

Terms of Reference

External Panel to review Election Processes including Finance-By-Law

Background

Subsequent to the 2017 Municipal Election, a non-commissioned report of the Citizens' Assembly for Stronger Elections (CASE) was presented to the City for consideration.

The City established an internal ad hoc committee to review the recommendations put forward in the CASE report. The Committee consisted of the following members

Council	Mayor Danny Breen Councillor Ian Froude Councillor Dave Lane Councillor Maggie Burton
Staff	Elaine Henley, City Clerk Karen Chafe, Supervisor of the Office of the City Clerk/Election Coordinator 2017

The ad hoc committee put forward its recommendations to Council in a Decision Note dated July 5, 2019. The recommendations were approved by Council at its Regular Meeting held July 22, 2019.

Purpose

The Panel is tasked with reviewing the proposed amendments noted below (taken directly from the CASE report) and providing Council with a detailed report including the impact of such changes.

1. Campaign Finance
 - a) Reduce expenditure caps based on the real need of campaigns, the effect on barriers for new candidates, and the relationship with voter engagement.
 - b) Ban corporate and union donations based on public trust concerns, and barriers for new candidates.
 - c) Amend the necessary by-laws to reduce timeline for disclosure of campaign contributions to allow greater transparency of donors.
 - d) Amend the necessary by-laws to require disclosure of expenditures in addition to contributions to improve transparency and public trust.
2. Council Structure
 - a) Further study the current and other potential council structures (i.e. ward and/or at-large councillors) and the method of determining the roles mayor and deputy mayor to determine the best fit for your community.

3. Electoral Systems

- a) Increase proportionality, reduce strategic voting and promote a more equitable democratic process by adopting a ranked ballot for the municipal electoral system.

4. Voting Method

- a) Conduct an independent review to determine whether the mail-in-ballot system met the objective of increasing accessibility, improving and diversifying voter turnout and providing cost savings.

5. Enfranchisement

- a) Lobby the Provincial Government to amend the necessary legislation to change the voting day to enfranchise student voters.
- b) Resolve to allow permanent residents to vote if and when the province has made the necessary legislative changes.
- c) Lobby the Provincial Government to amend the necessary legislation to grant permanent residents the right to vote in municipal elections.

Council also requested that the Panel further consider the following item (which is not part of the CASE report):

6. Election Signage

- a) Investigate the use of election signage noting that other Canadian jurisdictions have banned the use of such in public places.

Membership

The Panel will consist of the following four members:

- **Ross Reid:** former Canadian politician who most recently served as the Chief of Staff to Newfoundland and Labrador Premiers Kathy Dunderdale and Tom Marshall. Reid is a former Progressive Conservative member of Parliament who served as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency under Prime Minister Kim Campbell;
- **Dr. Amanda Bittner:** studies elections and voting in Canada. She has published research on voter turnout, immigration, as well as the impact of social cleavages and political sophistication on political attitudes. She is currently working on projects in a number of areas, including voters' attitudes about immigration; the influence of gender on public opinion and voting; and Canadian parties and elections.
- **Marie Ryan:** Partner at Goss Gilroy Inc. Management Consultants and tireless advocate for social justice in the community, former councillor and deputy mayor. She is an advocate for inclusive citizenship and development of the housing and

homelessness support services sector. She is the recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador

- **Dr. Steven Tomblin:** is a full professor in the Department of Political Science and Medicine (Community Health) at Memorial University of Newfoundland. In addition to administrative service in the political science department, Tomblin has served as the Principal Investigator for the Atlantic Regional Training Centre.

Compensation

Members of the Panel will serve in a volunteer capacity and as such, there will be no compensation.

Operating Principles

Regardless of their backgrounds and/or affiliations, members shall serve in an individual capacity having regard to the public interest, and not as the delegates or representatives of sectoral groups. While knowledge of political context and processes is an asset, care must be taken to avoid political partisanship.

Report/Recommendations

The Panel shall provide to Council a written report of recommendations within 60 days of the Panel's establishment. The report shall be made public by Council at a reasonable time after Council's review.