



Report Number: C2018-0405

Meeting: Combined Meeting of Council

Meeting Date: 2018 April 05

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Ensuring Efficiency, Transparency and the Appropriate use of Closed Meetings for Council Business

Sponsoring Councillor(s): Councillor Demong

WHEREAS a well-run city is governed by a Council that is as open and transparent as possible with its decision-making processes and operates in an efficient and effective manner;

AND WHEREAS, as part of enhancing transparency, it behooves Council to make every effort to ensure that it is discussing as much information as possible in a public forum and to limit discussion in closed meetings to only those matters that the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) allows to be discussed in closed meetings;

AND WHEREAS Council should periodically examine its meeting and decision-making processes to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible;

AND WHEREAS Section 197 of the MGA provides that Council and Council Committees must conduct their meetings in public unless the matter to be discussed falls within one of the exceptions to disclosure outlined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP Act) or Regulations made pursuant to the MGA;

AND WHEREAS the FOIP Act prescribes the matters that can be discussed in closed meetings, which matters include for example:

- legal advice or advice from officials; and
- matters that may be harmful to business interests of a third party, personal privacy, individual or public safety, law enforcement, intergovernmental relations, or economic and other interests of The City;

AND WHEREAS the MGA was recently amended to include the following additional requirements relating to closed meetings:

- that before closing meetings to the public, Council or a Council Committee must by resolution approve the part of the meeting to be closed and the basis for doing so under the FOIP Act;
- after the closed meeting discussions are completed, members of the public present outside the closed meeting room must be notified that the rest of the meeting is open to the public and given a reasonable amount of time to return to the meeting before it continues; and
- meeting minutes must include the names of individuals at the closed meeting and the reason for their attendance;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Administration be directed to bring forward a report to Council, through the Priorities and Finance Committee, no later than Q4 2018, which report shall include the following information:

1. The categories of matters that have been discussed in closed meetings of Council over the past year and the time spent in closed meetings of Council during that period; and
2. Information about governance practices and committee structures and strategies used by other Canadian municipalities in order to allow Administration to bring forward recommendations and strategies that:
 - help increase transparency in decision-making processes;
 - assist with ensuring Council meeting efficiency and effectiveness; and
 - assist in decreasing the amount of time Council spends in closed meetings while still ensuring that personal privacy is protected and that Council is given the opportunity to discuss matters in closed meetings appropriate for discussion in that forum.