

## Citizen Member Input to Governance Committee

**Dated: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

### **Re: Subcommittee for Election Related Matters**

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The following represent our thoughts and recommendations regarding the suggested reconsideration of the Terms of Reference for this Subcommittee at today's meeting.

**1. Subcommittee timeline:**

- a. **November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020** – Subcommittee established by Governance Committee
- b. **January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021** – Subcommittee established draft Terms of Reference
- c. **January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021** – Governance Committee approved draft Terms or Reference with minor amendments
- d. **February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021** – Council referred the Subcommittee Terms of Reference back to Governance Committee for further consideration
- e. **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021** – Governance Committee meets to discuss the matter

**2. Significant factors to be considered:**

- a. Council's approval on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 of the report entitled "Ward Boundary Review" dated November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 stated, "That Council initiate the process to review the City's wards and endorse the timelines, guiding principles, approach to develop scenarios and consultation program outlined in this report".
  - *Significantly, Council approved the nine guiding principles for reviewing the City's ward boundaries*
- b. Council received the report entitled "Ward Boundary Review – Preliminary Ward Boundary Scenarios" dated January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. It was referred it back to staff to develop three scenarios of 12 wards *guided by the same criteria identified in the preliminary report* and report back to General Committee.
- c. Completion of the process mandated for changes to ward boundaries by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 is highly unlikely whether the process is led by the Subcommittee or conducted by staff alone a per the January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 report.
- d. Given the current and anticipated COVID-19 restrictions on in person meetings for at least the first half of 2021, it will be difficult if not impossible to recruit additional citizens for the Subcommittee or to engage a robust representation of the general public for town halls.
- e. 2021 is a census year. Data is expected to be available not later than the first quarter of 2022.
- f. The appointments of the current citizen members will end with the call of the election in mid 2022.

**3. Accordingly our thoughts and recommendations are as follows:**

- a. This Subcommittee for Election Related Matters should be disbanded today.
- b. Staff should be asked to update the report entitled “Ward Boundary Review – Preliminary Boundary Scenarios” dated January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 when the results of the 2021 census become available and bring it forward for consideration by the Governance Committee immediately following the 2022 election.
- c. Any work undertaken by a new Subcommittee with respect to changes to ward boundaries should build upon the staff reports on the subject.
- d. The Governance Committee should add an item to its current workplan calling for the identification of any and all election and voting related issues and opportunities, including those which flow from potential new citizen attitudes and preferences following the COVID-19 pandemic, so that they might be made part of the Terms of Reference of a post 2022 election Subcommittee for Election Related Matters.

Respectfully submitted

John Magill

Sandy Milakovic