

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2013

Item 15, Report No. 1, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on January 29, 2013.

15 PROVISION OF CIVIL MARRIAGE SERVICES (MARRIAGE SOLEMNIZATION)

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the City Clerk, dated January 15, 2013:

Recommendation

The City Clerk recommends:

- 1) That the City Clerk be authorized to provide the service of solemnizing marriages at City Hall and at such other locations within the City of Vaughan as may be appropriate;
- 2) That such persons as the City Clerk delegates in writing the ability to solemnize marriages also be authorized to provide marriage solemnizing services;
- 3) That a request for proposals be issued for the provision of contracted marriage solemnizing services under the direction of the City Clerk;
- 4) That the City Clerk be requested to report back with the results of the request for proposals for marriage solemnizing services, including any recommended fees to be charged for the service;
- 5) That the City Clerk make such applications as may be necessary for the purposes of complying with the *Marriage Act* and the administrative procedures imposed by the Office of the Registrar General; and
- 6) That any necessary by-laws be introduced.

Contribution to Sustainability

Not applicable

Economic Impact

Potential revenues to be derived from marriage solemnization services will be presented following the review of submissions received through the issuance of a request for proposals for marriage solemnization services. Additional revenue may be derived through the rental of city facilities for receptions and certain ancillary services.

Communications Plan

Marriage solemnization services will be marketed through promotional brochures, web site postings and information provided at the time of marriage license application.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council authority to commence a service to provide marriage solemnization. If the recommendations in this report are approved, Council's resolution will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar General to accompany an application for the issuance of a Marriage Register, a necessary component of marriage solemnization services. City staff will also issue a request for proposals in support of a future report to award marriage solemnization services to a person designated by the City Clerk to offer such services, and to establish fees for such services.

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Background - Analysis and Options

Pursuant to regulations made under the *Marriage Act*, the Clerk of a local municipality is authorized to solemnize civil marriages in Ontario.

Municipalities may offer the performance of civil marriages as a municipal service and charge such fees as may be deemed appropriate. In order for the service to be provided, a Marriage Register must be obtained from the Office of the Registrar General. That Office requires that a municipal resolution authorizing the implementation of the service be provided before any Marriage Register is issued. This report satisfies that requirement.

Pursuant to subsection 228(4) of the *Municipal Act*, *“the Clerk may delegate in writing to any person, other than a member of council, any of the clerk’s powers and duties under this and any other Act.”* The City Clerk may therefore delegate the power to solemnize marriages to such persons, including persons under contract, as he may delegate in writing.

The City of Vaughan Clerk’s Office has for over 25 years issued marriage licences enabling marriages to be solemnized, but has not offered the service of marriage solemnization itself (civil ceremonies), notwithstanding frequent requests for that service.

Given the design of the City’s new City Hall, appropriate facilities will soon be in place to offer the service. The “Garden Room” located on the first floor of City Hall will be available in the Spring of 2013 and is ideally suited to the conduct of civil marriages. The cessation of external building construction activities and the imminent provision of an audio system makes the Garden Room a suitable and dignified setting for civil wedding ceremonies.

At the present time the City Clerk and two other members of the City Clerk’s Office have been trained through the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers (AMCTO) to perform civil ceremonies. Once an appropriate fee is set, it is proposed that such City Clerk’s Office staff who have been trained and delegated the authority by the City Clerk to solemnize marriages conduct ceremonies in the Garden Room by appointment. In addition, pursuant to a competitive procurement, the City Clerk proposes to contract the services of a marriage officiant who will provide the service weekends, evenings and at such other times when the designated City Clerk’s staff are not available. An appropriate fee-sharing arrangement will form part of the contracted services, which will be reported to Council at the time of award.

From time to time civil marriage services may be provided at other locations within the City of Vaughan by special arrangement. The City Clerk will ensure that the locations and circumstances for such services provide the requisite dignified setting for the conduct of a marriage solemnization.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the Vaughan Vision 2020/ Strategic Plan:

Service Excellence- Demonstrates Excellence in Service Delivery.

Regional Implications

Not applicable

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Conclusion

The provision of marriage solemnization services will respond to a demand currently unfulfilled at the City of Vaughan and also provide for a new revenue stream derived from the implementation of the service. Recommended fees for the service, as well as a recommended provider of marriage solemnization services, will be the subject of a future report.

Attachments

None.

Report prepared by:

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)