



Corporation of the City of St. Catharines

Governance Committee

MINUTES

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

4:30 p.m. – City Hall

Attendance: Mayor Brian McMullan
Alan Caslin, Regional Councillor
Bruce Timms, Regional Councillor
Jeff Burch, Councillor, City of St. Catharines
Peter Secord, Councillor, City of St. Catharines
Mathew Siscoe, Councillor, City of St. Catharines
Dr. John McTavish, Community Representative
Mike Sullivan, Community Representative
Brett Sweeney, Community Representative

Staff: Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk
Susan Dods, Clerk's Service Leader

Ex-officios: Dan Carnegie, Deputy CAO

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. Moved by Mike Sullivan:

That the City of St. Catharines Governance Committee ratify the minutes of January 18, 2012, as presented.

CARRIED.

3. The City Clerk gave a presentation on the history of Government Reform in the Niagara Region. Included in the presentation were fact sheets providing an outline of the process pursuant to the *Municipal Act*, for changes to ward boundaries within a municipality, changes to the composition of Council, and changes to the Upper Tier.

4. The Committee reviewed the draft letter prepared by the Clerk inviting the other municipalities in the Region to consider working on governance reform and advising of the

Committee's Terms of Reference. It was agreed that the communication be forwarded to all area municipalities for consideration.

5. The Committee members each provided a brief outline of their suggestions for revisions to the existing model for local governance. The proposals included the following:

- Dual-role for Councillors (City & Region)
- Reduction in the number of elected officials
- Elimination of Wards in the City
- Amalgamation of municipalities
- Four Wards across Niagara with three Councillors each elected at large
- Regional Chair elected at large
- Decrease in number of City Wards and number of City Councillors per ward
- Establishment of an Auditor General at the Region
- Representation by Population at Region

A general discussion of the merits of each proposal followed, along with when best to communicate ideas to the other municipalities in order to reach a triple majority. It was suggested that the Committee look at the Region of Waterloo model and how it works, as well as Halton Region and Durham Region. Based on the proposals submitted, the Clerk was requested to prepare a list of questions to survey the Committee members on their preferences for debate at the next meeting.

The final report to City Council should include all viable options that were considered as well as the Committee's recommendation.

6. The Chair asked for an adjournment.

Moved by Regional Councillor Caslin:

That the meeting hereby adjourn at 6:25 p.m.

CARRIED.

NEXT MEETING DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012 AT 4:30 P.M.

LOCATION: CITY HALL, COMMITTEE ROOM, 3RD FLOOR