

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 5/25/2022 3:23:36 PM

Subject: [Response to Vancouver Food Policy Council Motion](#)

Attachments: CCO - Memo to Mayor and Council - Response to VFPC Motion - May 2022.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk, in response to an information request from the Nomination Subcommittee. A short summary of the memo follows:

- The Nomination Subcommittee asked staff to respond to a Vancouver Food Policy Council motion on Advisory Body accessibility and participation.
- Staff have responded to the recommendations with reference to existing or planned actions, and to the [Type A Advisory Body Review and Improvement Report](#).

Please contact Katrina (Katrina.Leckovic@vancouver.ca) with questions in regards to this memo.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

May 24, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Tina Penney, Director, Legislative Operations
Kevin Burris, Manager, Civic Agencies
Megan Fitzgerald, Manager, Public Engagement
Sarah Common, Administrative Team, VFPC
Michelle Reining, Administrative Team, VFPC
Marc Schutzbank, Administrative Team, VFPC

FROM: Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Response to Vancouver Food Policy Council Motion

Introduction

On April 21, 2022, the Nomination Subcommittee directed City Clerk's Office staff to respond to the motion entitled "Motion to Increase Equity of Participation on COV Advisory Committees," passed by the Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) on February 24, 2022, and referred to the Nomination Subcommittee by Council for consideration on March 1, 2022.

This memorandum responds to the recommendations contained in the motion with reference to existing or planned actions, and where applicable, direct references to the [Type A Advisory Body Review and Improvement Report](#), delivered to Council March 30, 2022.

The original VFPC motion is as follows:

WHEREAS:

1. Municipalities, locally and internationally, are increasingly recognizing the need to provide equity-denied populations, especially those experiencing poverty and other systemic barriers to access, with services and infrastructure for community development;

2. This includes acknowledging the complexity of doing work in the areas of justice, equity, diversity, decolonization, inclusion and liberation on the stolen lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Beyond acknowledgement, this work includes taking actions to decolonize our daily practices as well as our institutions and governing bodies;
3. Strategies are actively being developed by the City of Vancouver and its City Council, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and Advisory Bodies to strengthen respectful engagement and increase access to participation for Indigenous members of the community, BIPOC, and others who may experience systemic barriers to access in civic processes;
4. In particular, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has demonstrated more accessible, supportive and respectful processes around community engagement throughout their recent updates to the Local Food Systems Action Plan's Community Advisory Committee. For example, honoraria for elders and participants as well as food and transport supports, which were readily available and offered with clarity to those who participated in outreach and meetings;
5. Building a strong social safety net, that ensures that all Canadians have access to housing, food, transportation, internet, and other utilities, is the best way to help all people participate in advisory committees. In lieu of that provincial and federal support, municipalities who choose to engage with community members have a responsibility to acknowledge the burdens and barriers that exist in order to provide feedback as an advisory council;
6. Participating on Advisory Councils can be overwhelming, retraumatizing and inaccessible, especially for those who are stepping into systems that have historically and in ongoing ways caused them harm; and

WHEREAS the Vancouver Food Policy Council:

1. Has been exploring and practicing ways to increase accessibility with respect to membership of those equity denied groups who may experience multiple barriers to full civic participation;
2. Is committed to developing and advancing protocols of respect and reciprocity; building our decolonizing practices; embodying our values and establishing systems to address systemic barriers to access in Advisory Council meetings and related activities.;
3. Through the Administration Team/Chair, has utilized the following strategies:
 - a) Supporting the voices of those who are equity denied in coming into the room either through community engaged processes, or through presentations and community engaged components of our meetings;
 - b) Advocating for increased clarity around processes, expectations, and supports available for members in Advisory Councils (i.e. process around access to childcare, food, and transportation supports/stipends);
 - c) Slowing down Land Acknowledgements and making space for group introductions, cultural welcomes, speaking circles and gifts in our processes;

- d) Providing information and documents in alternative formats (e.g., PDF and email, verbal/oral feedback options);
- e) Setting up lateral mentorship relationships with members that have access needs not being met by the existing structures;
- f) Providing additional training/tools to navigate technology platforms, communication tools and procedures regarding motions and voting;
- g) Building a resource list to share with membership for self-guided learning;
- h) Building a protocol around gifting recognizing honoraria is a gift, an acknowledgement of time, given with dignity, transparency, respect; where made possible by funding, special occasion or other;
- i) Building community agreements together, including shared terms and common definitions;
- j) Building our agendas to share resources that support each item;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Council calls on the City of Vancouver to support the following mechanisms to deepen accessibility on Advisory Councils:

1. Clearly outline all financial support and processes for accessing support, for members and prospective members, (especially regarding food/meal, transportation, and dependent supports). As part of this, direct staff to:
 - a) Further work to make the process of reimbursements more accessible, user-friendly, and timely, reducing barriers around the collection of SIN number and other personal information;
 - b) Increase allowance for food in budgets to support healthier and more culturally appropriate choices;
 - c) Provide financial support for transportation and food for all formats of meetings - online/hybrid/in-person;
 - d) Consider structures for providing a discretionary budget to each Advisory Committee which may be applied to awareness, outreach, celebration, honoring and other resourcing of members;
 - e) Further explore supports for language accessibility to ensure that non-English speakers can participate in meaningful ways.
2. Extend the length, and expand and diversify the reach of recruitment and build in overlap between terms;
3. Prioritize succession planning between terms and communication within terms. As part of this, direct staff to:
 - a) Make a file sharing and communication platform available to all Advisory Bodies and provide support such as training to ensure the platform is accessible to all members. Considering privacy concerns, accessibility, and usability of platform;

- b) During recruitment and membership, make clear the resources available to committees, ie. financial supports, and explore providing options for testimonials from previous committee members;
 - c) Make accessible automated Closed Captioning of all meetings;
4. Support more welcoming, inclusive and interconnected committee structures:
- a) Reduce formality of motions being the prevailing pathway that Council hears from committees; offer and support alternative options of letters and consensus based decision sharing;
 - b) Support committees in prioritizing room in meetings for introductions/check-ins for all voices in the room to share;
 - c) Support inter-advisory committee collaboration i.e. facilitate bi-annual collaborative space for all chairs of committees to gather.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Response to Recommendations

- 1.a) Council-approved expense allowances are now offered to Committee members to mitigate transportation and dependent-care expenses related to meeting attendance. Due to Canada Revenue Agency regulations around taxable income and the disbursement of public funds, as well as internal City accounting processes, members are required to provide a Social Insurance Number and a bank account for direct-deposit. In recent weeks, Supply Chain Management staff have introduced a new Supplier Portal, which ensures that this information is collected securely and privately. Staff will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that allowances and honoraria are as accessible as possible, and distributed with efficiency and sensitivity to personal circumstances. Staff are available to assist any members having trouble with the process ([pp. 12-13](#)).
- 1.b) As a result of a Council-approved budget increase in 2021, Committee members are now provided with healthy meal options in meetings taking place over lunch or dinner periods. These meals are supplied by a social enterprise caterer providing jobs to residents of the Downtown Eastside ([p. 13](#)).
- 1.c) Expense allowances do not currently cover at-home food costs for virtual meeting attendance. Staff will further consider this option and bring recommendations as needed.
- 1.d) Staff are currently assessing the viability and budgetary impact of an “outreach fund” for Advisory Bodies ([pp. 18-19](#)).
- 1.e) In previous terms, Advisory Body recruitment advertising has been placed in English, Mandarin, and Punjabi language periodicals. In the recruitment plan for 2023, currently under development, staff will seek to expand this to additional languages. The City’s forthcoming Accessibility Strategy encourages greater use of plain language in City communications, to be more inclusive of people with varying levels of English proficiency. Staff will also be introducing new policy regarding language accessibility, with a focus on translation of written information. The Language Access Policy is intended to be a starting point for offering a consistent approach to language access across City operations. However due to significant logistical challenges, and in

consideration of financial resources required, the policy will not apply to Council-appointed agencies, boards and commissions during the initial phases of implementation ([pp. 14-15](#)).

2. Council has recommended through resolution that the next Council implement lengthened four-year terms for Type A Advisory Bodies. Recruitment for 2023 will focus on underrepresented communities, as established through demographic surveys in the two previous terms (especially first-generation immigrants, IBPOC, people with low incomes, and residents of South-East Vancouver). Due to the Type A Advisory Bodies' legislative status as Committees of Council, those Bodies dissolve at the end of a Council term and must be reconstituted following an election—as a result it is impossible to build in term overlap ([pp. 8; 14; 18](#)).
- 3.a) Staff are currently piloting access to SharePoint with three Committees: Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Seniors' Advisory Committee, and Transportation Advisory Committee. The intention is to provide a centralized platform for collaborative work, and document sharing and storage. The pilot will help ensure that platform is both accessible and user-friendly prior to roll-out in all Committees ([pp. 15-16](#)).
- 3.b) Recruitment advertising in 2023 will be more detailed and informative than in the past, specifying workload, available supports, and applicant criteria. Staff are also considering ways to incorporate past Committee members' testimonials in advertising materials ([p. 7](#)).
- 3.c) Closed Captioning is currently available in meetings on an as-needed basis (for example, if a member is d/Deaf or hard of hearing) ([pp. 13-14](#)).
- 4.a) Staff have received member feedback that meeting procedures based on the Procedure By-law and Robert's Rules of Order can be perceived as restrictive and colonial. Accordingly, interested Advisory Bodies may suspend the Procedure By-law motion requirement, on a meeting-to-meeting basis, allowing for decisions to be made based on collaboration and consensus, rather than majority rule. As part of improved training and the revision of the Advisory Body Guidelines, staff will also outline and clarify the mechanisms available to Advisory Bodies for conveying advice and recommendations ([pp. 7-8; 12](#)).
- 4.b) At the beginning of the 2021-2022 term, each Advisory Committee met informally to get to know one another and develop community expectations. Staff will continue to create opportunities to promote cohesion and familiarity in and among Committees, and make it clear that Committees are welcome to introduce wellness practices into their meetings.
- 4.c) Staff are working to create opportunities for cross-Committee collaboration, including joint staff consultations. There have also been periodic meetings open to Chairs, Staff Liaisons, and City Clerk's Office staff to focus on issues of common interest—staff are planning to regularize this practice in the future. Finally, staff are assessing the feasibility of a new Standing Committee of Council, dedicated to receiving presentations and recommendations from all Type A Advisory Committees on a quarterly or bi-annual basis ([pp. 17-18](#)).

For further information, please contact Kevin Burris, Manager, Civic Agencies, at kevin.burris@vancouver.ca or 604-707-5412.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Leckovic', written in a cursive style.

Katrina Leckovic
City Clerk