

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM9.3	ACTION			Ward:All
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Transparency and Fairness in the Constituency Services and Office Budget Policy - by Councillor Rob Ford, seconded by Councillor Stephen Holyday

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Rob Ford, seconded by Councillor Stephen Holyday, recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Constituency Services and Office Budget Policy so that the purchase of event tickets will be an ineligible expense, effective immediately, and that purchase of event tickets using personal funds not be required to be reported to the City Clerk's Office and disclosed in quarterly expense reports.

Summary

In July, 2012, City Council adopted changes to the Constituency Services and Office Budget Policy and approved that donations to community groups be an ineligible expense with the exception of donations to groups for use of space for a Town Hall meeting if the organization does not charge rent for their facility. This was an important step to help reduce what is often perceived as the 'incumbent advantage', as these community groups may feel obligated to support a Member of Council for re-election because their office had donated to the group.

Community groups are a vital part of our City. Among other things, they provide volunteers for a number of worthwhile causes, and help bring awareness to issues taking place in the community. Community groups frequently hold events which involve sale of tickets so that funds can be raised to help support the community group, or a particular initiative the community group is undertaking.

Members of Council should be encouraged to attend these events whenever possible. Currently, the Constituency Services and Office Budget Policy allows for the purchase of two tickets per charitable event within the ward or City-wide event or function. This can include participation fees for charitable or fund-raising events, such as community golf tournaments, walkathons organized by non-profit organizations etc.

In the same vein of fairness, Members of Council should not be allowed to purchase tickets for

community events from their Constituency Services and Office Budget, as these fees are also used to fund a particular initiative or community group. Councillors should pay for these tickets personally. Such expenses will not be considered office expenses using personal funds and will not be required to be reported to the City Clerk's Office and disclosed in quarterly expense reports.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM9.3