



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM23.21	ACTION			Ward:All
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Strengthening Our Municipal Democracy - by Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie

** 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 Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Clerk to consider and to report back to the Executive Committee on opportunities for collaboration with DemocracyKit, for the 2018 and subsequent municipal elections, for the purposes of making tools and information more available to all registered candidates, including but not limited to: candidate awareness and training; campaign tools; and outreach to past candidates and current Members of Council.

Summary

The more engaged residents are in the local political process, the better the outcomes for the future of our City.

This engagement should also extend to political candidacy and ensuring that we make the democratic process as accessible as possible. Running for office is a daunting task for many. Although we do see experienced candidates stand in our municipal elections, we also see many candidates without a formal political background come forward as candidates for office. It is positive, and a critical part of sustaining our democratic institutions, to see promising new candidates step up and put their names forward, and this should be encouraged. However, this group can be at a disadvantage, without the necessary background, supports or training on the formal political process.

DemocracyKit is a project that seeks to address this problem. Spearheaded by community members from across the Country, DemocracyKit is a grassroots initiative that seeks to create a system of tools that can support all those who wish to run for elected office. Unlike campaigns within a political party structure, independent municipal campaigns currently have no access to a shared services package. DemocracyKit is working to deliver a scalable, locally-tailored set of public campaign services for municipal councillor and trustee campaigns. This work seeks to provide support to all candidates for office, providing tools such as template campaign materials, through campaign team roundtables, group conversations to develop template content, and other community-based initiatives.

As a City, we must encourage a robust democratic process, and providing supports for all those who wish to stand for elected office is a critical part of this work. To that end, I would like to request that City Council approve the above recommendation.

Background Information (City Council)

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