



Report Number: PFC2020-0525

Meeting: Priorities & Finance Committee

Meeting Date: 2020 May 05

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Improving Councillor Meeting Transparency in the Time of COVID-19 and Beyond

Sponsoring Councillor(s): Councillor Druh Farrell

WHEREAS City Council is the governing body of The City of Calgary and the custodians of its powers, both legislative and administrative;

AND WHEREAS holders of public office are accountable to the public for their actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure they act in a transparent manner;

AND WHEREAS City Council establishes policies and bylaws that guide Councillor conduct and disclosure, including the Code of Conduct for Elected Officials Bylaw 26M2018 (Code of Conduct);

AND WHEREAS periodically updating the Code of Conduct to provide a more complete public understanding of meeting and lobbying activities of City Councillors is important in improving transparency and bolstering public confidence in Councillor conduct, in addition to providing clearer guidance to members of Council;

AND WHEREAS section 30 of the Code of Conduct outlines that, subject to a visitor's consent, which the visitor must only be encouraged to provide, Councillors must disclose, quarterly, a list of persons with whom they and/or their staff meet within their offices, excluding media and City employees;

AND WHEREAS the Code of Conduct excludes the disclosure of meetings that occur outside of the Office of the Councillors or by video call;

AND WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic is forcing most meetings to be conducted remotely and/or by video call, resulting in a gap where meetings are not required to be disclosed and where the public is unable to fully review with whom Elected Officials are meeting;

AND WHEREAS remote meetings will likely continue to be more common, even post-pandemic;

AND WHEREAS the Ethics Advisor is preparing recommendations to amend the Code of Conduct and other Council policies to improve accountability and transparency;

AND WHEREAS, until the Ethics Advisor's recommendations are implemented, there is an immediate need to address the gap with respect to the disclosure of remote meetings during COVID-19;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council, in advance of the implementation of further reporting changes recommended by the Ethics Advisor and with the assistance of the Office of the Councillors, report all remote meetings occurring with Elected Officials and/or their staff, as though they were meetings occurring within the Office of the Councillors.