

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Item 1, Report No. 40, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 15, 2016.

1

WATER BY-LAW UPDATE

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the City Manager and the Director, Environmental Services, dated November 7, 2016:

Recommendation

The City Manager, and the Director, Environmental Services, in consultation with the Director, By-law & Compliance, Licensing & Permit Services and City Solicitor, recommend:

1. That Council repeal Water By-Law No. 167-73, as amended, and Water Conservation By-law No. 122-2003, as amended, and in their place adopt the new Water By-law, as provided for in this report incorporating the amendments set out in Attachment 1 and subject to wording and a format satisfactory to the City Solicitor; and
2. That staff be directed and authorized to take any other actions necessary to give effect to the new Water By-Law.

Contribution to Sustainability

The proposed by-law will contribute to the following sustainability goals/actions, through Green Directions Vaughan:

Objective 1.4: To ensure efficient and appropriate use of potable water. The proposed by-law will regulate connections to the City of Vaughan's water distribution system.

Action item 1.4.2: Making better use of captured water for lawn and garden watering. The proposed by-law will regulate the supply and use of water for outdoor watering of lawns, grass, trees, shrubs or gardens and apply penalties upon contravention of the by-law.

Economic Impact

There is no financial impact as a result of the recommendations of this report beyond those already identified and approved in previous budgets.

Communications Plan

The communication plan includes working with By-Law and Compliance, Environmental Services staff, Development Engineering and Infrastructure Planning, Planning and Growth Management, Infrastructure Delivery, the Office of the City Solicitor, Fire and Rescue Services, PowerStream, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, York Regional Police (C.O.R.R. Unit) to provide background on the updates to the proposed by-law.

Implementation Plan – Communication

The implementation plan includes communication to the public using our website and operational resources.

The following communications strategies will be implemented, upon Council approval of the proposed water bylaw:

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Item 1, CW(W/S) Report No. 40 – Page 2

- updates to the website with relevant information and contact information to be complete by Q2, 2017
- social media messaging around the approval of the Water By-Law

Purpose

This report describes the need for updating the current Water Bylaw (No. 167-73), amalgamating the Water Conservation By-law (No. 122-2003), and seeks Council's approval for the proposed new Water By-Law.

The proposed new Water By-Law regulates connections to the City of Vaughan's water distribution system, to establish an effective method to measure and charge for water consumption, to prohibit practices and other actions that put the integrity of the water distribution system at risk, to regulate water conservation and to establish a system of recourse and penalties for the purposes of enforcing the By-law.

Background – Analysis and Options

Vaughan's Current Water By-Law needs to be updated to better align with legislation and City business needs

Water By-Law 167-73 was passed on December 17, 1973 and last amended on January 16, 1978. Since 1978, legislation and business needs within the City of Vaughan have significantly changed. New technologies, processes and best practices have been implemented to meet the needs of Vaughan's growing population, conservation efforts and legislated requirements. The introduction of legislation and regulations such as the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, and associated regulations have detailed the City of Vaughan's (as the owner of a drinking water system) obligation to supply safe, clean drinking water. As stated in the Drinking Water Quality Management System Operational Plan, Element 2 (Quality Management System Policy):

The City is committed to:

- providing safe drinking water to our residents and businesses
- complying with applicable legislation and regulations as related to the provision of safe drinking water
- implementing and continually improving the effectiveness of our Quality Management System

The new Water By-Law is intended to enable the City to recover all revenue from water used by citizens and businesses

Installation of water meters, investigation of water meter by-passing, gaining access to private property for repairs/inspections and illegal connections (i.e. theft of water from fire hydrants) all impact the City's overall water loss volume. The by-law has been improved to allow the City to reduce the amount of water loss imposing special fines, penalties for offences and by giving the City power to investigate when needed, in a timely manner.

Amalgamating the water conservation by-law will help to keep penalties and offences in line with other water related offences within the proposed Water By-Law.

With water conservation initiatives now integrated within the proposed Water By-Law, all offences and penalties for contraventions will be consistent with all other parts of the proposed Water By-Law as outlined in Attachment 1 to this report.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Item 1, CW(WS) Report No. 40 – Page 3

The changes between the proposed new Water By-Law and the current Water By-Law will allow the City to ensure that all water used will pass through a water meter and effective enforcement measures are in place

The proposed changes between the current Water By-Law and the proposed Water By-Law are summarized in Attachment 1.

The contravention, failure to comply and obstruction of the proposed Water By-Law will have fixed offences and penalties associated to them. The penalties will serve to protect the City against unapproved water taking, unauthorized connections to the City's water distribution system, water meter by-passing, accessing water meters and obstructions to fire hydrants, water meters, and remote read out units.

Special fines have also been introduced within the proposed Water By-Law to capture penalties for person(s) who gain economic advantage or economic gain from contravening the proposed Water By-Law in amounts equal to the fair market value of the economic advantage or economic gain obtained from the contravention.

An environmental scan was completed to ensure that the new Water By-Law incorporated best practices from other municipalities

As part of the review of the current by-law, the Water By-Laws from the following municipalities were used as a comparison and in some cases as guidance, in the development of the proposed Water By-Law:

- Town of Richmond Hill
- Township of King
- City of Markham
- City of Toronto
- City of Cambridge
- Town of Aurora
- Town of East Gwillimbury

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

This report supports the following priorities set forth in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018):

- Invest, renew and manage infrastructure and assets
- Continue to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens

Regional Implications

There are no Regional implications as a result of the proposed Water By-Law

Conclusion

The City's current Water By-Law is significantly outdated. The proposed new Water By-Law will close the gap between old and new practices and will better facilitate the City's abilities as it relates to regulatory and operational obligations. The new proposed by-law will contribute positively to help deter unethical behavior when considering the integrity of the City's water distribution system, and promoting water conservation

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Item 1, CW(WS) Report No. 40 – Page 4

Attachments

1. Attachment #1: Water By-Law Comparison Highlights

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.)