

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 8.4.1
Halifax Regional Council
January 27, 2015
February 3, 2015

TO: Members of Halifax Regional Council
Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Mayor Savage, Chair of Executive Standing Committee

DATE: November 24, 2014

SUBJECT: Campaign Finance Reform

ORIGIN

Executive Standing Committee November 24, 2014 meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The mandate of the Executive Standing Committee, as adopted by Regional Council is to fulfill the self-governance role of Regional Council including:

3.6 General Council Governance

3.6.1 The Executive Standing Committee shall act as a review committee for matters related to the general self-governance and administration of Council as directed by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council request a staff report examining the legislative options and implications of campaign finance reform for municipal government in Halifax, as identified in the discussion section of this report.

BACKGROUND

The Executive Standing Committee received a Request for Consideration form from Mayor Savage at their November 24, 2014 outlining the reasons for examining the legislative options and implications of campaign finance reform for municipal government.

Additional information can be reviewed in Mayor Savage's Request for Executive Standing Committee Consideration form attached hereto.

DISCUSSION

The Executive Standing Committee considered Mayor Savage's request, with discussion being held on the limited rules within the Municipal Elections Act that govern municipal campaign finance. The need to engage UNSM on municipal campaign finance reform was also raised. The Standing Committee put forward a recommendation to Council to request a staff report that examines the legislative options and implications of campaign finance reform for municipal government in Halifax.

As identified in Mayor Savage's Request for Executive Standing Committee Consideration form, the report should include a review of practice in other jurisdictions, and address administrative, intergovernmental, legislative, and procedural implications. The scope of the report should include, but not be limited to donation and spending limits, further disclosure of campaign spending, when money can be raised, and options, if any, for possible sanctions when rules are not followed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with the recommended course of action.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Executive Standing Committee meetings are open to the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with the recommended course of action.

ALTERNATIVES

No alternatives were provided by the Executive Standing Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

Mayor Savage - Request for Executive Standing Committee Consideration form

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk, 902-490-6519

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Item No.

Request for Executive Committee Consideration		
<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least 5 working days prior to the meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one day prior to meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor
Date of Meeting: November 24, 2014		
Subject: Campaign Finance Reform		
Motion for the Committee to Consider:		
<p>Recognizing that municipal election contributions currently fall under the provincial Municipal Elections Act, that the Executive Committee request a staff report examining the legislative options and implications of campaign finance reform for municipal government. The report should include a review of practice in other jurisdictions, and address administrative, intergovernmental, legislative, and procedural implications. The scope of the report should include, but not be limited to: donation and spending limits, further disclosure of campaign spending, when money can be raised, and options, if any, for possible sanctions when rules are not followed.</p>		
Reason:		
<p>Today, a council district is larger than a provincial constituency, and the mayoral election includes multiple times more electors than a federal riding. Therefore, increased expenditures are required to run effective campaigns.</p>		
<p>While there have been several recent changes to the ways in which provincial and federal elections are financed, there are currently limited rules within the Municipal Elections Act that govern municipal campaign finance.</p>		
Outcome Sought:		
<p>A staff report that examines the legislative options and implications of campaign finance reform for municipal government in Halifax.</p>		
Mayor Savage Original Signed		