

South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards Board Appointment 2022-2023

ISSUE

This report provides follow up information for the 2022-2023 Board appointment to the South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards, recommending that the current practice is maintained for the term, which includes one Board representative from City Council and informal participation by the Administration.

BACKGROUND

The South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards Inc. (SSRWS) is a community driven, non-profit membership corporation working within the South Saskatchewan River watershed to implement stewardship initiatives and activities that will protect the beauty, diversity, and integrity of the watershed.

The organization was provincially incorporated in 2007, as part of a provincial watershed planning initiative, which focused on developing water stewardship capacity at the local level. The organization was initially tasked with implementation of the 2007 *Source Water Protection Plan* for the watershed and later with support of the 2012 *25-Year Saskatchewan Water Security Plan*.

The City of Saskatoon (City) was a founding member of the organization and has maintained membership and representation on the SSRWS Board since 2007. From 2007 to 2018, there were two appointments to the SSRWS Board: one from City Council and one from the Administration. There have been no Administrative appointments since 2018.

A response to a Council inquiry about the possibility of having a member of the Administration appointed to the Board instead of a member of City Council, was submitted to the Governance & Priorities Committee on November 15, 2021, with a recommendation to maintain current practices for 2022 and a commitment to report back in Q3 of 2022.

CURRENT STATUS

SSRWS bylaws allow for a maximum of two representatives from the City on the Board. Appointments to the organization's Board are not mandatory and City Council representation is not a requirement.

Currently, Councillor Hilary Gough sits on the SSRWS Board as a member of the North Watershed area. Administrative representation is managed via the Sustainability Department, and Sustainability staff attend meetings of the organization as a general member rather than as an appointment to the SSRWS Board.

The SSRWS is not a City corporation, therefore has not been part of the general governance review.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In 2022, the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds submitted a restructuring proposal to the Water Security Agency that involves all 11 watershed organizations in the province. The proposal may lead to establishment of one central administrative entity and consolidation of watershed activities into three or more regions within the province. The role of existing watershed organizations and their individual Boards within this framework has not yet been resolved.

The Administration is recommending maintaining current practices for 2023, which includes one representative from City Council and informal participation by the Administration. The roles and responsibilities of the SSRWS within the proposed new framework should be resolved prior to determining administrative representation for the City of Saskatoon.

FINANCIAL/OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial or other implications associated with this information report.

NEXT STEPS

The Administration will report to City Council on representation and appointments to this organization upon completion of the restructuring initiative.

Report Approval

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