

Deferral Report - Review and Feedback on the City's 2020 Municipal Election

ISSUE

The 2020 civic election was conducted during a global pandemic, delayed due to an unprecedented snowstorm, and followed a provincial election. While significant planning went into election preparations, some unforeseen challenges emerged. The returning officer intends to report on the 2020 election and offer potential improvements to future elections.

RECOMMENDATION

That consideration of a report from the returning officer be deferred to the second quarter of 2021 or such time that the Saskatoon Municipal Review Commission reports to Committee.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on December 14, 2020, the Governance and Priorities Committee was informed by the acting city clerk that the returning officer (RO) is preparing a report on the 2020 local government election, to be tabled at the end of Q1 2021.

At its March 15, 2021 meeting of the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) the interim city clerk presented a deferral report recommending deferral of this item to the April 19, 2021 GPC meeting. GPC unanimously approved the deferral report.

At its March 22, 2021 Regular Business meeting, City Council announced the appointment of Mr. Adam Titemore as the new permanent city clerk.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Given that the appointment of the new city clerk was announced at the March 2021 City Council meeting, the RO has not had an opportunity to engage with the city clerk and discuss election matters and how best to proceed. Elections are a function of the Office of the City Clerk so the newly appointed city clerk should have an opportunity to provide insight into the process.

Further, the Saskatoon Municipal Review Commission (SMRC) is conducting a parallel process. The SMRC's purpose is to inquire into and make recommendations to City Council on matters relating to the conduct of municipal elections. To avoid duplication, it may be more efficient for the RO to respond to the SMRC's report once presented.

NEXT STEPS

The returning officer will continue to research election issues and will report back to committee on election-related matters as necessary.

Deferral Report - Review and Feedback on the City's 2020 Municipal Election

Report Approval

Written by: Scott Bastian, Returning Officer
Reviewed and Approved by: Mike Jordan, Interim City Clerk

Admin Report - Deferral Report - Review and Feedback on the City's 2020 Municipal Election.docx