

MOTION ON NOTICE

2. Campaign Financing Limits for November 15, 2014 Vancouver Civic Election

At the Regular Council meeting on April 1, 2014, Councillor Carr submitted the following Notice of Motion

MOVER: Councillor Carr

SECONDER: Councillor Affleck

WHEREAS

1. Bill 20, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* tabled by the Provincial Government on March 26th, 2014, fails to contain any proposals to impose limits on either individual or corporate donations to civic candidates or elector organizations, or on election campaign expenditures, and neither does it contain provisions that would change the rules governing election finance for the City of Vancouver despite requests for changes made by the City of Vancouver to the Province in 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013 (through a nearly unanimously supported motion by the Union of BC Municipalities) and 2014;
2. Council's position on local election campaign financing, including placing limits on contributions and campaign spending, banning donations from corporations, unions, and donations from sources outside of Canada, and requiring greater disclosure resulted from a March 12, 2010, report to Council by an all-party subcommittee of Council (see "A" below);
3. Civil society organizations such as IntegrityBC, Fair Voting British Columbia and City Hall Watch have repeatedly called upon the Provincial Government and Vancouver's civic parties to take measures to limit the influence of money in Vancouver civic politics, whether through legal or voluntary measures;
4. North Vancouver City Council passed a motion on November 4, 2013, strongly urging all candidates for election to Council to abstain from accepting donations from developers with projects or potential projects before Council or from labour unions that represent employees of the City because "the appearance of a conflict of interest is created when developers and unions that make significant contributions to election campaigns of candidates for Council also have matters that come before Council and that whether or not these conflicts are permitted in law, they harm the reputation of Council and impair the legitimacy of its decisions";
5. Bill 21, the Local Elections Statutes Amendment Act, also tabled by the Provincial Government on March 26th, proposes to increase the interval between municipal elections from 3 to 4 years beginning with the 2014 civic elections, which in the absence of accompanying campaign finance reforms of the sorts outlined in "A" below, threatens to perpetuate a status quo that is undermining confidence in local democracy for another four years.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT Council communicate with the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development urgently calling upon her to amend Bill 20 (Local Elections Campaign Financing Act) by including amendments or the intent to amend the Vancouver Charter to make campaign finance rules as outlined in Item 6 of the Minutes of the Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment meeting of March 25, 2010, and set out below:
(<http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20100325/documents/penv20100325min.pdf>)

1. Set limits on the annual amount of contributions that can be given by an individual to an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office.
2. Ban union and corporate donations.
3. Limit the amount of money that may be spent annually by an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office during a general local election campaign.
4. These limits on contributions and expenditures would be based upon a per-elector/capita, per-candidate formula (with individual candidate resources allowed to be pooled for use by elector organizations) and would be no higher than provincial and federal spending limits.
5. Disallow contributions to an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office, from sources outside of Canada.
6. Require that all donations and expenses for candidates, elected officials and elector organizations be disclosed on a continuous basis at six month intervals.
7. Implement a system of tax credits for municipal donations, similar to those for provincial and federal elections.
8. Change the definition of "candidate" to include anyone seeking nomination within an elector organization for candidacy to a local government office.
9. Appoint the Provincial Chief Election Officer to oversee municipal elections in BC, and establish penalties and mechanisms for enforcement of offences under the amended local government elections legislation.
13. Amend the definition of election offenses and related penalties to include individuals acting as an intermediary in third-party campaign contribution schemes.

NOTE: items 10-12 of the March 25, 2010, Motion are not included as they do not directly relate to municipal campaign finance reform and were specific to questions posed by the Local Government Elections Task Force.

B. THAT, should the Provincial Government fail to amend Bill 20 as requested above, Council shall quickly establish an all-party subcommittee of Council which, in a process allowing for public input, shall develop for Council's consideration a set of campaign finance guidelines based on the recommendations outlined in A above, including specified limits on sources and amounts of donations and campaign expenditures, for Council to consider and to urge all parties and candidates to adopt voluntarily in the absence of legal constraints, and that these guidelines shall be made ready in time for the November 15, 2014, election campaign period.