



Legal and Clerks Services

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July 7, 2015

Ralph Walton, Regional Clerk
Region of Niagara
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Sent electronically via email
ralph.walton@niagararegion.ca

Re: Double Direct Councillor Role - City of St. Catharines
Our File: 10.12.99

Please be advised that Council, at its Regular Meeting held Monday, July 6, 2015, passed the following motion with respect to Double Direct Councillor Role for City of St. Catharines:

"That Council request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the "Double-Direct Method" as outlined in December 2nd, 2013 report, where six members of Council will serve on both Regional and City Council, while six members of Council would serve only on City Council, all to be elected on a ward system basis; and

That, if the Region agrees to make this request, total compensation of the new "double-duty" Councillors will be equal to the combined compensation a Councillor would receive as a City of St. Catharines Councillor and as a Regional Councillor; and

That, should the request not receive required Regional and/or Provincial approvals, staff recommend specific changes that would improve communication and efficiency under the present system."

Trusting this is satisfactory for your information. Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk

cc N. Auty, City Solicitor



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Legal and Clerks Services, Office of the City Clerk

Date of Report: June 2, 2015

Date of Meeting: July 6, 2015

Report Number: LCS-138-2015

File: 10.12.99

Subject: Double Direct Councillor Role - City of St. Catharines

Recommendation

The following recommendation was moved by Councillor Siscoe, however, referred for further information on January 26, 2015:

That Council request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the "Double-Direct Method" as outlined in December 2nd, 2013 report, where six members of Council will serve on both Regional and City Council, while six members of Council would serve only on City Council, all to be elected on a ward system basis; and

That if the Region agrees to make this request, that a citizen task force be established to discuss and decide upon the issues related to compensation of these new 'double-duty' Councillors. FORTHWITH

Summary

This report provides information as it relates to the City of St. Catharines (the City) 2013 work on governance. As well, it contains very specific information on the double direct councillor, implementation and next steps if Council chooses to ask the Region to support this new model of Councillor.

Background

On January 26, 2015, Council voted unanimously to fill a vacant seat at the Regional Municipality of Niagara by choosing the next runner up, Mr. Kelly Edgar.

Following this decision, the following motion was put on the floor by Councillor Siscoe.

That Council request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the "Double-Direct Method" as outlined in December 2nd, 2013 report, where six members of Council will serve on both Regional and City Council, while six members of Council would serve only on City Council, all to be elected on a ward system basis; and

That if the Region agrees to make this request, that a citizen task force be established to discuss and decide upon the issues related to compensation of these new 'double-duty' Councillors. FORTHWITH

During the debate, a referral motion was put on the floor by Councillor Stevens.

That Council refer the double direct method motion to staff for a report to clarify the details of the model of double direct councillor representation. The motion passed.

Following the motion, there was additional specific direction from Council that included: 1) a clear definition of the double direct councillor; 2) public consultation; 3) the cost for the dual direct model; 4) an implementation plan; and 5) seek input from the Region.

Report

1) Definition of Double Direct Councillor

These councillors are elected to sit on both regional and local municipalities' councils. The 2013 Governance Committee recommendation proposed a model that would have six councillors be directly elected to the municipality and ward, while six councillors would be elected as double direct councillors.

2) Public Consultation

On July 8, 2013, City Council received Report Number EDCS-186-2013 entitled *Report from the City of St. Catharines – Governance Committee* (Appendix 1 and the attachments). Within the report was a resolution asking City Council to consider changing its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the 'Double Direct method'. The proposed structure was that six Councillors would serve both lower and upper tiers, and six councillors would serve only the lower tier. This request would then be sent to the Region who would forward it to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their consideration. As well, the committee requested that Council consider establishing a citizen's committee to decide upon issues related to payment of the new 'Double Direct' Councillor.

At that time, Council sent the report back to the Governance Committee:

"That Council refer the report to two public consultations to be held July 15, 2013, and August 8, 2013; and

That the report come back after those meetings to the meeting of Council August 12, 2013, before AMO; and

That the summaries of the two public consultations be forwarded to the members of Council."

Further, Councillor Elliott proposed that a further amendment be considered:

"That staff be directed to hold an additional public consultation for governance in September 2013."

All of the above amendments were carried out by staff and the Governance Committee. On December 2, 2013, the final report of the Governance Committee came back to Council. EDCS-377-2013 *Governance – Final Report* (Appendix 2), reported the results of all of the public consultation. The public consultation consisted of an on-line survey, and three public meetings.

Appendix 2 goes into detail with respect to the public commentary as it relates to governance in general. Although this report deals only with the Double Direct Councillor, it is timely that all of Council reviews the work of this past committee.

On January 26, 2015, Councillor Stevens asked staff to hold public meetings on the subject of Double Direct councillors. Given the past committee did hold several meetings and collected data from an on-line survey, staff is recommending an on-line call in format of public consultation, similar to the one held with respect to the 2015 Operating Budget, if additional input is a priority.

This is an unbudgeted expenditure therefore staff will need Council's direction to proceed.

3) The Cost for the Double Direct Councillor

The actual cost for a Councillor who would sit on Council at both the local and regional Council varies. There is no single model for Council to follow in this matter.

The Governance Committee asked that a Citizen Committee be struck to review the issue of compensation for these Councillors.

The specific part of the motion that Council moved to the Region stated:

...

That if the Region agrees to make this request, that a citizen task force be established to discuss and decide upon the issues related to compensation of these new 'double-duty' Councillors.

Some recent research was done with respect to compensation, and it is noted that, for the most part, Councillors were paid by both the region and the local municipality. Therefore, the actual cost varies and is dependent upon what each pay. In most cases, each municipality and region differed.

Municipalities also varied on the support staff and benefit packages that were provided. Should the City of St. Catharines adopt this model, the City's portion would be \$19,384 per annum; the Region's portion would be approximately \$29,000, for a total of \$48,400. The discretionary cost would include the provision of support services and benefits for these Councillors.

4) An Implementation Plan

Rules for changes to Council composition are found in the Municipal Act. They apply to upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities.

Upper-tier municipalities have a fairly broad flexibility to design Council composition, subject to certain rules. For example, there has to be a minimum of five members and one of those has to be the head of Council. The power to change Council composition includes the ability to change the size of Council and change the method of selecting members, including direct election to the upper-tier, serving on both the lower and upper tier Council or having members elected to the lower tier and appointed to the upper-tier or a combination of methods of election.

The process for going about changing begins with the upper-tier Council adopting a resolution requesting the Minister of Municipal Affairs to authorize by regulation the process to begin.

The process undertaken by the upper tier, once the Minister's regulation is made, begins with the municipality giving notice of its intent to pass a by-law to change its composition and then holding at least one public meeting.

Any changes require a majority of all the votes at the upper-tier to be in favour of the change; a majority of the lower-tier Councils forming the upper tier passing resolutions consenting to the change; and the total number of electors of the lower tier municipalities forming a majority of all the electors of the upper-tier (a triple majority).

5) Regional input

Staff met with the Regional Clerk to verify the above noted process and was assured that this is correct and there was no new information to share at this time.

Conclusion

Staff is providing the information contained in this report and its attachments you're your information. Should Council direct staff to proceed with the process to seek Regional approval, staff will proceed with notification of intent to the Regional Clerk for Regional Council.

Prepared by:

Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk
Legal and Clerks Services

Submitted & Approved by:

Nicole Auty, City Solicitor, Director
Legal and Clerks Services



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Appendix 1

Corporate Report

Report from Economic Development and Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk

Date of Report: March 19, 2013

Date of Meeting: July 8, 2013

Report Number: EDCS-186-2013

File: 35.60.63

Subject: Report from the City of St. Catharines – Governance Committee

Recommendation

That the Governance Committee seek Council's approval to request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the 'Double Direct method' as outlined in this report, where six members of Council would serve on both Regional and City Council, while six council members would serve only on City Council; and

That if the Region agrees to make this request, that the City of St. Catharines reconvene the Governance Committee to decide upon how these Councillors would be elected; and

That a citizen's committee be established to discuss and decide upon the issues related to compensation of these new 'double duty' Councillors. FORTHWITH

Summary

This report provides Council with a synopsis of the work done by the City of St. Catharines, Governance Committee and its recommendations.

Background

City Council, at its meeting of October 17, 2011, approved the formation of a Governance Committee composed of the Mayor, three City Councillors, two Regional Councillors, and three citizen members. The citizen positions were advertised and three members of the community were appointed by Council. The Regional Councillors volunteered to serve on the Committee but were not appointed by their Regional Council. The first meeting was held on December 14, 2011.

The members of the Committee are:

- Councillors Siscoe, Burch and Secord
- Regional Councillors Caslin and Timms
- Citizens-at-large: Dr. John McTavish, Brett Sweeney, and Mike Sullivan

The City Clerk was appointed the staff liaison for the Committee, the Mayor, CAO and Deputy CAO are ex-officios.

The guiding principles and mandate of the Committee were developed and approved as follows:

- Review improved coordination and communication among upper and lower tier municipalities in the Region of Niagara
- Review and report on the overlap and duplication in present service delivery
- Review an enhanced accountability, transparency and accessibility model for both levels of government
- Review and report on enhancing sustainable community planning and development for both tiers
- Review and report on the potential models for future governance structure in Niagara, considering: structural change-boundary adjustments, amalgamations and annexations; representative change-size and composition of Council, mode of election; functional change-service delivery and the 'new regionalism' and weighted votes for representatives of larger municipalities
- Review and report on the need for a cohesive, region wide identity

The Governance Committee held ten meetings, and has reviewed a variety of issues respecting the relationship of the area municipalities within the Region. There were general discussions on how to proceed under the accepted Terms of Reference. It became evident, through much discussion that the mandate was very broad and the committee decided, very early on, to focus on a new governance structure that could potentially address the many issues that were part of their mandate.

The City Clerk gave a brief presentation to the Committee on governance models that have been studied, including what can and cannot be done at the municipal level in accordance with the Municipal Act 2001, as amended, and the relevant timelines with respect to the upcoming 2014 municipal election. A question matrix was developed respecting the composition of Council, the role of the Councillor, and pros and cons of Councillors filling a dual role, and a ward versus an at-large system.

The members of the Committee each put forward their ideas related to a vision for a new governance structure. A synopsis of their comments is attached as Appendix 1. It was suggested that other municipalities in the Region should be advised of what St. Catharines is doing and include them in the process by asking them to consider working on governance within their respective municipalities. The committee members believed it was a good idea to involve them and invite them to do the same. A letter of intent was sent to all the municipalities in the region and our City Council representatives on this committee made presentations to eight of the area municipalities. One municipality, the Town of Lincoln, preferred to send two of their Councillors to a governance meeting to hear first-hand what St. Catharines was considering. Overall, the presentations were well received. At the time of writing this report, the City of Welland is the only municipality that has moved forward to set up an internal governance committee. A visit to their website and a call to the Clerks' Department verified they have only held two meetings. They are 'on hold' given the recent Business Planning Committee of the Whole meeting of Regional Councillors that, in essence, defeated most of the relevant

changes to governance and deferred part of the motion awaiting St. Catharines Council's recommendations.

Dr. David Siegel, Professor, Brock University, Department of Political Science, attended one of the meetings and provided an overview of the policy brief prepared by the Niagara Community Observatory entitled, "*Representation on Municipal Councils in Ontario*". Dr. Siegel's extensive knowledge on the history of the region and his expertise with respect to all regional issues brought a new perspective to the committee.

Dr. Siegel's remarks were centered on the current governance model in the Niagara Region and he discussed at length the representation by population solution. His conclusion was that to truly have representation by population Regional Council could have up to 70 members. This he felt was an unrealistic number of Councillors and likely very little would get accomplished. He stated that one solution to the issue of inequity in representation is to have "weighted voting". For example, one vote from St. Catharines might count as two or more votes, in other words less bodies but a more equitable system.

Dr. Siegel also discussed a ward system for Niagara based on communities coming together and crossing municipal boundaries. In other words, this would be a regional ward system. The development of these boundaries would need to have this representational issue at its core. Any of these options could potentially work, however, the issue of a 'triple majority' would likely hinder any movement on any of these fronts given each of these municipalities have a strong conviction with respect to remaining autonomous.

Defining the problem... first step to solving the problem

With regards to the present governance structure as a whole, Dr. Siegel spoke to the committee about the need to define the problems first? Once these are defined, his sense is that a more productive discussion of possible considerations could follow. Although he was directly asked, Dr. Siegel refrained from giving direct advice to the committee on a chosen alternative to the status quo that would best suit Niagara.

Following the working meeting with Dr. Siegel, the committee moved ahead and began the work to identify issues that they felt were key issues and need to be addressed no matter what model was being discussed and/or accepted. By using a question matrix the following is an overview of their responses:

- Regional Council is too large
- Need to reduce parochialism
- Democracy issues
- Duplication of services between the area municipalities and the region, need to streamline services
- Need to create a more transparent, accountable and responsive government
- Should create a more regional identity
- Reduce the number of city wards (elect one per ward)
- Two tiers produce no Team Niagara
- Functional and political structure separates cities and towns from Region and each other

- Two tier structure inhibits Team Niagara approach among the 12 municipalities
- No political connection between the Region and the City, except through the Mayor
- City Councillors have no say and no vote at the Region and Regional Councillors have no say and no vote at their cities, (without an appointment, limited to 10 minutes on one subject only per meeting)
- No full time elected representatives except Mayor
- Regional Chair has no mandate from the “people”

In July 2012, members of Regional Council received a memorandum from their Regional Chair advising them of the next steps with respect to their review of governance. In that correspondence the Chair stated that a Governance Review was considered their third highest priority in their 2012-2015 Business Plan.

On January 24, 2013, Regional Council met as their Business Planning Committee of the Whole and debated the issue of governance. At the same meeting the following motion was put to a vote with the following results:

“WHEREAS Double Direct Councillors for Niagara Region is being proposed as a way of improving inter-municipal communications and co-ordination

WHEREAS members of Regional Council received an analysis respecting Dual Role (double-direct) Councillors as part of Communication C7921 (attached) at the September 20, 2012 Council Business Planning Committee of the Whole meeting

WHEREAS the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara is uncertain as to the support from the area municipalities for the change to the current Regional Councillors’ representation (single role) Regional Councillors representation model, similar to the Durham Region’s model of governance”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

“That the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara requests that Councillor Timms, as the sponsor of this proposal seek the support of his home municipality (City of St. Catharines) for the change to the current Regional Councillors’ representation (single role) to a Double Direct (dual role) Regional Councillors representation model, similar to the Durham Region’s model of governance; and

That the City of St. Catharines be requested to initiate the process to change the current Regional Councillors’ representation (single role) to a Double Direct (dual role) Regional Councillors representation model, similar to the Durham Region’s model of governance.”

The above-noted motion was extracted from the Region of Niagara’s Council Business Planning Committee of the Whole, Report 1-2013. From the Regional Municipality’s web site the minutes showed that the motion was separated and voted upon. The motion was defeated. However, while preparing this report, a call was made to the Regional Clerk’s office and it is noted that Item 5 from the Region’s minutes of

January 24, 2013 – Regional Council Business Planning Committee of the Whole, was lifted at Regional Council and the motion was “Deferred”.

Item 5 reads as follows:

*That the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara requests that Councillor Timms, as the sponsor of this proposal seek the support of his home municipality (City of St. Catharines) for the change to the current Regional Councillors' representation (single role) to a Double Direct (dual role) Regional Councillors representation model **for the City of St. Catharines**, similar to the Durham Region's model of governance.*

Moved by Councillor Rigby

Seconded by Councillor Marshall

*That the foregoing amendment to the original motion, **BE DEFERRED** to another Council Business Planning Committee of the Whole Council Session. Defeated (at the Business Planning Meeting) removed and Deferred at Regional Council **pending the receipt of a letter from the City of St. Catharines respecting the City of St. Catharines' Council decision on the recommendations from the St. Catharines Governance Committee.***

Report

Attached to this report is Appendix 1 that outlines the Committee's considerations. The Committee struggled with all the options, and at their last meeting, they decided to provide Council with the following two options:

1. Six double-direct councillors and six part time councillors system; or
2. Status quo

Double direct election

Double direct election is found in a number of other regions. Policy Brief 10, dated September 2011, written by Margaret Corbett and Doug Hagar for the Niagara Community Observatory stated the following:

“In the double direct system, candidates choose to run for seats that have been identified as serving on both the upper and lower tier councils. Mayors already do this, but in some regions, there are other council seats which are designated double direct as well. These councillors tend to be full-time councillors because of the time demands involved in serving on two councils and the accompanying committees and other commitments. Of course, they must also be paid as full-time councillors.

There is a legal and ethical issue involved in serving on two councils. It is an important legal principle that a representative serving on a board of any organization must protect and advance the interests of that organization regardless of how the person obtained the position. Specifically, someone elected to an area municipal council who also serves on the regional council must always act in the best interest of the regional council when he or she is dealing with regional matters. However, the person also has a responsibility to her or his area municipality. Mayors already must strive to balance

this issue. Having double direct members on council would mean that every member of regional council will be serving two masters with the accompanying ethical and practical dilemmas."

There was some discussion about this becoming an issue in St. Catharines. Although it is being done within other regions, there was no sense about how it is working and whether this is an issue, partly because no other region worked any other way from inception. More information and research regarding this issue would need to be done should Council choose this option.

If Council chooses the double direct model, the make-up suggested by this Committee would see at least six of the Councillors as members at-large and working as full-time councillors, alongside six part time ward Councillors. Council would need to consider the corresponding budgetary implications. This consideration should include not only full-time salaries for six (or more/less) of the Councillors but benefits, support staff and perhaps office space and equipment.

Another consideration with respect to the double direct election would be that the area would reduce the numbers of people that might otherwise consider running, given they may have to leave full time employment to seek the uncertain status of elected office for four years.

Although there are several other variations across the province on the double direct Councillor model, this Committee discussed the six full time and six part time concept for St. Catharines. Any change that this Council may consider is subject to ministerial approval.

Financial Implications

Not applicable at this time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, The Region of Niagara Act was repealed on January 1, 2003. *The Municipal Act 2001, (the Act) as amended* contains provisions for upper tier municipalities to change the composition of their councils and this can be found in *the Act* sections 217 and 218, details relating to Changes to Council. A call to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirmed that to commence such a change, Regional Council must ask for a Cabinet regulation to authorize a change in composition and submit the proposed changes to a public consultation process. The proposed change would need to receive a 'triple majority' approval, meaning approval by a majority of Regional Councillors, who represent the majority of eligible electors. No changes can be made prior to the by-law which would appoint the new Council in 2014.

Notification

It is in order to notify The Regional Municipality of Niagara.

Submitted by:

Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk
Economic Development & Customer Service

Approved by:

Dave Oakes, Director
Economic Development & Customer Service

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES' GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REVIEW COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

MEMBER	MEMBER'S ALTERNATE PROPOSAL
Councillor Burch	Four wards in Niagara with boundaries similar to current federal/provincial riding boundaries
	Three Regional Councillors elected at large for a total of 12
	Chair elected at large across Region
Regional Councillor Caslin	City - Elect six councillors and Mayor at large (all full-time)
	Eliminate Wards
	Region - consider reducing Regional Council by half (maintain proportionate representation)
	Consider amalgamations: St. Catharines, Thorold, and NOTL; Wainfleet & Port Colborne; Niagara Falls and Fort Erie; Grimsby and Lincoln; Pelham and West Lincoln
	Upon amalgamation, limit council size to 12 - 15 total
	Continue to elect Chair within Council
Councillor Peter Secord	Reduce number of municipalities (3-5)
	Representation by population by Regional Councillors
	Six full-time/six part-time Councillors
	One water utility
	Streamline duplication of City and Region responsibilities
Brett Sweeney, Community Member	Reduce the number of City wards, one councillor per ward

	Elect double-direct City councillors at large	1
	Only Mayors and double-direct councillors at Region	
	Elect regional chair at large	
	Establish Auditor General at Region	
	Investigate feasibility of amalgamating municipalities	
Regional Councillor Bruce Timms	Double-direct City Councillors at Region	
	Part-time ward councillors	
	Regional Chair elected at large	
	Each municipality decides how to elect double direct councillors	



CITY OF
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Appendix 3 has been removed
(duplicate)

Appendix 2

Corporate Report

Report from Governance Committee

Date of Report: October 3, 2013

Date of Meeting: December 2, 2013

Report Number: EDCS-377-2013

File: 35.60.63

Subject: Governance - Final Report

Recommendation

That Council receive this report for information only. FORTHWITH

Summary

This report is the final report from the City of St. Catharines' Governance Committee. The report provides the results and a synopsis of the three public meetings and the online survey that were held to receive public input for Council's consideration.

Background

On July 8, 2013, the General Committee of Council reviewed a report from the City of St. Catharines Governance Committee. The report contained a recommendation from the Committee, as follows:

"That the Governance Committee seek Council's approval to request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the "Double-Direct Method" as outlined in this report, where six members of Council would serve on both Regional and City Council, while six members of Council would serve only on City Council; and

That if the Region agrees to make this request, that the City of St. Catharines reconvene the Governance Committee to decide upon how these Councillors would be elected; and

That a citizen's committee be established to discuss and decide upon the issues related to compensation of these new 'double-duty' Councillors.
FORTHWITH"

Councillor Secord moved to refer the report and requested the following:

"That Council refer the report to two public consultations to be held July 15, 2013 and August 8, 2013; and

"That the report come back after those meetings to the meeting of Council August 12, 2013, before AMO; and

That summaries of the two public consultations be forwarded to the Members of Council."

Councillor Elliott proposed a further amendment as follows:

"That staff be directed to hold an additional public consultation for governance in September, 2013."

Motion to refer was carried as amended

That same evening Council directed that staff and the committee:

- Explore the option of providing 'live streaming' through the website for public consultation
- That the future report be 'received for information purposes' with committee recommendations contained in the body of the report
- That other governance options be included in the next report
- That term limits be part of the public consultation
- That cost information be provided for representation by population

Following this meeting the committee agreed upon three dates for public consultation meetings. The meetings were held on:

- August 8,
- September 16, and
- September 30, 2013

Staff met with the Communications Division to develop a public engagement strategy. The agreed upon strategy was to produce a postcard with key points about the subject and the public meeting dates, times and locations. An online survey was developed and launched on July 23, 2013, and ran on the City's web site until midnight on September 30, 2013. As well, a brochure on the topic of Governance Reform was developed to answer some basic questions about the subject. This approach was the most cost and time effective way to reach the citizens of St. Catharines. Copies of the material are attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Although Council directed staff to provide 'live streaming' of the meetings, it was determined that this was cost prohibitive.

Councillor Siscoe was asked to prepare a presentation that would be the opening remarks for the three public meetings. This presentation provided the public with an overview of the committee's work to date and their next steps. A copy of the presentation is attached to this report as Appendix 2.

Attached as Appendix 3 to this report is the first report from the Governance Committee dated March 19, 2013.

Report

The online survey

A total of 106 surveys were received. Attached as Appendix 4 are the results of the online survey for Council's information. The information has been categorized by staff for Council to review. This is staff's perception of what the citizens who responded to the survey are saying:

1. City of St. Catharines Municipal Council Governance

The majority of the respondents stated they are satisfied with the current system and do not support a change, nor an *at-large* municipal system (there is a preference to keep the present ward system).

2. Full-time versus Part-time Councillors

There is not a strong leaning between the two; however, there is less support for a full-time Councillor if it does not reduce the overall number and the overall cost of Councillors.

3. City / Region Council Governance

There appears to be general support for some form of dual purpose Councillor if it reduces the number of overall Councillors and improves the communication between the City of St. Catharines and the Region of Niagara.

4. Regional Council Governance

There appears to be a general sense that the existing Regional Council system is not effective, and the overall number of Regional Councillors needs to be reduced. For instance, it is viewed that the perception is the Regional Councillors are quite parochial and representation by population should be implemented.

After this survey was removed from the web site, staff received a call from a member of the community. The individual asked to meet with the City Clerk to ask questions about the recent process and to review the minutes from the committee meetings and asked that their feedback be shared with Council. The email is attached to this report as Appendix 5.

The public meetings

Generally speaking, the three public consultation meetings were not well attended. The total number of attendees was 26, and of this number, four of the individuals attended all three meetings and presented at each one.

Given the low turnout, only assumptions can be drawn as to why more individuals were not present and engaged:

- The topic was of no interest to them;
- They are happy with the status quo;
- They understand the process and feel there will likely be no changes anyway;
- They are never engaged, no matter the issue;
- It is an issue that does not affect them directly.

From the meeting records, the following information is being presented:

Amalgamation

- We need to look at the big picture – amalgamation
- We need one level of government – amalgamation can work but it will take a lot of work, there are too many egos, opinions, etc. in the way; we need to eliminate some Councillors
- One big city, all other communities do not exist anymore
- No 'stomach' at the province for amalgamation
- There will be one Niagara in the future
- Do not want to do it like Hamilton, will create a lot of resentment, most especially the farmers will be mad
- Amalgamation can be done, ask someone from the Province to come here and lay down the rules, think way outside the box, none of the past reports mention the financial implications of amalgamating water, fire, tax and other services
- No to amalgamation, each city has something different to offer
- No to amalgamation, there is still no trust between the municipalities

Full-time, part-time Councillors

- Why do we have two part-time Councillors per ward, it should be one full-time Councillor per ward (pay them more, but ask the Region to pay some of the cost of the wage)
- We should have one part-time and one full-time Councillor at the Region however individuals in the political ring risk losing their careers.
- Need to eliminate some Councillors and get to one level of government
- Politicians make it their job to get elected and stay elected, still too much segregation in St. Catharines alone (Port Dalhousie, Merriton, etc.) to add / delete politicians would not bring positive change
- Full-time Councillors can only be ones who own partnerships where the other partner can run the business while they play politics. He would be anxious about hiring these full-time Councillors because it would skew towards certain occupations, such as lawyers.
- The management structure does not create the team.
- Cannot see how a change from a part-time to a full-time Councillor can change anything, can't see how this would serve the wards well
- Lessen the number of Councillors
- The amount of money Councillors are responsible for should justify a full-time Councillor
- Should trim the Regional Council
- The challenge will be to get the Councillors to do the right thing
- Do not need a two tier Council
- Value for money? The money is just a number if we get value for the money?
- We want services not governance reform

- Federal and Provincial politicians are full-time, no issues are getting resolved there
- Cannot afford full-time Councillors (quoted other cities who have dual roles are also at the high end of the average family income, St. Catharines is not high, therefore cannot afford full-time Councillors)
- Dual role Councillors will cost too much

Representation by population

- Whatever we do, do not do things as they did it in Hamilton indicating that it will bring about a lot of resentment and farmers will be mad, especially with representation by population

Generally speaking the public said:

- No more said about governance, develop the Niagara Peninsula
- There is a huge disconnect with people and politicians
- Agrees politicians work hard and get things done
- Councillor from Welland would like to talk about ideas to make it work, a panel discussion to get all parties to the table together
- People are confused about roles and responsibilities in upper and lower tier governments
- Open communication to get it done right and make it easier for people to understand
- Would like other Councillors to show an interest (Welland going through this as well)
- Where does governance get us: our job rate is down, after many more meetings nothing has been done
- Four bridges in St. Catharines, no one else in Canada has this, should make the most of this
- Ask the Province to come down and lay down the rules
- Think way outside the box
- Do not support the city being part of a two tier government
- Two tiers has not helped
- St. Catharines is the same for the past 30 years, where Waterloo, Guelph, Barrie and Halton have all grown in size
- Property taxes and water have increased drastically
- The government has become more expensive to operate
- Ask the Province to introduce the model we want
- Council should facilitate the process but the public needs to participate (larger than this)
- Two tiers has not hurt us but it has not helped either
- Niagara region is not an industrial region, even though a lot of people still claim that we are or are going to be soon
- There is a lack of trust between municipalities
- Most companies have employees across the Niagara region, each city has something different to offer

- One source of revenue – all hands are in the same pot
- No one is here because of governance although it is an important issue, it is not more important than taxes and budgets
- Belief out there that we should lessen the number of Councillors
- The amount of money we are spending should be important enough to have full-time Councillors
- Regional Councillor numbers should be trimmed
- The challenge will be to get all Councillors to do the right thing
- Public input is the right thing to do
- Not a complex question and the attendance has been low = little to no community concern
- Who are our Regional Councillors, no one knows
- Don't hear from constituents – they must be happy (reference to the low turn out at the meetings and no calls to the Councillors)
- We want services not government reform
- End duplication of departments (EDC Division, should be One!)
- Internal communications, another waste of money
- City and Regional staff should be involved to a greater extent

The City of St. Catharines' Governance Committee said:

Shortly after this committee was organized, each member was asked to provide their thoughts on a proposal. Council, at its meeting of July 8, 2013, asked that this information be included within this report. The following information was reviewed by the committee and is being presented for Council's information:

- Develop a system that would liken Niagara to the current federal and provincial electoral boundaries. That would mean there would be a four ward system. This proposes that in this system there would be three Regional Councillors elected at-large as well as a Chair to be elected at-large.
- A second proposal would see the ward system abolished and the City would elect six Councillors and the Mayor at-large. Each of these positions would be considered full-time. Further, the Region should be reduced by half (to maintain proportionate representation). Another proposal was to consider amalgamating: St. Catharines, Thorold and Niagara-on-the-Lake; Wainfleet and Port Colborne; Niagara Falls and Fort Erie; Grimsby and Lincoln; and Pelham and West Lincoln. After such an amalgamation, limit the size of the new Council to 12-15 members. Continue to elect the Chair within the Council.
- Representation by population for the Regional Council along with a reduced number of municipalities (3-5). Councillors should be a mix of six full- and six part-time at the City of St. Catharines. There should be one water utility and a review to streamline the duplication of City and Region responsibilities.
- The number of wards should be reduced with one Councillor representing each ward. Elect double-direct city Councillors at-large and the Mayor and the double-direct Councillors would be the representatives at the Region. The Regional

Chair should be elected at-large not by the Regional Council. There should be a move to establish an Auditor General at the Region. There should be a review and investigation to amalgamate the municipalities.

- A double-direct city Councillor model for the City and Region. The ward Councillors would remain part-time. The Regional Chair should be elected at-large and each municipality should decide how to elect their double-direct Councillors.

Implementation of any changes to composition of Council

Changes to the composition of Council are governed by Section 217 and 218 of the *Municipal Act, 2001 (the Act)*.

Section 214 of *the Act* governs changes to Council composition of local or lower tier municipalities. It is within City Council's jurisdiction to change the composition of its own Council, subject to certain rules. Rule Number 5 is that "the representation of a local municipality on the Council of an upper tier municipality shall not be affected by the by-law of the local municipality under this section". Basically, any changes to the manner in which St. Catharines' representatives on Regional Council are elected is a matter within the jurisdiction of Regional Council not City Council.

Changes to the composition of an upper tier Council are governed by Section 218 of *the Act* and the jurisdiction under this section is exercised by the upper tier municipality. Sub-section 218 (2)(b) provides that the power to change the composition of the upper tier Council includes the power to change the method of selecting members of the Council, including having members elected to serve on both the upper and lower tier Councils - in other words, to permit a double-direct election.

However, even Regional Council cannot do this without the Province's approval. Sub-section 218(5) a regional municipality (that was a region on December 31, 2002) cannot pass a by-law to change the composition of its Council until the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has, by regulation, authorized it to exercise those powers. Accordingly, it would require both Regional Council and the Province to implement a double-direct election to City Councillors.

Assuming that Regional Council is willing to proceed and the required approval from the Province is obtained, passing the necessary by-law at Regional Council also requires a triple majority (sub-section 219(2)). That is: a majority of votes cast at Regional Council; and resolutions consenting to the by-law passed by seven of the 12 lower tier municipal Councils; and the seven (or more) lower tier municipalities that consent must represent greater than 50% of the total number of electors in the region.

In order any changes to composition to take effect for the 2014 municipal election, the by-law must be passed prior to the end of the 2013 calendar year. If this deadline is not achieved, the change would not be implemented until the next regular election in 2018.

Representation by population and weighted votes

In July when Council received the first report from the Governance Committee, Council asked staff to include the cost of the representation by population model. The chart below illustrates the number of Councillors that would be elected to the Region if this was implemented.

REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION			
MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION	CURRENT NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS	COUNCILLORS BY REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION
Wainfleet	6,356	1	1
Fort Erie	29,960	2	5
Grimsby	25,325	2	4
Lincoln	22,487	2	4
Niagara Falls	82,997	4	13
Niagara-on-the-Lake	15,400	2	2
Pelham	16,598	2	3
Port Colborne	18,424	2	3
St. Catharines	131,400	7	21
Thorold	17,931	2	3
Welland	50,631	3	8
West Lincoln	13,837	1	2
TOTAL		30	68

Formula based on Wainfleet having one Councillor for a population of 6,356

When Dr. Siegel spoke to the committee, he mentioned that there is also a 'weighted vote' that could basically serve the same purpose with less Councillors, therefore, less expensive. Each Councillor's vote would be weighted to equal the number of Councillors that would be at the table if it was representation by population. Dr. Siegel's one comment at this time was that collegiality would likely be lost in such a model.

The cost consideration of the representation by population model would simply be the additional cost of the Regional Councillors for the 12 municipalities. Each Councillor is an additional cost of \$27,527 per year, as well as the cost to the municipality of the 'extra' Councillors, which in St. Catharines would be the stipend for the an additional nine members.

Conclusion

The report is a compilation of the information that Council has asked for to assist them with their decision making process. As per Council's direction, the report is submitted for your information only.

The Committee has reviewed the report and its' contents and has provided their feedback at a meeting held on November 6, 2013.

Council should be aware that, at its meeting of September 20, 2012, Regional Council made a decision which essentially closes the door on governance changes with the exception of the Double-Direct Councillor issue which was to be considered by St. Catharines City Council. The Regional Council decision was deferred to allow St. Catharines Council to specifically decide on the Double-Duty Direct Councillor issue.

Once Council reviews this report and makes their recommendation, the committee views their role as complete and a recommendation to disband the Governance Committee will be forthcoming.

The committee members are Councillors Secord, Siscoe and Burch, Regional Councillors Caslin and Timms and citizen representatives Brett Sweeney, Dr. John MacTavish and Mike Sullivan. This committee has worked for the past two years, and it is fitting at this time to recognize and thank them for volunteering to commit many hours to the municipality on the Governance Committee.

Submitted and Prepared by:

Governance Committee

Approved by:

Dave Oakes, Director, Economic Development and Customer Services

(1)

Governance Reform

Local Government is

- a) Too big
- b) Too confusing
- c) Needs to change
- (d) All of the above

Attend an open house
and tell us what you think

Aug. 8, Sept. 16 and 30

7 - 9 p.m. • Council Chambers
at St. Catharines City Hall, 50 Church St.

Can't make an open house?

Complete the survey at
www.stcatharines.ca/GovernanceSurvey

For more information visit www.stcatharines.ca/GovernanceReform

What is governance reform?

Think local government – be it at the City or Regional level – is too large, too expensive, or too ineffective? Think it needs to change? That's governance reform.

What's going on?

In July 2013 the City's Governance Committee recommended to City Council that it pursue a double direct method to electing councillors as a first step in reforming governance.

Under this scenario voters will:

- Elect one local part-time councillor for each of the City's six wards
- Elect six councillors who will represent residents full-time on both City and Regional councils.

Before making a decision on pursuing this idea, City Council wants to hear what St. Catharines residents think about it and other options for governance reform.

Your opinion on governance reform is important.



City of St. Catharines, PO Box 3012, 50 Church Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 7C2
Tel: 905.688.5600 | TTY: 905.688.4TTY (4889)
www.stcatharines.ca | [Twitter@St_Catharines](https://twitter.com/St_Catharines) | [Facebook.com/cityofstcatharines](https://facebook.com/cityofstcatharines)

Are there other options for governance reform?

There are lots of suggestions on how governance reform can happen.

Others include:

- Redrawing ward boundaries for City Council and Niagara Region
- Reduce the number of municipalities in Niagara
- Adjust representation at region based on population.
- One councillor per ward

Keep in mind that options affecting City Council only are easier to put in place than those which affect Regional Council.

How do I give my two cents?

Your opinion on governance reform is important.

Share your thoughts at one of these public open houses:

Thursday, Aug. 8
Monday, Sept. 16
Monday, Sept. 30

All open houses will be held in Council Chambers at City Hall, 50 Church St., from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Can't make an open house?

Complete the survey at:
www.stcatharines.ca/GovernanceSurvey

Governance Reform

Local Government is

- a) Too big
- b) Too confusing
- c) Needs to change
- ☒ d) All of the above

What do you
Think?



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Facebook: [facebook.com/stcatharines](https://www.facebook.com/stcatharines)

What is governance reform?

Think local government – be it at the City or Regional level – is too large, too complicated, or too ineffective? Think it needs to change? That's governance reform.

In St. Catharines and Niagara it's been talked about for several years and there have been many attempts to change local government – both at the City and Regional levels.

Not much has really changed and the system, including the number of representatives and how they are elected, is pretty much the same as it was when Niagara Region was created more than 40 years ago.

How hard can governance reform be?

As it turns out, it's pretty complicated.

Depending on the type of change you want to make there are a variety of rules and approvals required in the Municipal Act, the provincial legislation that governs how municipalities operate.

Niagara has a two-tier local government structure, which means it has local municipalities (lower tier) that are part of a larger regional government (upper tier). So any changes in how a city is represented at the region, affects both the City and the Region.

In this case the approvals are more complicated, requiring what is known as a simple majority of regional councillors and a majority of local councils representing the majority of voters in the region.

If it's so hard, why bother?

Following the 2010 municipal election, City and regional councillors said many of the voters they spoke to wanted to see changes to local governance.

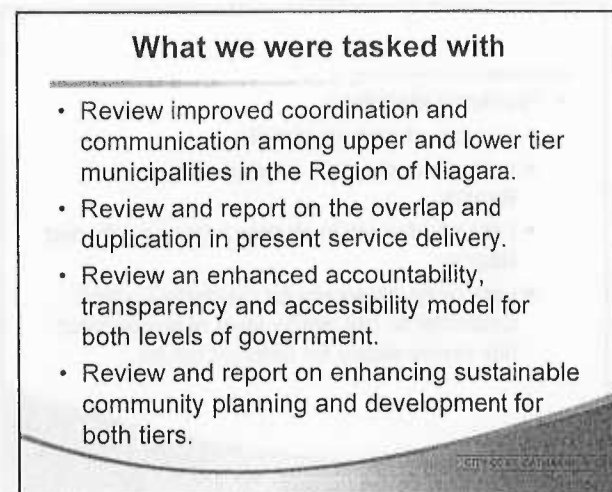
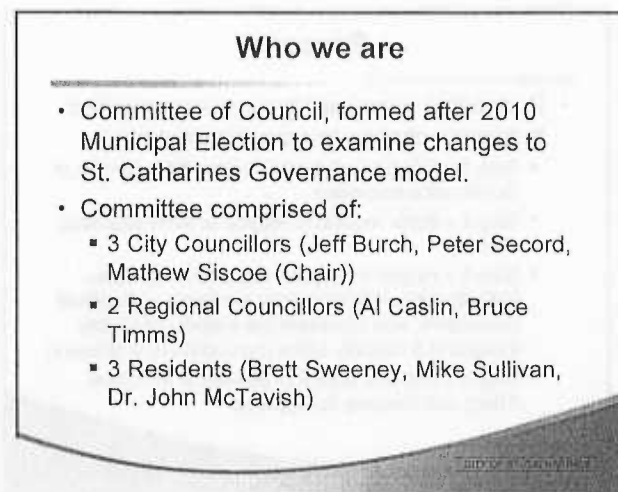
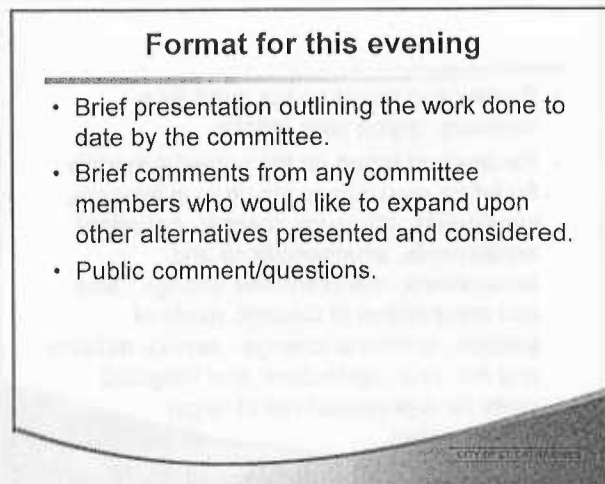
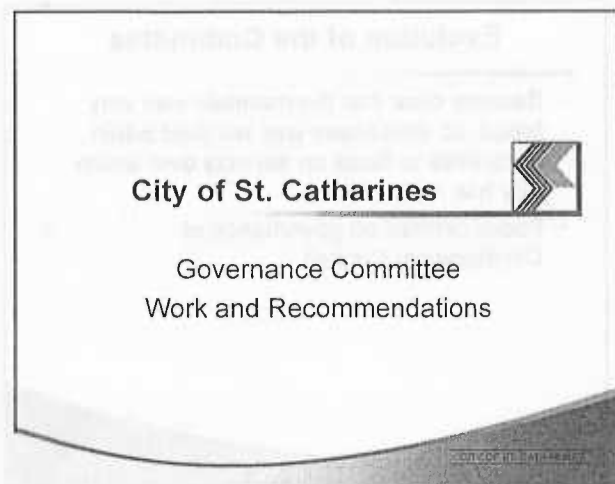
St. Catharines City Council created a committee in October 2011 to study the issues and suggest how governance reform could be achieved in St. Catharines. The committee identified a list of governance issues which any reform needed to address. These included:

- Local government transparency and accountability
- Lack of connection between regional and local councils
- Too many politicians
- Duplication between regional and local councils

In July 2013 the committee recommended to City Council that it pursue a double direct method to electing councillors. Under this scenario voters will:

- Elect one local part-time councillor for each of the City's six wards
- Elect six councillors who represent residents full-time on City and Regional councils.

For more information visit www.stcatharines.ca/GovernanceReform



- Review and report on the need for a cohesive, region wide identity.
- Review and report on the potential models for future governance structure in Niagara, considering: structural change - boundary adjustments, amalgamations and annexations; representative change - size and composition of Council, mode of election; functional change - service delivery and the 'new regionalism' and weighted votes for representatives of larger municipalities.

Evolution of the Committee

- Became clear that the mandate was very broad, so consensus was reached within committee to focus on aspects over which City has most control.
- Focus centred on governance of City/Regional Council.

- Problems identified:
 - Number of elected officials;
 - Lack of coordination between City and Region;
 - Lack of information sharing between City and Region;
 - Lack of transparency for residents – which Councillor to call, which level of government has responsibility for different issues.

Process

- Committee examined the process required to make a change to governance model:
 - Step 1 – City Council must pass recommendation of Governance committee
 - Step 2 – Make request to Region to allow proposed change
 - Step 3 – Region must pass request using Triple-Majority method (approval by a majority of Regional Councillors, who represent the majority of eligible electors in a majority of the municipalities in Niagara)
 - Step 4 – Request is sent to Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval

Steps taken

- The committee held several meetings over the course of 2012 and 2013.
- All members of the committee submitted ideas for change of our governance model to reflect the problems identified.
- Consulted with Dr. David Seigel of Brock's Niagara Community Observatory regarding governance restructuring.
- Examined evidence and models from other jurisdictions in Ontario that have different governance models.

- Over the course of the year, consensus (although not unanimous) was reached on the following recommendation:

- That the Governance Committee seek Council's approval to request that the Region of Niagara apply to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to allow the City of St. Catharines to change its method of electing City and Regional Councillors to the 'Double Direct method' as outlined in this report, where six members of Council would serve on both Regional and City Council, while six council members would serve only on City Council.

What is 'Double Duty'?

- From the staff report to City Council:
 - *In the double direct system, candidates choose to run for seats that have been identified as serving on both the upper and lower tier councils.*
 - *These councillors tend to be full-time councillors because of the time demands involved in serving on two councils and the accompanying committees and other commitments.*

Next steps

- Committee still has recommendations to make regarding:
 - Support or opposition to improved 'Representation by Population' argument in favour of St. Catharines gaining a more representative (by numbers) voice at Regional Council; and
 - Whether to elect 'Double Duty' Councillors by Ward or At-Large.
- A final report will be prepared, including public consultation remarks from residents, to present to Council in the Fall.

How to be heard

- Make your views known here tonight.
- Go to www.stcatharines.ca and fill out the online survey.
- Send comments to mayorcouncil@stcatharines.ca.

**Corporation of the City of St.Catharines
Survey on Governance Committee**

(4)

Numbers are out of 106 votes

The interests of residents are well represented at City Council under the current governance structure

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
53	53	50%	50%

Residents' interests would be better represented if councillors were elected at large across the City (no wards)

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
40	66	38%	62%

The current ward system of two part-time councillors per ward provides effective representation

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
53	53	50%	50%

Having a combination of full-time and part-time councillors would provide more effective representation

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
55	51	52%	48%

Having full-time councillors is a good idea if it reduces the overall number of councillors

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
47	59	44%	56%

Having full-time councillors is a good idea even if it doesn't reduce the overall number of councillors

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
41	65	39%	61%

The number of members on St. Catharines City Council should be reduced

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
53	53	50%	50%

The number of wards in St. Catharines should be reduced

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
47	59	44%	56%

Too much of taxpayer's money goes to pay for City councillors

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
36	70	34%	66%

I would support spending more for City councillors if it improved representation

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
52	54	49%	51%

My City Councillors are available when I need them

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
67	39	63%	37%

I know which issues I should address to City Council and which issues I should address to Regional Council

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
50	56	47%	53%

The interests of St. Catharines residents are well represented at Regional Council

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
48	58	45%	55%

Representation at the region should be determined by population of Cities with the most residents should get the most councillors/votes

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
71	35	67%	33%

Regional Councillors do a good job of considering the needs of all Niagara residents, not just those in their community.

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
30	76	28%	72%

Using wards that are similar to federal and provincial ridings would reduce parochialism

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
55	51	52%	48%

The number of regional councillors should be reduced

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
78	28	74%	26%

Having the same councilors sit on both St. Catharines City Council and Niagara Regional Council is an effective way to reduce the number of St. Catharines politicians

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
74	32	70%	30%

I would support paying fewer councillors more per person to sit on regional council

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
58	48	55%	45%

Having the same people sit on City Council and Regional Council would improve communication, co-operation and accountability between the two levels of government

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
73	33	69%	31%

The Regional Chair should be directly elected by voters, not appointed by regional council

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
89	17	84%	16%

My Regional Councillors are available when I need them

<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>% Agree</i>	<i>% Disagree</i>
52	54	49%	51%

How old are you? (81 total votes) 99 total votes (spoiled votes total 7)

19 and younger - 2 (2%)	50-59 - 26 (26%)
20-29 - 10 (10%)	60-69 - 13 (13%)
30-39 - 22 (22%)	70-79 - 4 (4%)
40-49 - 21 (21%)	80 + - 1 (1%)

Have long have you lived in St. Catharines? 99 total votes (spoiled votes total 7)

Less than 5 years - 10 (10%)	More than 20 years - 33 (34%)
5-10 years - 13 (13%)	All my life - 31 (32%)
11-20 - 12 (12%)	

Do you vote in municipal elections? 99 total votes (spoiled votes total 7)

<i>Always</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
92	6	1

What is your postal code? 95 total votes (spoiled votes total 11)

L2T - 11 (12%)	L2N - 16 (17%)
L2S - 11 (12%)	L2P - 9 (9%)
L2M - 21 (22%)	L3C - 1 (1%)
L2R - 23 (24%)	L3B - 1 (1%)
L2W - 1 (1%)	L3M - 1 (1%)

08/24/15
RAV

Nistico-Dunk, Bonnie

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, October 19, 2013 3:47 PM
To: Nistico-Dunk, Bonnie
Subject: RE: St. Catharines Governance recommendation

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on municipal governance issues in St. Catharines. At the outset, I'd like to congratulate the city for setting up a committee to investigate these issues and holding public consultations to gather broader input. It's unfortunate that so few residents had anything - positive or negative - to say about governance issues in general and even less to say about the specifics.

Nevertheless, after reviewing all the material, I have come to the conclusion that the status quo serves citizens well enough and that no changes are required. No system is perfect, and while representation by population at the Region is a longstanding and justified concern, the solutions for dealing with that particular issue are quixotic at best.

I will therefore restrict my comments to the issue of double duty councillors, which is the subject of a recommendation by the governance committee.

I am opposed to double duty councillors and am concerned that this recommendation does not enjoy widespread public support, as evidenced by the lack of residents calling for such a change as part of the public meetings. Moreover, the recommendation was not unanimous and the main proponents of such a system appear to be incumbent politicians, not citizens. I fear the proposal is being driven by political ambition.

Those issues aside, double duty councillors would create a two-tiered system of political representation at city hall, which would give half of the elected councillors greater access to information, staff, and resources (via the Region) that would not be readily accessible to the other half of council.

Under the existing system, a broad range of people from different economic and social backgrounds stand a reasonably decent chance at winning election to city council. Changing the system to make half the councillors part-time and the other have full-time double duty councillors effectively discourages people with full-time jobs, professional careers, or onerous family responsibilities from even considering running for the new full-time positions, while effectively shrinking the number of part-time positions in half. In other words, the independently wealthy and well-connected retired people would become the primary pool of people realistically able to even run for the full-time positions. This is not healthy for a democracy. We should always be looking at ways to make local government more accessible and democratic. Instituting double duty councillors would have the opposite effect.

Finally, there is no cost savings with double duty councillors. If anything, they will drive up costs in the long-term with inevitable demands for "full-time" pay, "full-time" office space to conduct business and "full-time" political staff to assist them. The last thing the city needs is a new class of career politicians. The status quo is not all that bad. I strongly urge members of council to reject the recommendation.