



Report to Council

From the Office of Councillor Zoë Royer

Date: May 6, 2021

Subject: Council Procedure Bylaw Update – Managing Time

Purpose

When we experience difficulties on Council, it is important that we also learn from what didn't work well. We need to look at the rules that are already in place to ensure transparency and equality at the Council table. We need to correct what isn't working well in order to restore public trust and the confidence of one another in order to govern effectively and democratically. One improvement would be for our staff to assist the Chair in managing timing.

There have been many questions about speaking time allotments. There are clear rules about time allotments in the Procedure Bylaw. Despite the rules, inequity, both perceived and real, has become an issue. I believe that the problem rests on how the existing rules are being implemented. One example of this is when the words "permission of Council" become interpreted as permission by the Chair. I propose the following amendment to Council's Procedure Bylaw:

Recommendation

THAT section 23 (11) (d) of Council's Procedure Bylaw be amended as follows as recommended in the report dated May 6, 2021 from the Office of Councillor Zoë Royer regarding Council Procedure Bylaw Update – Managing Time:

"A Member may speak to a question, or may speak in reply, for longer than a total time of five minutes only with the permission of Council. Speaking time will be tracked by staff, who will play an audible sound at the five-minute mark; upon hearing the sound, the speaker may call for a vote to receive permission of Council to continue speaking."
