Council Remuneration Bylaw

This bylaw is about good governance, transparency, and fiscal responsibility. It largely formalizes existing practices, maintains current remuneration levels, and ensures the City has clear, fair, and accountable processes in place to protect the interests of taxpayers.

Key Messages

Improving Governance and Transparency

- The purpose of these changes is to move Council remuneration provisions from policy into a bylaw, creating a clearer, more transparent, and enforceable framework for taxpayers and Council alike.
- The bylaw consolidates rules around remuneration, expenses, and benefits into a single public document that provides greater certainty and accountability.

No Changes to Remuneration

- The bylaw maintains the current remuneration for the Mayor and Councillors.
- This is not about increasing Council compensation. It is about clarifying how remuneration and expense provisions are administered.
- Taxpayers should know that the existing compensation framework remains in place.

Protecting Public Funds

- Council has a responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.
- The bylaw establishes a clear process that allows Council to address situations where money is lawfully owed to the City.
- Having a transparent process in place helps ensure consistency, fairness, and accountability in how public funds are managed.
- Taxpayers benefit when municipalities have transparent processes that protect public resources and reduce uncertainty.

Due Process and Fairness

- The bylaw includes notice requirements and an opportunity for a Council member to provide submissions before Council considers any action to withhold remuneration.
- These provisions are designed to support procedural fairness and consistent decision-making.
- The focus is on having a clear process that respects both accountability and fairness.

Q&A

Why is the City introducing this bylaw?

The primary purpose is to move the existing Council Remuneration Policy into a bylaw. This improves transparency, accountability, and administrative certainty by placing the rules related to Council remuneration, expenses, and benefits into a publicly adopted bylaw. Most provisions are being carried forward from the existing policy.

Is Council giving itself a raise?

No. The bylaw maintains the current remuneration for both the Mayor and Councillors. The focus of these changes is governance, clarity, and accountability, not increasing compensation.

What is changing?

Most provisions remain the same. The bylaw clarifies remuneration and expense processes, updates travel and expense provisions to reflect current costs, and establishes a clear administrative framework for matters such as recovering money owed to the City or implementing remuneration-related decisions under the Code of Conduct.

Why is the annual expense allowance increasing from $5,000 to $8,000?

The current limit has not changed for several years despite significant increases in travel, accommodation, meal, and conference costs. The proposed adjustment helps ensure Council members can continue to attend conferences, training, and advocacy meetings that support the community's interests. It is not a new entitlement; it is an update to reflect current costs.

Why include provisions that allow Council to withhold remuneration in certain circumstances?

Council has a responsibility to protect public funds and ensure there is a clear process if money is lawfully owed to the City. The bylaw creates a transparent administrative framework that can be used if such a situation arises. It provides clarity, consistency, and accountability while protecting taxpayers' interests. The bylaw establishes a general governance framework that would apply equally to all Council members.

Why make these changes now?

Administration reviewed the existing policy and identified an opportunity to improve transparency, consistency, and enforceability by converting it to a bylaw. This follows good governance practices and provides a stronger long-term framework for Council remuneration and expenses.

How does this benefit taxpayers?

Taxpayers benefit when municipal governments have clear, transparent, and enforceable rules. These changes strengthen accountability, improve public transparency, and provide a consistent framework for managing public funds and Council expenses.