



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: Richmond City Council

Date: June 20, 2013

From: Malcolm D. Brodie
Mayor

File: 05-1700-00/Vol 01

Re: **Formalizing Council Policy on the Scheduling of Elected Officials' Personal Leave Time**

Recommendation

That Council Policy 6205, as per Attachment 1 to the Report prepared by Mayor Brodie, under the title of, "Formalizing Council Policy on the Scheduling of Elected Officials' Personal Leave Time", dated June 20, 2013 be adopted.

Malcolm D. Brodie
Mayor
(604-276-4123)

Att. 1

Report

Origin

Richmond City Council have a long standing practice of scheduling personal leave time to coincide primarily with prescheduled breaks in the formal Council and standing committee meeting schedules.

Exceptions have always been permissible within the limitations provided in the Local Government Act and/or Community Charter; however the informal guidelines noted below in the Analysis section of this Report accurately reflect the present and past practices of Council. The purpose of this Report is to document the proposed guidelines for elected official's prescheduled absences in the form of a formal policy.

Analysis

Typically, prescheduled breaks in the scheduling of Council and standing committee meetings, under the past practice referred to above include:

- December holiday season - during which one Council meeting and any coinciding standing committee meetings are cancelled;
- August summer break – during which both Council and all coinciding standing committee meetings are cancelled;
- Any time an anomaly occurs in which the last week of a month includes a fifth Monday, Council and any coinciding standing committee meetings will not have been scheduled; and
- At any time that a scheduled Council or standing committee meeting is cancelled due to there not being sufficient available items on which to build an agenda.

Over the past year, Richmond Council - and Mayor and Councillors individually - have held various discussions regarding the scheduling of personal leave time. The outcome of these discussions is agreement that informal guidelines or past practices concerning the scheduling of personal leave time will be documented in a formal Council adopted policy. The basis of the formal policy will remain consistent with the past practice. Please note that the proposed policy is intended to cover only personal leave time (i.e. vacation, etc) and will not apply to absences due to sick time or short and/or long term medical or disability leaves.

By establishing a formal policy, Council will ensure a more clear and consistent understanding of Council's expectations for attendance by individual members of Council while providing greater transparency and accountability to the public.

The Policy (Attachment 1) will serve as a guideline while allowing for reasonable exceptions as described in the "Origin" section of this Report.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

As there has been a lack of a written policy regarding personal leave absences of the Mayor and Councillors, and in consideration of the expectations of the citizens who elect members of Council that elected officials will be available to participate in carrying out the formal business of their local government, it is appropriate that Council establish a formal policy with which to guide the scheduling and duration of personal leave time.



Malcolm D. Brodie
Mayor
(604-276-4123)



Page 1 of 1

Adopted by Council: <date>

Policy 6205

File Ref: 1700-00

Absences – Mayor and Councillors

Policy 6205:

1. WHEREAS as part of providing leadership to the City of Richmond, local government needs to be accountable to the residents;
2. AND WHEREAS the *Community Charter* provides:
 115. *Every council member has the following responsibilities:*
 - (a) *to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality and its community;*
 - (b) *to contribute to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs of the municipality respecting its services and other activities;*
 - (c) *to participate in council meetings, committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which the member is appointed;*
 - (d) *to carry out other duties assigned by the council;*
 - (e) *to carry out other duties assigned under this or any other Act.*
3. AND WHEREAS there has been a lack of a written policy regarding absences of the Mayor and members of Council:

THEREFORE – be it resolved as a policy that in order for the Mayor and Councillors to meet their responsibilities as set out in the *Community Charter*.

1. The Mayor and Councillors shall each attempt to schedule any civic or other official activities in which they are involved so that conflicts over timing and resulting absences from scheduled meetings of City Council, committees and/or other duties are minimized;
2. To encourage full attendance, the Mayor and Councillors shall schedule discretionary absences so that they are minimal in length and frequency in addition to:
 - a. As much as possible during the Christmas and/or summer extended breaks from scheduled meetings as well as over the occasional fifth Monday in a month; and
 - b. Taking into account civic matters which may be expected to arise and official duties during a potential absence.