

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) – FEBRUARY 28, 2006**

### **COUNCIL ORIENTATION POLICY**

#### **Recommendation**

The City Clerk, in consultation with the Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services, the Commissioner of Planning, the Commissioner of Community Services and the Deputy City Clerk, recommends:

1. That the attached Council Orientation Policy (Attachment 1) be approved.

#### **Economic Impact**

There will be a cost associated with respect to staff resources and materials. The economic impact of these costs will be absorbed in the respective department's approved budgets.

#### **Purpose**

To respond to Council's directive to establish a policy on orientation sessions for new members of Council.

#### **Background – Analysis and Options**

At the February 9, 2004 Council meeting, Council adopted, in part:

“...that a policy be established providing for orientation sessions for new Members of Council in the future”. (refer to Attachment 2).

It is recognized that a newly elected official may not be familiar with the workings of municipal government including meeting procedures, parliamentary procedure and various legislation that dictates how municipal government functions/operates. Further, there are numerous and various policies and practices used for administering programs and services.

Most recently the practice has been for the City Manager and Commissioners to make a presentation to the newly elected Council at the beginning of their term of office to acquaint council members with relevant and important issues that include topics such as Vaughan's Vision, strategic priorities, programs and services, operating and capital budgets, municipal administration structure, senior management's roles and responsibilities and policies and practices. The Council Reference Manual that the Clerk's Office prepares for each new term of office is provided to members of Council at this session. Having such a manual is an important component of an effective orientation program. The manual, however, is voluminous (refer to the Table of Contents page – Attachment 3), requires time and effort to go through and can be a frustrating exercise as there is no opportunity for questions and/or discussion. Orientation sessions serve to breakdown this information thereby reducing council members' effort and time and leads to a quicker, smoother, adjustment to their new position and environment.

The City Manager/Commissioners presentation covers a number of key topics referenced in the manual. Committee and Council meeting procedures and protocol requires its own session in order to appropriately present what may appear to be “complex” to those members who are “new” to this process. This session would also be of benefit to those members who were previously on Council as it would serve as a reminder and reinforcement of practices, processes and protocol. Committee/Council meetings are a key component of an elected

official's function and in order for meetings to be run effectively and efficiently it is necessary to be fully knowledgeable in this area.

Similarly, the development application and building permit process needs its own session to fully understand the different stages and timelines including Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Subdivision Applications, Site Plan Applications, lot grading, zoning, plans review, issuance of building permits and building inspections. This session would also be an opportunity to present the various legislation related to planning and building matters.

The tour of City departments and City facilities would provide elected officials the opportunity to meet senior staff and visit community centres, libraries and fire stations. Although these tours may probably be of more interest to "new" members of Council, the invitation would be extended to all members of Council.

The attached Council Orientation Policy covering the following orientation sessions and tours is being recommended for approval:

1. Council orientation on Committee and Council meeting procedures and protocol.
2. Council orientation on the development application and building permit process.
3. Tour of City departments.
4. Tour of City facilities.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

The objective of the proposed Council orientation sessions is to provide members of Council with relevant information regarding the conduct of meetings and the development application and building permit process, as well as provide an opportunity for members who are new to Council to meet senior staff and visit City facilities. The objective is in keeping with the Vaughan Vision – "Serve Our Citizens" and "Run Our City".

#### **Conclusion**

The proposed Council orientation sessions and tours will be offered at the beginning of each term of Council and the invitation will be extended to all members of Council. The more quickly and smoothly newly elected officials are oriented with their new position and environment, the sooner they will be able to begin their task of serving their constituents at the desired level. These sessions are also beneficial to the experienced member. Returning members of Council will be asked to play a role in the orientation sessions to add their perspective for the benefit of new members.

It should be noted that the policy provides for these orientation sessions to be expanded depending on council members' needs.

In addition to the City Manager/Commissioners presentation to the newly elected Council at the beginning of each new term of office, staff is recommending that the attached Council Orientation Policy be adopted.

#### **Attachments**

- Attachment 1 Council Orientation Policy
- Attachment 2 Council Extract, CW Report No. 14, Item 29, adopted February 9, 2004
- Attachment 3 Council Reference Manual (November 2003) Table of Contents

**Report prepared by:**

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Respectfully submitted,

John D. Leach  
City Clerk

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Having regard for the often challenging and difficult role of municipal elected officials, an orientation program is important in that it provides an opportunity for both new and experienced elected officials to ask questions and receive information about the municipality and its processes.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE POLICY**

Notwithstanding the presentation to members of Council by the City Manager and Commissioners covering relevant and important issues that include topics such as Vaughan's Vision, strategic priorities, programs and services, operating and capital budgets, municipal administration structure, senior management's roles and responsibilities and policies and practices:

1. The City Clerk will facilitate a Council orientation session for members of Council for each new term of office on Committee and Council meeting procedures and protocol.
2. The City Clerk will co-ordinate a Council orientation session for members of Council to be facilitated by Planning, Building and Engineering staff on the development application and building permit process.
3. The City Clerk will co-ordinate and accompany members of Council on a tour of City departments, including departments located offsite.
4. The City Clerk will co-ordinate with the Community Services department a tour of City facilities for members of Council and Community Services staff will accompany members on said tour.

**1.0 COUNCIL ORIENTATION ON COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL**

The City Clerk will facilitate a Council orientation session for members of Council that will include, but not be limited, to the following topics:

- 1.1 Role of council and role of head of council as defined in the Ontario Municipal Act, Section 224 and 225.
- 1.2 Clerk as defined in the Ontario Municipal Act, Section 228(1).
- 1.3 The "How To" of Committee/Council meetings.
  - 1.3.1 An outline of the Committee/Council structure and composition of members.
  - 1.3.2 Procedural by-law.
  - 1.3.3 Timing of meetings.
  - 1.3.4 Protocol of meetings and duties of the chair.
  - 1.3.5 Presenting motions, movers and seconders, voting on motions.
  - 1.3.6 Rules of debate
  - 1.3.7 Refer/defer, reconsideration, amend, points of order or privilege.
  - 1.3.8 Closed meetings as defined in the Ontario Municipal Act, Section 239(2)
  - 1.3.9 By-laws and resolutions.
  - 1.3.10 Declaration of interest as defined in the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
  - 1.3.11 Protocol on matters or requests a member wishes to place on an agenda or introduce at a meeting.

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- 1.4 Special Purpose Committees.
  - 1.4.1 Each committee's composition of members and terms of reference.
- 1.5 Statutory /Non-statutory Advisory Committees and Boards, Task Forces and Staff Committees.
  - 1.5.1 Each committee's composition of members and terms of reference.
- 1.6 Code of Ethics and Conduct for members of Council.
  - 1.6.1 Council policy with respect to this matter.
- 1.7 Registered Ratepayer /Community Associations.
  - 1.7.1 Council policy with respect to this matter.
- 1.8 Council Reference Manual
  - 1.8.1 An overview of the information contained in the manual.
  - 1.8.2 Budgets: Council Corporate, members of Council and Council Administrative Assistants.
  - 1.8.3 Commonly used acronyms, i.e. OMB, MFIPPA, OP, etc.
- 1.9 Council Policy Manual
  - 1.9.1 An overview of the information contained in the manual.
- 1.10 Ontario Municipal Act and Commentary.
  - 1.10.1 A brief discussion of the Act. A copy will be provided to all members of Council.
- 1.11 Ontario Planning Act and Commentary.
  - 1.11.1 A copy will be provided to all members of Council.
- 1.12 Returning members of Council will be asked to play a role in the orientation session to add their perspective for the benefit of new members.

### **2.0 COUNCIL ORIENTATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION AND BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS**

The City Clerk will co-ordinate a Council Orientation session for members of Council to be facilitated by Planning, Building and Engineering staff on the development application and building permit process that will include, but not be limited, to the following topics:

- 2.1 What is an Official Plan?
- 2.2 What is a Zoning By-law?
- 2.3 Development Application Process.
  - 2.3.1 Zoning By-law Amendment.
  - 2.3.2 Official Plan Amendment.
  - 2.3.3 Subdivision Application.
  - 2.3.4 Site Plan Application.
  - 2.3.5 Committee of Adjustment.
  - 2.3.6 Ontario Municipal Board.
- 2.4 Other related legislated requirements with respect to planning matters.

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- 2.5 Bill 124 and where necessary, other related legislated requirements.
- 2.6 Building Permit Application.
- 2.7 Building Application Process.
  - 2.7.1 Lot grading.
  - 2.7.2 Zoning.
  - 2.7.3 Plans review.
- 2.8 Issuance of Building Permit.
  - 2.8.1 Tracking.
- 2.9 Building Inspections.
- 2.10 Prosecutions.
- 2.11 Returning members of Council will be asked to play a role in the orientation session to add their perspective for the benefit of new members.

### **3.0 TOUR OF CITY DEPARTMENTS**

The City Clerk will co-ordinate and accompany members of Council on a tour of City departments, including departments located offsite, that will include:

- 3.1 The office of the Commissioner and his/her Assistant.
- 3.2 Office(s) of the Director(s) under the respective Commissioner's area of responsibility.
- 3.3 Summary of key functions and responsibilities of the department(s) under the respective Commissioner's area of responsibility.
- 3.4 Organizational Chart of the office of the Commissioner.

### **4.0 TOUR OF CITY FACILITIES**

The City Clerk will co-ordinate with the Community Services department a tour of City facilities for members of Council and Community Services staff will accompany members on said tour.

- 4.1 A tour of all City of Vaughan community centres, libraries and fire stations will be co-ordinated with the appropriate staff.

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2004**

Item 29, Report No. 14, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 9, 2004.

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**ORIENTATION TRAINING FOR  
NEW MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**The Committee of the Whole recommends that staff be directed to provide an orientation training session for new Members of Council and their assistants, and that a policy be established providing for orientation sessions for new Members of Council in the future.**

The foregoing matter was brought to the attention of the Committee by Councillor Yeung Racco.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN – COUNCIL REFERENCE MANUAL

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