

Walter, Penny

Subject: FW: Communication - Ailsa Watkinson - Tax Exemptions and Relief for Community-Based Organizations - CK 1965-1
Attachments: request_to_city_council_september_20_2022.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 11:40 AM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Ailsa Watkinson - Tax Exemptions and Relief for Community-Based Organizations - CK 1965-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED]

Submitted on Tuesday, September 20, 2022 - 11:40

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

Date Tuesday, September 20, 2022
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Ailsa
Last Name Watkinson
Phone Number [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] Quance Ave.
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)
Subject Tax exemptions/relief for community-based organizations
Meeting (if known)
Comments
I am submitting a working copy of my request to City Council. I would like to speak to them about my request. The attached document (though it may be amended slightly) gives you the information needed to determine the purpose of my request.
Attachments
[request to city council september 20 2022.docx](#)
Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

Dear Members of Saskatoon City Council,

I am asking that you adopt the spirit and intent of a By-law that has passed 3rd reading in the City of Iqaluit, Nunavut. The By-Law puts the onus on Non-Profit and Charitable Organizations to apply for full or partial property tax relief. The intent of the Bylaw is to ‘establish criteria for applications and evaluations of such property tax partial or full exemption applications made by community groups and societies’ (Property Tax Relief Criteria Non Profit and Charitable Organizations, Schedule A, (2)).

Eligible applicants are “community-based organizations in the City, be they community, charitable, educational, recreational, religious, cultural ... that operates for the common good of city residents, uses money earned for the core missions of the organization and does not distribute profits to individuals.” (Schedule A (3) Eligible Applicants) and further that the “services provided by the applicant align with the City’s Strategic Plan, support the City’s wellness priorities or provide services in the City that enhances the quality of life for all, especially youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, the homeless and those facing other socio economic disadvantages.” (Schedule A 3 ‘Municipal Purpose’).

I recognize that the City of Saskatoon does not have jurisdiction over all property tax exemptions that are given to many organizations listed in the Iqaluit By-law. Having noted this, I am asking that:

- in those cases where you do have authority over taxation relief and/or exemptions that you include as part of your application criteria a requirement that all current and new applicants demonstrate by their policies, practices and actions that they conform to and promote the equality rights and fundamental freedoms articulated in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and other relevant human rights documents; and secondly,
- Saskatoon City Council work with the Saskatchewan Government to amend *The Cities Act* such that all organizations named as exempt from property taxes as per s. 262(1) re-apply for tax exemptions and demonstrate, as part of the application criteria, that their policies, practices and actions conform to and promote the equality rights and fundamental freedoms articulated in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and other relevant human rights documents.

I am making this request because I am concerned about the abuse and discrimination carried out in churches and schools -both historically and currently. This summer, in Saskatoon, more than 18 students of the Legacy Christian School and Mile Two Church have alleged they were beaten with wooden paddles, sexually abused, forced to work for specific party politicians, subjected to an exorcism and discrimination. The police have concluded their investigation and it has been handed over to the prosecutors. The Legacy Christian School and Mile Two Church do not pay property taxes because, like all schools and churches, their property tax exemption is 0%.

Subsequently the former students have filed a class action lawsuit claiming they were "were physically, sexually, psychologically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually traumatized by their experiences" at the Legacy Christian School and Mile Two Church. They named 21 former employees some of whom are currently employed by other religious organizations and schools in Saskatoon which, in turn, are exempt from property taxation because they are classified as a church, religious organization or school.

My request seeks public scrutiny as to who gets tax exemptions and asks: do they meet the criteria of providing a public good that fits within the constitutional obligations as stated in the *Charter* to provide such services free from discrimination, violence, abuse and "within an atmosphere that foster citizens for a responsible life in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29).

Submitted by: Ailsa M. Watkinson

