

Correspondence Addressed to Mayor and Council

Effective Date: July 2, 2013
Revised Date: February 17, 2015

Purpose:

To establish protocols for receipt and processing of correspondence addressed to Mayor and Council.

Definitions:

“City” means the City of Pitt Meadows.

“Council” means the duly elected officials for the City, being the Mayor and Councillors.

“Councillor” means any member of Council except the Mayor.

“Corporate Officer” means the Manager of Legislative Services.

“Correspondence” means written material received electronically or in hard copy by the City from an identifiable individual or organization.

“Mayor” means the chief executive officer of the City.

Policy:

Council

1. Individual members of Council have no individual decision-making power and, as such, shall not express opinions in correspondence on behalf of Council.
2. The decisions of Council shall be reflected as collective corporate decisions.
3. In recognizing Councillors' roles and responsibility to Council, separate or customized letterhead stationary shall not be purchased for, nor used by, individual members of Council.

4. Emails regarding City business sent directly to Mayor and Council's email addresses are to be forwarded by Council to the Corporate Officer for recording, distribution, filing and action, as required.
5. A member of Council may choose to respond to requests for information from a resident that are routine in nature where the information is readily available to the public. Such responses shall be shared with the Mayor, all members of Council, and the Chief Administrative Officer.

Corporate Officer

6. The Corporate Officer is responsible for establishing routing procedures to ensure timely and appropriate review of correspondence addressed to Mayor and Council including email received through the "info" email.
7. Upon direction from the Chief Administrative Officer, the Corporate Officer will forward correspondence addressed to Mayor and Council from external sources to all of Council and appropriate staff electronically as soon as possible and, if appropriate, include the correspondence on the consent agenda at the next available Council meeting provided:
 - a. the correspondence includes the name and address of at least one person or agency, and
 - b. does not contain any defamatory statements, allegations, inferences, impertinent, disrespectful or improper matter.
8. Correspondence deemed by the Corporate Officer not to comply with section 7) will be returned to sender (if known) with an explanation as to why the material cannot be included in the Council agenda.
9. No further action is taken in response to correspondence received by Mayor and Council, unless directed by Council.
10. Correspondence that requires a response from Council is signed by the Mayor and cc'd to Council. The Chief Administrative Officer may direct staff to prepare the Mayor's response.

Mayor

11. The Mayor, as the City's chief spokesperson, is responsible for explaining Council policies, priorities and decisions to the public and will respond to electronic communications on behalf of the City as appropriate or refer the correspondence to staff for response and will copy Council members, the CAO and the Corporate Officer on all correspondence.

12. The Chief Administrative Officer will coordinate actions and responses to electronic correspondence received from the Mayor and will inform Council of the outcome of the requests when appropriate.
13. Hard copy and electronic correspondence addressed to the Mayor, may be circulated at the discretion of the Mayor to Council either informally for information (via email) or formally through inclusion in an upcoming Council meeting agenda.

General

14. Electronic Correspondence will generally be dealt with only during business hours. Correspondence received on weekends and statutory holidays will be dealt with the next business day. If the matter is an emergency, members of the public are to be advised to contact the city by telephone.

Exceptions

15. Communications from external bodies which Council members sit as members of inter-municipal committees are to be routed or filed as requested by Council members by the Executive Assistant to Mayor and Council.
16. Hard copies and electronic copies of invitations to Mayor and Council are to be forwarded to Council by the Executive Assistant to Mayor and Council. Invitations sent to Mayor and Council are to be filed by the Executive Assistant to Mayor and Council.