Minutes – Council – March 21, 2024

Minute No. 223
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – March 4, 2024

Item No. 2 Financial Penalties for Accidental Sewage Discharge

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and adopted the following:

1. That the Council Motion of February 22, 2024, be received as information.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Mayes,
That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment be adopted by consent.

Carried

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Chambers, Eadie and Wyatt were absent for the vote on the above motion.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 12, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 4, 2024, the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment recommended to the Executive Policy Committee and Council:

1. That the Council Motion of February 22, 2024, be received as information.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On February 22, 2024, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment:

Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
Seconded by Councillor Allard,

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is once again experiencing a so-called ‘accidental’ or ‘unexpected’ break in our Wastewater Distribution System that is dumping raw sewage into a river;

AND WHEREAS the present raw sewage discharge has dumped over 228 million litres of raw sewage into the Red River and is still flowing as of this Council Meeting;

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

AND WHEREAS the City is too often experiencing such 'accidental' discharges of raw sewage into one of our rivers, rivers which ultimately flow into Lake Winnipeg and therefore negatively affecting the health of this important body of water, not to mention the communities that rely on Lake Winnipeg for their livelihoods;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba regulates and licenses the City of Winnipeg and has the authority to issue severe fines on the City of Winnipeg for clear and irresponsible environmental violations;

AND WHEREAS due to the continual incompetence of the City, and complete disrespect and disregard for the environment, the City must now be subjected to clear, active, and irrevocable Province of Manitoba Penalties, as only such penalties, namely fines, will act as a deterrent to future sewage discharge accidents;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Winnipeg request the Province of Manitoba to:

A. Immediately fine the City the equivalent of $4 a litre for every litre of raw sewage accidentally dumped into a river, from a preventable source, namely a broken pipe or broken valve or a piece of broken sewage system infrastructure;

B. Direct all revenues achieved from paid penalties and/or fines against the City of Winnipeg, toward assisting with conservation efforts to clean and save Lake Winnipeg, and/or to the communities that are being affected by needless pollution caused by the City.