

## Committee of the Whole (2) Report

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**DATE:** Monday, March 8, 2021

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** PROCLAMATION REQUESTS FOR EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH AND PURPLE DAY, AND AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH AND AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

**FROM:**

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

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To seek Council approval for proclamation requests for: Epilepsy Awareness Month and Purple Day, and Autism Awareness Month and Autism Awareness Day; and to seek direction on the request for City Hall Illumination for Purple Day and Autism Awareness Day.

**Report Highlights**

- Respond to requests from Epilepsy York Region and Waves of Change for Autism.
- Requests for proclamations in March and April.
- Requests for illumination of City Hall.

**Recommendations**

1. That March 2021 be proclaimed as Epilepsy Awareness Month;
2. That March 26, 2021 be proclaimed as Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness, and that Council provide direction on the illumination of City Hall in Purple;
3. That April be proclaimed as Autism Awareness Month on an annual basis;
4. That April 2, be proclaimed as Autism Awareness Day on an annual basis, and that Council provide direction on the illumination of City Hall in Blue; and
5. That the proclamations be posted on the City's website and that the Corporate and Strategic Communications department be directed to promote the above-noted proclamations through the various corporate channels.

## **Background**

### **Epilepsy Awareness Month and Purple Day**

Correspondence was received from Epilepsy York Region on February 23, 2021 requesting a proclamation and illumination of City Hall. To combat the stigma surrounding those that have epilepsy may live with, the month of March, and specifically Purple Day (which is on March 26), has been celebrated internationally to raise awareness, dispel myths associated with epilepsy, and increase education.

The proclamation request has been previously approved by Council.

### **Autism Awareness Month and Autism Awareness Day**

Correspondence was received from Waves of Change for Autism, in collaboration with Autism Ontario (York Region) on February 24, 2021 requesting a proclamation and illumination of City Hall. Autism Ontario is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the issues faced by individuals with autism, their families and the professional with whom they interact. The association and its chapters share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research and advocating for programs and services for the autism community. Waves of Change for Autism has requested that proclamation be made on an annual basis going forward.

A request for an annual flag raising has also been made, however, the Flag Protocol Policy (03.C011) states:

“4.1.1. A new request must be initiated by the Requestor each year and shall not automatically be held or reserved for the same date in a subsequent year.”

The proclamation request has been previously approved by Council.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

Epilepsy Awareness Month and Purple Day – [March 11, 2020](#)

Autism Awareness Month and Day – [March 11, 2020](#)

## **Analysis and Options**

### **Epilepsy Awareness Month and Purple Day**

The proclamation request meets the requirements of the City's Proclamation Policy as follows:

“An official and ceremonial statement made by or under the authority of Council, recognizing a cause, event or commemoration of significance to the City of Vaughan and its citizens.

2.1. For the purposes of section 2, a proclamation may be issued for:

2.1.3. Charitable and non-profit fundraising campaigns;

2.1.4. Public awareness campaigns;”

### **Autism Awareness Month and Autism Awareness Day**

The proclamation request meets the requirements of the City’s Proclamation Policy as follows:

“An official and ceremonial statement made by or under the authority of Council, recognizing a cause, event or commemoration of significance to the City of Vaughan and its citizens.

2.1. For the purposes of section 2, a proclamation may be issued for:

2.1.3. Charitable and non-profit fundraising campaigns;

2.1.4. Public awareness campaigns;”

### **Illumination Requests**

An Illumination Policy is currently in development and expected to be before Council for approval in Q2 2021. As the City does not currently have a policy in place for illumination requests, staff will require direction from Council.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no expected financial impact with respect to these requests.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

Not applicable.

### **Conclusion**

Having reviewed the requests, staff is recommending that March 2021 be proclaimed Epilepsy Awareness Month and March 26, 2021 be proclaimed as Purple Day; that April be proclaimed as Autism Awareness Month and April 2 be proclaimed as Autism Awareness Day on an annual basis; that Council provide direction on the illumination requests; and finally that the proclamations be posted on the City’s website and that the Corporate and Strategic Communications department be directed to promote the proclamations through the various corporate channels.

**For more information**, please contact: Todd Coles, City Clerk, ext. 8281.

**Attachments**

1. Correspondence from the Executive Director, Epilepsy York Region, received February 23, 2021.
2. Correspondence from the President, Waves of Change for Autism, received February 24, 2021.

**Prepared by**

Shari Gouzvaris, Supervisor, City Clerk's Administrative Services, ext. 8280

**Approved by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Law".

Wendy Law, Deputy City Manager  
Administrative Services & City Solicitor

**Reviewed by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Harnum".

Jim Harnum, City Manager