

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Ailsa Watkinson - Tax Exemptions and Relief - File CK 1965-1
Attachments: Response to Tax Exemption report.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 4:14 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Ailsa Watkinson - Tax Exemptions and Relief - File CK 1965-1

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

Submitted on Monday, April 3, 2023 - 16:13

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

Date: Monday, April 03, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Ailsa

Last Name: Watkinson

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: Ailsa (Ale-sa)

Email: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] Quance Ave.

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: [REDACTED]

What do you wish to do ?: Request to Speak

If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely: In person

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Standing Policy Committee on Finance

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Re: 7.3.2 Tax Exemptions and Relief [F12023-0402]

Comments:

I wish to respond to the administrations report concerning my earlier submission on Tax Exemptions and Relief for religious/charity organizations.

Attachments:

- [Response to Tax Exemption report.docx](#)15.1 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Response to the Report on Tax Exemptions and Relief

Submitted by Ailsa M. Watkinson

Date: April 3, 2023

Thank you for the report to my query about tax exemptions and relief for specific organizations. As part of my submission, I asked that you consider the spirit and intent of the Iqaluit bylaw, recognizing that tax exemptions are not within your jurisdiction. I also asked that you work with the Saskatchewan Government to consider what changes need to be made to ensure that those who receive Tax Exemptions and Relief deserve to do so.

As follow up to the Information Report submitted by your administration, I wish to make the following suggestions:

- Please work with the provincial government to seek amendments to the *City Act* which would include:
 - Providing discretion for cities and municipalities to remove an organization's tax exempt status for failing to meet community standards, human rights obligations and failing to provide a public benefit;
 - Defining a "place of public worship" to include evidence that it serves a public good or benefit (similar to what I believe a charity must show) as well as its "primary duty [to] the ministrations of its members spiritual needs." In addition, more scrutiny is called for to ensure a "place of worship" is in good standing.
- The 2014 review that was undertaken and the subsequent report did not address whether a 'place of worship' was authentic, just if it was carrying on a business that meant it was no longer eligible for tax relief. It seems that calling oneself 'a place of worship' attaches some instant immunity from vigorous scrutiny. I say this due to recent reports that some 'places of worship' in Saskatoon and elsewhere have been accused of discrimination, have caused serious harm to members and show no evidence of providing a public benefit.
The Tax Exemption and Relief Report reported that \$4.8 million in property taxes (2022) are exempt for being a 'place of worship'.