



CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Audit, Finance and Administration Committee; General Issues Committee; and City Council
From:	LGBTQ Advisory Committee _____ Cameron Kroetsch, Chair
Date:	April 20, 2021
Re:	Delegations regarding Citizen Committee Reports

Recommendation

That the City of Hamilton update its procedural bylaw to reflect a process that allows Chairs / Vice Chairs of Advisory Committees an automatic right to delegate to Committees when a Citizen Committee Request that they have submitted is an item on a Committee Agenda.

Background

The current procedural bylaw does not permit this to happen. When an Advisory Committee submits a Citizen Committee Report, the Chair / Vice Chair is permitted to "attend the meeting" and to "be available if the Committee has any questions" but is not permitted to either submit a request to delegate to its Citizen Committee Report using the City's form or to otherwise speak to the matter unless specifically asked a question or unless a separate vote takes place, at the request of the Chair or a member of the Committee, to permit the Chair / Vice Chair to speak to their Committee's report.

Analysis / Rationale

This process is arbitrary and seems only to apply to Advisory Committees. For instance, where there is a staff report or recommendation on an Agenda, staff are permitted to present on the matter. It makes intuitive sense for the party submitting a report to speak to the matter before a decision is made or a discussion takes place.

This is a barrier for members of Advisory Committees. It means that individual members of Advisory Committees, Chairs or Vice Chairs, must lobby individual Councillors or Committee Chairs to be entitled to speak to their own recommendations.

There is no democratic, transparent, or other process by which Advisory Committee Chairs / Vice Chairs can be assured that they will be able to speak to items before Standing Committees. In fact, leaving things the way that they are presently is a significant barrier for volunteers who may otherwise sit in a meeting for hours only to be told that there are no questions and they may exit the meeting.

This does not appear to be either the intention or the proposed impact of the rules written in the procedural bylaw, despite the fact that this is how they have been interpreted and enforced by the office of the City Clerk. Our Committee Chair has asked the office of the City Clerk for direction and clarity on this matter. The explanation in this report is the one that was provided to our Committee's Chair.

We think that granting this recommendation will make presenting to Standing Committees an easier process for all involved and significantly reduce the barriers to volunteers, staff that support Advisory Committees, and the office of the City Clerk.

NOTE - We ask that the LGBTQAC Chair be updated as to when and at what Committee the recommendation(s) in this Citizen Committee Report will be addressed so that they can speak to the matter formally at that time.