

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Wednesday, May 20, 2020

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: COMPREHENSIVE CIVIC PROTOCOL POLICY UPDATES

FROM:

Wendy Law, Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services and City Solicitor

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

The Office of the City Clerk has undertaken a comprehensive review and updates to policies respecting civic protocol, including flag protocol (governing flag raisings and half-mastings), proclamations, and civic protocol on the death of a current or former Mayor or Member of Council in the City of Vaughan.

Report Highlights

- Two civic protocol policies have been substantially updated and one new policy has been drafted to address a matter not yet addressed.
- Flag raising ceremonies bring the community together to recognize the diverse cultures, causes and occasions within the City of Vaughan. A courtesy flagpole will provide more visibility for these ceremonies and allow for a safer and more inclusive space for the public to attend them.
- Proclamation requests will be combined to reduce the number of reports presented for Council approval.
- Civic Recognition on the Death of a Current or Former Member of Council ensures that the City has a consistent and dignified policy for recognizing the contributions of elected officials.

Recommendations

1. That AD-013 Proclamations Policy be replaced by 03.C.10 – Proclamations Policy, substantially in the form as attached to this report;

2. That AD-014 Flag Raising / Half-Masting Policy be replaced by 03.C.11 – Flag Protocol Policy, substantially in the form as attached to this report;
3. That 06.C.01 – Civic Recognition on the Death of a Current or Former Member of Council Policy be approved, substantially in the form as attached to this report; and
4. That the installation of a courtesy flagpole at Vaughan City Hall be approved.

Background

The City of Vaughan's existing policies respecting flags and proclamations have not undergone a comprehensive review for a number of years, and have not been updated to meet the standards established for corporate policies. A thorough review of the existing Flag Raising / Half-Masting Policy and Proclamations Policy has been conducted to ensure that they reflect the current practices of the City, meet the needs of the Corporation and the community, and clearly set out the appropriate definitions, rules, and procedures where appropriate.

In addition to the two policies identified above, the Office of the City Clerk has also prepared a wholly new policy to fill a gap in the existing protocol framework for the City of Vaughan. The proposed Civic Recognition on the Death of a Current or Former Member of Council Policy seeks to establish a clear and consistent policy to guide Council in staff in recognizing the contributions of a current or former member of Council upon their passing. Modelled after similar recognition provided by the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario and municipalities such as the cities of Toronto and Calgary, the policy introduces standards for honouring Vaughan's elected municipal public servants in a dignified way, in consultation with the family of the deceased.

Previous Reports/Authority

Analysis and Options

This report recommends the approval of three policies - two updated and one net new policy, by Council respecting matters of civic protocol. These policies cover flag protocol, proclamations, and civic recognition on the death of a current or former Member of Council respectively. The key highlights of these policies are outlined as follows:

1. Proclamations Policy – Attachment #1
 - Provides a more substantial policy to clearly define what may be recognized with a proclamation and who may request one.

- Introduces a hiatus mechanism to ensure that proclamation requests received during the summer or election periods may still be approved in the absence of a Council meeting.
- Will result in a simpler approval process for Council, consolidating monthly proclamation requests into single reports for consideration, thereby reducing the length of committee agendas and making it simpler to find a complete list of requests for Council's consideration.

2. Flag Protocol Policy – Attachment #2

- Updates the protocol for the flying and display of flags as well as half-masting dates to be consistent with nationally established standards.
- Provides clearer definitions for the types of flags to be flown and who may request a flag raising.
- Clearly defines a flag raising ceremony and identifies the standard level of support provided by the City to eligible organizations who make a request for a flag raising ceremony.
- Provides for flag raisings in recognition of official visits from diplomatic representatives and other international delegations to the City.

3. Civic Recognition on the Death of a Current or Former Member of Council Policy – Attachment #3

- Outlines a set of options for the City to offer to the family of the deceased as recognition for their dedicated service to the people and the City of Vaughan.
- Scales the forms of recognition based on whether the member currently or formerly served on Council, and whether they were a Mayor or a Councillor, consistent with similar municipal, provincial and federal policies.
- Provides a consistent approach to recognizing elected municipal officials to ensure that all are treated in the same manner in future.

In addition to the policies outlined above, and in connection to the newly drafted Flag Protocol Policy, the City Clerk also recommends the installation of a Courtesy Flagpole at City Hall. This flagpole would be installed separately and independently from the existing stand of flags permanently displayed at the front of Vaughan City Hall. The purpose of this flagpole would be to provide a separate and dedicated place for the community to fly their flags, and to draw greater public attention to the causes, occasions and cultures represented by the flags when one is flown on the pole. The placement of the Courtesy Flagpole would provide for a safer and more inclusive space

in which to conduct flag raising ceremonies, and would ensure that the National Flag, Provincial Flag and City Flag are always displayed clearly at Vaughan City Hall.

Financial Impact

The costs associated with the installation of a courtesy flag protocol are captured within the existing budget. All other costs associated with the approval and implementation of the recommended policies are accommodated within existing approved budget envelopes.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

There are no regional impacts associated with this report.

Conclusion

Following a thorough and comprehensive review of existing policies respecting matters of civic protocol, two policies have been fundamentally redrafted to provide a higher level of detail and clarity, and to better serve the community. The recommendations before Council also propose the installation of a Courtesy Flagpole to better address the needs of the community in proudly flying their flags at the front of City Hall, a practice in keeping with other municipalities. In addition, a wholly new policy has been prepared to address the important but rare need to recognize and honour the life of a current or former Mayor or Councillor of the City of Vaughan on the occasion of their passing. This new policy would provide a consistent approach to recognizing their contributions in a way which respects the family's wishes.

For more information, please contact: Evan Read, Manager, Elections and Special Projects, ext.8241.

Attachments

1. 03.C.10 – Proclamations Policy, Office of the City Clerk, April 15, 2020
2. 03.C.11 – Flag Protocol Policy, Office of the City Clerk, April 15, 2020
3. 06.C.01 – Civic Recognition on the Death of a Current or Former Member of Council Policy, Office of the City Clerk, April 15, 2020

Prepared by

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