

# Staff Report



Corporate Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Finance and Corporate Services Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** October 28, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Amanda Fusco, Director, Legislated Services / City Clerk, 519-741-2200 ext 7809

**PREPARED BY:** Amanda Fusco, Director, Legislated Services / City Clerk, 519-741-2200 ext 7809

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** All

**DATE OF REPORT:** October 4, 2021

**REPORT NO.:** COR-2024-465

**SUBJECT:** Advisory Committees 2022-2024 Term Extension

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## RECOMMENDATION:

**That the appointment of members to the City's Advisory Committees and Quasi-Judicial Tribunals for the 2022-2024 term be extended until successors are appointed.**

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to extend the appointment of members to advisory committees and quasi-judicial committees from the 2022-2024 term until a successor is appointed.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

## BACKGROUND:

On November 21, 2022 Council appointed applicants to the City's Advisory Committee and Quasi-Judicial Tribunals for a term ending November 21, 2024 in compliance with the two-year term set out in each Terms of Reference and the Appointments to Boards and Committee Policy (GOV-BOA-063).

Save and except for a few vacancies that have occurred and been filled, membership has remained as appointed since 2022. In February 2024 Council approved a new Honorarium and Reimbursement Policy (GOV-BOA-2037). During this discussion members of Council raised questions regarding the city's advisory committee recruitment practices and ability to ensure that membership on its advisory committees reflect the diversity of the Kitchener community.

To that end, and in anticipation of the term ending, staff in Legislated Services, Communications and Equity and Anti-Racism began in early summer to review existing recruitment practices, methods and language with the aim to further reduce barriers, increase education and information and encourage applications. Some these enhancements include;

- Revising the applications forms to;

\*\*\* This information is available in accessible formats upon request. \*\*\*  
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

- remove the legal language on the first two pages (by itself a barrier to participation), removal of the photo release section (can reduce participation as well) and oath of confidentiality (as it was deemed a duplicate and more appropriately addressed in the training on the code of conduct provided),
- acknowledging in question regarding work or volunteer-related skills, activities, experience or training that due to structural barriers such as financial constraints or being a newcomer to Canada, some people were deprived of opportunities to volunteer or gain professional experience and/or training and encouraging members, if they faced any of these barriers, to share their experience and explain what they can contribute to the committee, and
- adding in specific questions that encourage members to identify any lived experience and diverse ways of knowing that would contribute to the committee's diversity and objectives.
- Expanding the key messages in the communication plan to;
  - focus recruitment efforts on traditionally underrepresented areas of the community, through more targeted communications to diverse groups with inclusive language and promotion that participation helps ensure all the voices and perspectives of all members of our community are represented in the City's decision-making,
  - leverage direct contact mailouts to community groups and associations, council, existing members and areas of the city that have involvement in each of the Committees,
  - place an advertisement in the Kitchener Life fall edition,
  - paid digital media and radio campaigns on CKWR in multi-languages, and
  - create and publicly display visually engaging posters in the community centre boards with QR codes and friendly URL to the application forms.
- Facilitating two (2) hybrid committee orientation sessions for members of the public on September 18 and 19, 2024 to learn about;
  - Committee Structure, Mandate and Reporting Process
  - How an Advisory Committee functions
  - Application Process – How to Apply, Consideration, Appointment
  - Honorariums and Reimbursements
  - Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Accessibility

## **REPORT:**

Applications for committees and boards opened on September 4<sup>th</sup> and were expected to close September 27, 2024. By September 24, 2024 the number of applicants was well below the required vacancies to fill and the decision to extend the deadline to October 9, 2024 was made and communicated to all existing members, social media, the application system, the website and council and staff. Paid advertisements were increased with the aim to generate additional applications and meetings with the Equity and Anti-Racism on other barriers to participation occurred. Applications did increase and were closed on October 9<sup>th</sup> with the Nominating Committee expected to meet shortly afterwards.

Due to agenda timelines and the lack of a standing committee cycle in November to focus on budget, staff are requesting the appointments for the 2022-2024 term be extended, until successors are appointed, so the committees can continue to meet until the next appointments are made at the December 2, 2024, Committee meeting.

Recommendations are proposed to the Appointments to Boards and Committee Policy, through a separate report, that will address the enhanced recruitment practices undertaken and build on community engagement, as well as addressing situations where appointments may not line up with the term ending, affording Committee Administrators and members the flexibility to continue to meet and consider very important work, until successors are appointed.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

CONSULT – Committee Administrators and staff in the respective areas were consulted on the recruitment methods used and encouraged to promote to interested parties. Key messages were shared with members of Council and external agencies/organizations for their distribution/circulation to parties that may be interested.

COLLABORATE – Collaboration occurred extensively with the Equity & Anti-Racism division to revise the application form to reduce barriers, promote the importance of lived experiences and diversity on committees and encourage new recruitment methods.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

**APPROVED BY:** Victoria Raab, General Manager, Corporate Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None.