Minute No. 757
Report – Executive Policy Committee – September 14, 2022

Item No. 32 Orientation for Members of Council

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Province of Manitoba be requested to amend The City of Winnipeg Charter to include roles and responsibilities for Members of Council, as contained in Sections 82 and 83 of the Municipal Act (See Attachment A).

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

Report – Executive Policy Committee – September 14, 2022

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by His Worship Mayor Bowman,

That the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 14, 2022, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Orientation for Members of Council

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Gameiro	M. Lemoine	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Winnipeg Governance Review submitted to Council on January 27, 2022, provided 15 recommendations where the City could strengthen its governance structure and processes. Council directed the Winnipeg Public Service to implement recommendation 1 regarding the development of a formal orientation process, that includes documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council, prior to November 2022. A further report will also be submitted to Council with information regarding the implementation of recommendations 2 to 15 by February 2023.

This report addresses the steps that are being taken in regards to the implementation of recommendation 1 of the Governance Review through the creation of an enhanced ongoing orientation process for Members of Council and their staff, which includes the development of an online Council access portal containing information ranging from simple office procedures to the City of Winnipeg Budget development process. The portal will have search capabilities and will be regularly updated in order to provide Council with the most current and relevant information.

The orientation process will also include a series of seminars / presentations from departments on their function and area of services, specific topics of interest at the relevant time (i.e. snow clearing, flooding, pot hole repair), as well as tours of City facilities including the Water Treatment Plant and Sewage Treatment Plants, Brady Resource Management Facility, Transit Garage, and the 311 Call Center. New members of Council and their staff will also receive a heightened level of one on one coaching on Council and committee meeting processes.

The report is also recommending that Council request the Province of Manitoba to amend the City of Winnipeg Charter to include roles and responsibilities for Members of Council, as contained in Sections 82 and 83 of the Municipal Act (See Attachment A).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Province of Manitoba be requested to amend The City of Winnipeg Charter to include roles and responsibilities for Members of Council, as contained in Sections 82 and 83 of the Municipal Act (See Attachment A).

2. 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 January 27, 2022, Council directed the Winnipeg Public Service to implement Recommendation 1 of the Governance Review Final Report, prior to November 2022, namely:

> "Develop a formal orientation process that includes documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council."

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public Service will develop an online portal with access provided to Members of Council and their staff. The portal will contain information on a large variety to topics, including simple office procedures and the City of Winnipeg Budget development process.

The Province of Manitoba will be requested to amend The City of Winnipeg Charter to include roles and responsibilities for Members of Council, as contained in Sections 82 and 83 of the Municipal Act. (See Attachment A).

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

The final report on the City of Winnipeg Governance Review, conducted by MNP, was submitted to Council on January 27, 2022. The report concluded that overall *"the City of Winnipeg's governance framework (formal structures and practices) appear to be consistent with or leading the practices of the other jurisdictions reviewed, and support principles of effective municipal governance.*" The report also provided 15 recommendations on where the City could further strengthen its governance structure.

Council directed the Winnipeg Public Service to implement recommendation 1 regarding the development of an orientation process including documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council, prior to November 2022, and report back with information regarding the implementation of recommendations 2 to 15, by no later than the end of 2022. On June 23, 2022, Council amended its decision and directed the Public Service to report back to Council with information regarding the implementation of recommendations 2 to 15 by no later than February 2023.

Council Orientation

The Council Orientation process is a method through which new and existing members of Council and their staff can familiarize themselves with the roles and responsibilities of Members of Council, the areas of service delivered by the various Civic departments and the function of the Council Decision Making process. As well, it is intended to be a guide to help answer questions quickly and easily for day to day operations of their offices. It is not expected to replace the role of the City Clerk's Department, who are also there to answer queries from Members of Council. The information in the orientation process is especially important for newly elected Members of Council, who may be assuming their new role without any continuity of staff from their predecessors.

As part of the Data Collection and Research phase of the of the Governance Review, MNP interviewed all Members of Council regarding the current governance structure. The Council orientation process was identified as an area where improvements should be made, with Recommendation 1 of the Review stating: *"1. Develop a formal orientation process that includes documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council."*

The typical orientation of previous Councils occurred shortly after Council inauguration and consisted of two to three days where Councillors were invited to attend meetings where each department would provide a brief presentation on their area of service. Members of Council were also provided with a copy of the *Council Members' Reference Guide,* which is a large binder containing over 600 pages of information on a variety of topics including, the role and mandate of Council and committees, Council and committee meeting procedure, the Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund Policy, and the administrative structure.

The large volume of information provided in a short timeframe may be difficult to retain, especially when new members of Council are dealing with competing priorities, including hiring staff. Although the *Council Members' Reference Guide* is a valuable resource, it can be difficult to search through a 600-page paper document. In order to facilitate searchability, members of Council were provided with both an electronic and paper version of the guide in 2018.

A revised Council orientation process will be implemented in 2022 with a focus on providing members of Council and their staff with the support and information in priority related stages, rather than all at once. As an example, it is likely that in order to begin to effectively serve the citizens of Winnipeg as quickly as possible, a newly elected member of Council may place greater emphasis on setting up the operational needs of their office, rather than perhaps being briefed on the finer details of planning documents like Our Winnipeg. Accordingly, the first step of the orientation process will focus supporting newly elected members of Council in setting up their offices including providing an overview of Councillors Ward Allowance (CWA) budget and the related CWA fund policy on expenditures, process for hiring staff, contact information for support staff, and getting access to the Council building.

The process will then shift to a series of seminars / presentations provided by departments on their function and area of services. See Attachment B for a preliminary outline of information to be presented. Information seminars on specific topics of interest will also be held at the relevant time (i.e. snow clearing in late fall, flooding in late winter, and pot hole repair in early spring). In order to gain a greater understanding of the services provided by the City of Winnipeg,

members of Council will be provided tours of City facilities including the Water Treatment Plant, Sewage Treatment Plants, Brady Resource Management Facility, Transit Garage, and the 311 Call Center.

Shortly after the election, Council will also be provided with an overview of the Council and Committee meeting process and Public Hearing Process. New members of Council and their staff will also receive a heightened level of one on one coaching on Council and committee meeting procedure. Once assigned to a committee, a new member will also have the opportunity to meet with the respective Committee Clerk to review the committee agenda prior to the meeting, so that they understand meeting process along with their roles and responsibilities in meetings.

An online Council Orientation portal containing information ranging from office procedures, to details on the City of Winnipeg Budget process, roles of departments in the Public Service, and Frequently Asked Questions, is in the process of being developed and will be available to Council and their staff by November 2022. The portal will have search capabilities and will be regularly updated in order to provide Council and their staff with the most current and relevant information.

While previous Council orientations have focused on the elected officials, it is expected that the online portal will also be of great use to Council staff. As noted in the Governance Review, the amount of resources Councillors have to undertake the duties of their offices, including staffing, is quite low compared to other cities. As noted in the report of the Governance Committee of Council dated July 13, 2021 entitled “Councillor Office Resources”, Winnipeg City Councillor offices were experiencing a turnover rate of 50% among staff, due in part to a lack of resources to attract and retain staff. Most Councillor Offices employ only one full time executive assistant and as such a new assistant coming in midway through the term has few resources from which to become familiar with the job. It is hoped that this online portal will help to provide a starting point for new executive assistants as well as new Councillors.

Documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council

Part of Recommendation 1 of the Governance Review Report included the development of “*documented Roles and Responsibilities for Members of Council.* The report further stated that there would be value to codifying the roles and responsibilities of Members of Council in an update to the Organizational By-law, include them in the orientation process and make them available to the public to provide an understanding of the responsibilities of members of Council.

The Governance Review does cite roles and responsibilities for Municipal Councils published in 3 Provinces, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Links include:

Alberta: https://www.alberta.ca/roles-and-responsibilities-of-municipal-officials.aspx

Saskatchewan: https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/tools-guides-and-resources/information-for-council-members

In Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg Charter is the primary provincial legislation which in general terms, provides the City of Winnipeg with its governing authority and establishes the composition and the general powers of Council. The Charter does not include roles and responsibilities for members of City of Winnipeg Council. Conversely, the Municipal Act of Manitoba, which is the primary provincial legislation for all other municipalities in Manitoba, does include sections 82 and 83, which stipulate the roles and the general duties of members of Council (See Attachment A). Those sections of the Municipal Act apply to all other municipalities in Manitoba, but not to the City of Winnipeg.

Formalizing the roles and responsibilities of members of Council would provide a clear understanding for both members of Council and the citizens of Winnipeg of the role of Council. The Governance Review did suggest that this could be achieved through an amendment to the City Organization By-law 7100/97, but it would be more appropriate to include the roles and responsibilities of members of Council in the City of Winnipeg Charter. The roles and responsibilities set out in the Municipal Act are viewed as being the most applicable to the City of Winnipeg. Accordingly, this report is recommending that the Province of Manitoba be requested to amend the City of Winnipeg Charter to include roles and responsibilities for Members of Council, as contained in Sections 82 and 83 of the Municipal Act.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: August 11, 2022

Project Name:

Orientation for Members of Council

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Jason Duke - August 11, 2022

Jason Duke, CPA, CGA
Acting Mgr. of Finance & Admin. (Campus)

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Customer Service and Communications Department

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The recommendations contained in this report align with OurWinnipeg Goal to provide Leadership and Good Governance.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

N/A

SUBMITTED BY

Department: City Clerk's
Division:
Prepared by: C. Gameiro
Date: August 22, 2022
File No:

Attachments:

ATTACHMENT A: - Extract of the Municipal Act

ATTACHMENT B: - Council Orientation Topics