

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 6, 2019

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR J. FARR.....

SECONDED BY MAYOR / COUNCILLOR.....

Ranked Balloting for Municipal Elections

WHEREAS, ranked ballot elections have been successfully used in Canadian elections, as with the London Ontario 2018 municipal election, and leadership races for Provincial and Federal parties;

WHEREAS, ranked ballot elections are in use globally at various levels of government in Australia, India, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Nepal;

WHEREAS, the candidate with the broadest support and the most votes will win, and a candidate who is opposed by a majority of voters cannot win in elections that use ranked ballots;

WHEREAS, ranked ballot elections eliminate “vote splitting”; wherein two or more candidates with similar platforms “split” a finite base of support. With ranked ballot elections, voters are able to vote for who they want to win rather than voting strategically against who they want to lose;

WHEREAS, the ranking of candidates on the ballot ensures that votes are not “wasted”, rather, if the voter’s first choice is eliminated their vote will transfer to their second choice and so on until a winner is selected; and,

WHEREAS, a study done in Portland, Oregon after implementation of ranked ballots in 2011 found that voters were not confused by a ranked ballot; 94% of voters said that they “Fully Understood” the ballot design and instructions (attached hereto);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the appropriate staff report back to General Issues Committee on the feasibility of adopting ranked ballots (including all associated costs) for future Hamilton Municipal Elections, beginning in 2022.