Minute No. 416
Minutes – Council – July 17, 2025

Executive Policy Committee – Motions

Item No. 3 Amendments to the Criminal Code

Moved by His Worship Mayor Gillingham,
Seconded by Councillor Santos,

WHEREAS paramedics and firefighters are essential frontline health-care providers who are increasingly exposed to violence, intimidation, and harassment while performing their duties;

AND WHEREAS Bill C-321 (An Act to amend the Criminal Code — assaults against persons who provide health services and first responders) and Bill C-345 (An Act to protect firefighters, paramedics, and other first responders) were introduced in the 44th Parliament to provide enhanced legal protections for first responders, including paramedics and firefighters, but did not pass before Parliament was prorogued;

AND WHEREAS incidents of violence and harassment toward first responders in Winnipeg have been rising in recent years, including 58 instances to date in 2025 of paramedics or firefighters being physically assaulted or threatened;

AND WHEREAS recently a Winnipeg firefighter was viciously attacked while responding to a fire;

AND WHEREAS violent acts impact not only the safety and well-being of these professionals but also the effectiveness and timeliness of emergency care;

AND WHEREAS Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service, United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg and Manitoba Government and General Employees Union are unanimous in their call for changes to legislation to protect firefighters and paramedics;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That Council formally calls on the Government of Canada to:

    A. Reintroduce and adopt legislation amending the Criminal Code to ensure firefighters and paramedics are given personal safety protections equal to those granted to peace officers;

    B. Increase penalties and maximum terms of imprisonment for aggravated assault against paramedics, firefighters, and other first responders to align with those for peace officers;

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2. That the Public Service be directed to forward the resolution to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, local Members of Parliament, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Manitoba, Association of Manitoba Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

3. That the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Association of Manitoba Municipalities be requested to adopt as formal policy the advocacy of Criminal Code amendments that ensure equal legal protection for all frontline emergency service workers, including paramedics and firefighters.

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

The Speaker ruled automatic referral of the motion to the Executive Policy Committee, in accordance with Rule 16(1) of the Procedure By-law No. 50/2007.