

City committee wants province to change legislation on parental leave for councillors ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Councillors on Saskatoon's governance and priorities committee unanimously recommended requesting the province to make legislative changes to allow for parental leave of council members without needing a vote by council.

So they will ask the province to amend The Cities Act to allow for leaves of absence of three months or greater for circumstances such as parental or elder care.

Currently Saskatoon councillors are not eligible for a formal parental leave, though they can miss up to three council meetings and could request medical leave at the discretion of their colleagues.

The committee also recommended council approve a \$21,000 contingency fund for 2019 be used to provide temporary administrative staff for the City Clerk's Office in the event a councillor requests a leave.

The contingency fund was originally recommended to be used only if councillors were away for more than three months.

But Coun. Sarina Gersher put forth an amendment, which was passed, to make the fund available to councillors who need less time away.

Gersher said in some circumstances councillors may need to only cut back on their workload instead of taking off a full four months or more.

"The intention would be that it would be not just for leaves," Gersher said. "So you wouldn't need to be gone 100 per cent in order to have access to a contingency support.

"(For example) a new parent who may choose to take a month leave where they are not present so they would need some support in terms of e-mail or phone calls coming through."

Other cities, like Edmonton and Montreal, have passed similar bylaws outlining the process for taking a maternity/parental leave.

Related link:

Region: Saskatchewan ^[3]

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[2] <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/city-committee-wants-province-to-change-legislation-on-parental-leave-for-councillors-1.4940404>

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