

Ensuring Transparency in the 2022 Election: Amending the Contribution Rebate Program

Date: December 30, 2022

To: Executive Committee

From: City Council

Wards: Ward: All

CITY COUNCIL DECISION

City Council on December 14 and 15, 2022, referred Motion MM2.15 to the Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Chris Moise, recommends that:

1. City Council amend Municipal Code Chapter 53, Elections, by adding an additional requirement under section 2 (Candidate Obligations) subsection B (Include with all audited financial statements): “3) A copy of all campaign invoices” retroactive to the 2022 municipal election campaign finances.
2. City Council direct the City Clerk to inform all candidates for Mayor and City Councillor of this change by any means the City Clerk deems appropriate.

SUMMARY

Beginning with the 2003 election and in every election until 2021, City Council maintained the requirement that all participants in the Contribution Rebate Program submit copies of all campaign invoices. These invoices reside in the City Clerk’s Office and may be inspected by any individual. According to a 2002 staff report, Members of Council added the requirement to provide copies of invoices due to concern for the “lack of documentation of campaign expenses” that was otherwise available.

On October 1, 2021, City Council adopted the recommendations of a report entitled, “Mail-In Voting and Contribution Rebate Programs in the 2022 General Municipal Election.” The recommendations regarding the Contribution Rebate Program eliminated the requirement for candidates to provide copies of all campaign invoices.

While the requirement to submit copies of invoices was removed, candidates are still required by the Municipal Elections Act to maintain invoice records privately.

It is not too late to amend Municipal Code Chapter 53, Elections, to include the requirement to submit copies of all invoices for the 2022 election cycle. As candidates are required by law to maintain those records, they will still be available to submit with initial audited financial statements. The first deadline for initial audited financial statements is March 31, 2023. Any candidate that submits their initial audited financial statements before becoming aware of the need to submit copies of all invoices will have the opportunity to amend their filing any time before their deadline to file (including the statutory grace period).

Communications (City Council)

(December 13, 2022) Letter from Geoff Kettel and Cathie Macdonald, Co-Chairs, Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (MM.New)

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2023/mm/comm/communicationfile-157081.pdf>