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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
CC: ["City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"](#)
Date: 12/23/2020 2:26:01 PM
Subject: RTS 14258 - Memo: Speakers Needing Translation Allowed More Speaking Time
Attachments: image003.png
Memo - Speakers Needing Translation Allowed More Time to Speak RTS
14258.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see attached memo from Acting City Clerk, Rosemary Hagiwara. A brief summary:

- On Dec 19, 2018 Council adopted a motion regarding speaker participation at public meetings.
- This memo updates Council on the work staff are undertaking to afford speakers with linguistic challenges or those who have limited proficiency in English more opportunity to participate.
- Staff intends to return to Council in the spring with a report and recommendation about the proposed Procedures By-law amendments regarding the doubling of speaker time for those requiring translation services.
- Staff are continuing to work on the Multi-Lingual Access Policy (MAP) which will further guide translation services and policies for meetings.

Should you require more clarification, please contact Tina Penney, Director of Legislative Operations at tina.penney@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the

MEMORANDUM

December 23, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administrative Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Gail Pickard, Acting Director, Civic Engagement and Communications
Tina Penney, Director of Legislative Operations

FROM: Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk

SUBJECT: Speakers Needing Translation Allowed More Speaking Time – RTS #14258

On Dec 19, 2018, Council adopted a motion regarding speaker participation at public meetings. Staff have already dealt with several elements of this motion. The section that is relevant to this memo reads as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT staff also report back on the option of amending the Procedure By-law to consider allowing speakers who use translation twice as much time as speakers who do not;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT staff possibly find ways to make the speaking process more inclusive for people requiring translation and interpretation and report back, including costs;

This memo is provided to update Council on the work staff are undertaking to afford speakers with linguistic challenges or those who have limited proficiency in English more opportunity to participate in public meetings.

DISCUSSION

Work in response to this motion was intended to align with the Civic Engagement and Communication Department's development of a Multi-Lingual Access Policy (MAP), which is a document that addresses language accessibility needs including translation, interpretation and information sharing across the City of Vancouver more broadly and consistently. Because this

policy has been delayed by COVID-19, staff work on the above motion was delayed as well. However, since the first part of this motion – increasing speaker time for those needing translation services – is a simple issue, staff will include this matter in the upcoming recommendations to the Procedure By-law in the spring of 2021. The City Clerk’s Office will continue to liaise with the Civic Engagement and Communications department to ensure that this element of the Procedures By-law amendment, if approved, can be aligned with MAP when it is completed.

The second part of the motion directs staff to find ways to make to make the speaker process more inclusive for those requiring translation services. Providing easier access to public engagement in civic processes is an important way the City can support equity for all; increasing speaker time for those needing translation is a key step in this direction. Speakers who are not proficient in English, or who have a disability that impairs their ability to speak and/or understand speech, are at a disadvantage in a public meeting since they must work through a translator in order to communicate their points while having the same amount of time as speakers with no linguistic challenges. Doubling speaking time for those requiring translation or interpretation would help to ensure equitable participation opportunities for those individuals.

There are other strategies, such as providing closed-captioning on the live video stream or on the video recordings of meetings, that can make public meetings more inclusive for those with language challenges. These considerations are included in the City Clerk’s Office 2021 work plan, while others will require coordination with the recently resumed MAP project run by Civic Engagement and Communications. We anticipate that MAP will guide staff as they work on additional strategies for speaker inclusivity during meetings.

CONCLUSION

Staff will report back on amendments to the Procedures By-law regarding the doubling of speaker time for those requiring translation services. In addition, staff will continue to liaise with Civic Engagement and Communications concerning the Multi-Lingual Access Policy, which is a document that will, upon its completion, help guide the Procedures Bylaw amendments respecting translation services and policies for meetings.

Please contact Tina Penney, Director of Legislative Operations at tina.penney@vancouver.ca for further clarification.

Regards,



Rosemary Hagiwara

Acting City Clerk

rosemary.hagiwara@vancouver.ca