SUBMISSION – DAVID GRANT

Item 1 of the Report of the Governance Committee of Council dated June 18, 2026 (2025 Councillors' Ward Allowance (CWA) Audit)

Submitted: Wed, 06/17/2026 - 10:39

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1

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Comments
We are gathered here today to consider this report. It has the expected level of detail. It would be simple to approve it without questions.

It was provided by KPMG. I have worked with some of their folks. They are very nice. They are your financial investigators, your detectives. Does 'nice' make an investigator more effective? If 'nice' keeps them from asking tough questions, and keeps them from reporting embarrassing facts, then 'nice' makes them less effective. I recall that an audit team, year after year, completely missed widespread fraud in an organization which I served as a Trustee. Nice did not help. Nice is the antithesis of good financial investigation.

I see lists of the discretionary spending by a few Councilors. This report has obviously missed reviewing the spending decisions and records of most of Council. It should have studied the spending in every such account. You cannot expect to find every problem, if you have your back turned. This report is silent on much of the ward spending at the direction of members of Council. When a member of Council wants to spend tax dollars on a niche project, that would normally involve ward fund money. When a Councilor wants to spend more, they are tempted to break the rules. One easy way is to divert money that was budgeted for other uses, and spend it on that Niche Project. This report on ward spending should have followed every example of this sort of diversion. Why was this report silent on this?

This audit team fails to mention its own conflict of interest. It was chosen from among all such companies by Council. This is important. Other organizations avoid this conflict by having the full membership vote on selecting the audit company. Your governance

committee should seek a better way to select your audit company based on effectiveness, and not on how much Councilors like them. Some of us feel that the existence of this ward fund process is a symptom of bad management. This system should be eliminated. Such spending can be directed in ways that give advantages to incumbents at election time. The report is silent on this aspect of ward-spending. It is also silent on the whole lobbying and staff PR functions at city hall. Tax dollars should never be used to benefit incumbents in elections. When such money is directed to gain advantage, and it gets anyone re-elected, it should be reported by the audit team. Such spending should probably be forbidden.

Personal information

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