are regularly physically active.
Having access to drinking water will help reduce the most serious heat-related illnesses, by preventing severe dehydration and elevated body temperature related to extreme heat.

Increasing access to public drinking water for at-risk and unsheltered Winnipeggers, particularly during extreme hot weather in areas of higher poverty, has also been identified as an actionable item in the development of the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Temporary Water Supply Trailers

Since 2017, the Water and Waste Department has been deploying temporary water supply trailers, at the request of the Office of Emergency Management, to areas throughout the city that are known to be frequented by the populations most vulnerable to heat, in an effort to increase access to drinking water during Extreme Heat events.

The availability of temporary water supply trailers for Extreme Heat events is dependent on whether they are required at water main break locations, where residents have no access to water for long periods of time.

In 2021, temporary water supply trailers were placed in the following locations at various times, specifically for the extreme heat season:

- 180 Henry Avenue (Salvation Army)
- 185 Young Street (Broadway Neighbourhood Centre)
- 400 Langside Street (near Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre)
- 584 Selkirk Avenue (Bear Clan Patrol)

Community partners have indicated that these trailers were well used and appreciated by their members.

Temporary water supply trailers have a self-contained water supply and do not require connection to an external water source. As such, throughout an Extreme Heat event, water supply trailers must be regularly checked and replaced to ensure continued availability of fresh drinking water. Before water supply trailers can be refilled and put back into service, they are thoroughly emptied, cleaned and disinfected, and bacteriological testing is completed.

Given the extended periods of extreme heat this past summer, temporary water supply trailers were deployed more often and for more prolonged periods than in previous years.

Pilot Project – Water Bottle Filling Stations

A scan of North American cities showed there are alternatives to temporary water supply trailers for providing temporary drinking water access, such as drinking water fountains and water bottle filling stations. These are typically attached to the existing water system through hydrants or external water connections, such as outdoor water taps.

From a public health perspective, water bottle filling stations provide a more COVID-safe option than drinking water fountains, as users require a fillable container instead of accessing the water directly for consumption.

Water bottle filling stations require less resources (including staff, equipment and potable water) because:

- The equipment can be deployed at the start of the extreme heat season, and does not need to be switched out on a regular basis (as the water supply trailers do).
- Staff are not required to monitor the water supply, as the water is provided on demand from an external water source.
- Temporary water supply trailers, even if they are still partially full, must be emptied and replaced on a regular basis to ensure the water remains fresh. The use of water bottle filling stations will reduce water waste.
- They require less intensive maintenance work versus the work required to clean, disinfect and conduct bacteriological testing on temporary water supply trailers, which then frees up staff for other water-related maintenance activities.

Based on research and the feedback received from other municipalities, the public service is recommending a pilot project which involves the purchase of three (3) water bottle filling stations, at an estimated cost of approximately $10,000, as an alternative to using temporary water supply trailers during Extreme Heat events. The purchase of the water bottle filling stations will be subject to City approval in accordance with the Materials Management Policy, and funding will come from within the existing operating budget of the Water and Waste Department.

The Public Service is recommending that the purchase of these water bottle filling stations be limited to three (3) units at this time, in order to assess their feasibility (i.e., ease of installation/removal, maintenance, durability, customer usage).

Temporary water supply trailers will continue to be used to provide drinking water to vulnerable populations during Extreme Heat events in addition to the water bottle filling stations, on an as needed basis, and at the request of the Office of Emergency Management.

The locations for the water bottle filling stations will be determined by the Office of Emergency Management, in order to identify areas with limited access to drinking water and/or that serve populations that may be more vulnerable to Extreme Heat events. Locations may be modified from previous years to take advantage of existing connections to the water supply.

Should water bottle filling stations prove to be a successful alternative to temporary water supply trailers, the Public Service may recommend increasing their use, both during Extreme Heat events and as an alternative to temporary water supply trailer rentals for special events, such as festivals, and community events.

Waiving of Water and Sewer Charges

Section 55(1) of Water By-law 107/2015 requires that:

“A price, rate, fee, penalty, deposit or other charge related to the supply of water to a property is owed by both the customer and the owner of the property to which water has been supplied.”

To date, the public service has not applied water or sewer charges for the use of temporary water supply trailers when that use has been requested by the Office of Emergency Management during an Extreme Heat event to protect public health.

The public service is seeking Council approval to authorize the continued waiving of water and sewer charges related to the use of temporary drinking water supply trailers and water bottle filling stations designated by the Office of Emergency Management for the provision of drinking water to vulnerable populations during the extreme heat season. The water waiver is estimated to be $300 per season.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** December 7, 2021

Project Name: **First Year of Program** **2022**

PILOT PROJECT FOR THE PROVISION OF WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS DURING EXTREME HEAT SEASON AND WAIVING OF WATER AND SEWER CHARGES FOR TEMPORARY WATER SUPPLY TRAILERS AND WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS

	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	$ 10,300				
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery					
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 10,300	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	10,300				
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Funding for the pilot project is available in the current operating budget - account distribution 443-541040-201201-999. Funding for the water waiver is available in the current operating budget - account distribution 443-586010-200001-999.

L Szkwarek

Lucy Szkwarek, CPA, CGA
Manager Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

Office of Emergency Management
Community Services Department
Assets and Project Management Department
Legal Services (as to Legal Issues)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with:

OurWinnipeg Reference: 4.7 Community Safety

Provide capacity to prepare, mitigate, assess risk, respond to and recover from the impacts of climate change, extreme weather, human or natural emergencies, disasters, and diseases, to promote community resilience within a changing hazard landscape.

OurWinnipeg Reference: 5.1 Equitable Service Access

Provide municipal services through an age-friendly lens that promotes equitable access for all, with a focus on the youngest, oldest, and systemically disadvantaged members of the community.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy Goal 4: Community Well-Being Supports for those in Greatest Needs

4.1 Access to Drinking Water

Explore and increase access to public drinking water by at-risk and unsheltered Winnipeggers, particularly during extreme hot weather in areas of higher poverty, through such means as temporary potable water tanks and/or water bottle filling stations.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Water and Waste
Division: Customer Service and Communications
Prepared by: Yvette Cenerini, Manager of Customer Service and Communications
Date: December 9, 2021
File No.: 010-01-11-03-03