

Remuneration for Civic Agencies

Advisory Committees, Decision-making Boards, and Task Forces

Recommendation

That Executive Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That Council Policy C628, Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies, as set out in Attachment 1 of the June 28, 2021, Office of the City Clerk report OCC00213rev, be approved.
2. That the revised Council Policy C575D, Agencies, Boards, Committees and Commissions, as set out in Attachment 7 of the June 28, 2021, Office of the City Clerk report OCC00213rev, be approved.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the March 22, 2021, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That the March 22, 2021, Office of the City Manager report OCC00213, be referred to Administration, to engage with the City's advisory boards and committees, on an updated policy regarding remuneration and expenses, with a lens on structural inequality and barriers to participation.

Executive Summary

Administration engaged with the City's advisory boards and committees ("City agencies") to gather information for a new policy on remuneration and expenses, with a lens on structural inequality and barriers to participation. A survey was sent to the chairs of City agencies for distribution to their members. Sixty-eight members filled out the survey, representing a response rate of 43 percent.

Fifty-one percent of respondents felt that their work warranted remuneration, while 43 percent of respondents wished to volunteer their time without payment. The top three reasons offered by those who felt remuneration was warranted were significant time commitment, a certain level of expertise required, and responsibility. The top three reasons offered by those who did not want to be remunerated were "I see it as volunteering", "doing my civic duty", and serving "in something I believe in".

Members were asked to identify what might prevent someone from participating on a City agency. Time commitment was the most common response. Lack of remuneration, costs incurred, and lack of resources/supports were also cited.

Members were also asked what expenses or other arrangements could be provided to help people who face barriers to participating on City agencies. Responses included transportation, childcare, meals during meetings, and remuneration. The recruitment process was identified by some as creating barriers to participation. The tools (e.g. computers and access to the internet) and skills required to participate in remote meetings, a necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic, were also cited by some respondents as impediments to participation.

The proposed Council Policy C628 was developed based on the feedback received.

Report

On March 22, 2021, Executive Committee directed Administration to engage with the City's advisory committees, decision-making boards, and task forces ("City agencies") on an updated policy regarding remuneration and expenses, with a lens on structural inequality and barriers to participation. This report provides the results of this engagement and proposes a new Council policy to address some of the barriers identified, with the objective of increasing diversity on City agencies.

Structural inequality is a system of privilege created by institutions within an economy. These institutions include the law, business practices, and government policies¹. They create advantages for some and disadvantages for others. When the laws, policies, and practices work against specific groups, inequality becomes part of the structure of the system. The result of structural inequality is that specific groups of people are systematically disadvantaged, based on their race and gender, for example. While these identity factors alone may not prevent Edmontonians from participating on City agencies, they often intersect with other circumstances like poverty, education, and reduced health, which can be barriers to participation.

The following City agencies were included in the scope of this report:

Advisory committees

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Anti-racism Advisory Committee
- City of Edmonton Youth Council
- Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton Committee
- Community Services Advisory Board
- Edmonton Design Committee
- Edmonton Historical Board
- Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board
- Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee

¹ [What Is Structural Inequality? How Structural Inequality Stifles the American Dream by Kimberly Amadeo Updated March 01, 2021](#)

Decision-making bodies

- Edmonton Combative Sports Commission
- Edmonton Salutes
- Naming Committee

Ad hoc committees and task forces with public members

- There are currently no agencies with public members from this group

This report does not attempt to solve issues of structural inequality. However, through well-considered policy, progression towards a more inclusive City agency system can be made by addressing some of the barriers to participation.

Survey

A survey was sent to the chairs of City agencies on April 29, 2021, for distribution to the members of their respective committees. The survey asked respondents to identify which City agency they were appointed to and to answer five open-ended questions. The survey was completed by 68 people, a 43 percent response rate. [Attachment 2](#) includes the survey questions and participation rate by City agency.

Fifty-one percent of respondents stated that their work warranted remuneration, while 43 percent of respondents wished to volunteer their time without payment (the remaining 6% did not respond to this question).

Reasons to Remunerate

Respondents gave many reasons for which remuneration should or should not be provided (see [Attachment 3](#)).

The top three reasons offered by those who felt remuneration was warranted were:

- Significant time commitment
- A certain level of expertise required
- Responsibility

The top three reasons offered by those who did not wish to be remunerated were:

- “I see it as volunteering”
- “Doing my civic duty”
- Serving “in something I believe in”

Barriers to participation

Respondents were asked to identify what might prevent someone from participating on a City agency (see responses in [Attachment 4](#)). Seventy-five percent of respondents cited time commitment as a barrier. Lack of remuneration, the costs incurred, and resource supports were collectively referred to in 24 percent of responses.

Expenses or Arrangements to Reduce Barriers

Respondents were asked what expenses or other arrangements could be provided by the City to reduce barriers to participation (see [Attachment 5](#)). Responses included (from most to least cited):

- Cost of transportation, including parking and transit
- Childcare costs
- Meals during meetings
- Remuneration
- Recruitment
- Tools and skills to participate remotely

Policy C575C, Agencies, Boards, Committees and Commissions already provides for some of the expenses noted by respondents. Where this is the case, it is not clear if there is a lack of knowledge about existing expense coverage or if the current benefit is lacking in some respect.

Additional Comments

Respondents were asked if there was anything else related to remuneration and expenses they wanted to share. Responses are provided in [Attachment 6](#).

The responses to Question 3, regarding remuneration of non-committee members on subcommittees, are not included in this report but will be used to inform related procedures if Council proceeds with remunerating members of civic agencies.

Proposed Actions

Council Policy C628 Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies

The proposed Council Policy C628 ([Attachment 1](#)) was developed based on the feedback received from City agency members. The policy proposes these aspirational goals to shape the procedures to follow:

- City agencies are reflective of our diverse population
- Many perspectives are embraced and decisions are inclusive
- Members of City agencies feel valued for the work they do
- Equitable access to opportunities

- Members' time is valued and fairly compensated

The chairs of all in-scope City agencies were given the opportunity to review the policy.

Recruitment

As noted above, some deterrents to participation may be the result of the recruitment process, and may include the following examples provided by respondents:

- Do not have prior board experience
- Application process is complicated
- Lack of awareness of the opportunities

Administration commits to conducting a thorough Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) review of recruitment practices before the next general recruitment campaign to identify and address barriers associated with the recruitment process.

Next Steps

If Council approves proposed Council Policy C628, Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies, Administration will return with options for providing remuneration, with cost estimates, as well as procedures to accompany the policy. It is expected that the procedures will include a mechanism to opt out of remuneration for members who prefer not to receive compensation.

An updated Policy C575 is provided for Council's approval. The only change is to remove Section 18 Expenses and Remuneration. Administration will return with an updated Agencies, Boards and Commissions policy in Q1 of 2022.

Budget / Financial

Should Council approve the proposed Council Policy C628 Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies, Administration will return in Q1 2022 to present a proposed Remuneration Schedule and policy procedures for approval. Preliminary incremental budget estimates range from \$300,000 to \$1,250,000 (excluding the reimbursement of expenses) which will impact budgets throughout the corporation.

The following remuneration options, based on City of Edmonton and Government of Alberta examples, informed the estimated cost range shown above. The estimates use the 2019 average remuneration paid to Edmonton Design Committee (EDC) members as a starting point. The EDC is the only City Agency included in the scope of this report that currently receives remuneration. These estimates do not include costs associated with expenses (such as daycare and transportation) that could be covered by the proposed policy to eliminate barriers to participation. Nor does it include amounts that could be paid to non-members for participating in board and sub-committee meetings, should the procedures recommend payment for this type of activity.

City of Edmonton Examples

EDC members (including the Chair) receive \$100 per meeting up to five hours long, and \$200 per meeting over five hours. In 2019, the average amount claimed per member was \$3365. If all 150 members who would receive remuneration under the proposed policy were to receive remuneration in this same amount, the budget impact would be roughly \$500,000. The EDC met 22 times in 2019, while the other agencies had 12 or fewer. It should be noted that this data wasn't available for the Anti-racism Advisory Committee, which was not yet established in 2019. Both of these factors would affect the total remuneration amount (downward or upward), as could other factors such as an increase in expenses covered. The rates for the EDC were set in 2005 and have not increased since.

The EDC rates are much lower than the rates set for the Edmonton Police Commission, which were used to set remuneration rates for the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force. The EPC rates are as follows:

- Members receive \$150 per meeting under three hours long and \$300 per meeting over three hours, while the chair receives \$200 and \$400 respectively. Remuneration is also provided for attendance at related events, strategic planning sessions or retreats, conferences and required training, meetings where the member is representing the Commission, and at meetings of external working groups established by the Commission, City Council or other order of government.

Remuneration for members of the recent Community Safety and Well-being Task Force was based on the Edmonton Police Commission rates. The minimum hourly amount for the EDC is \$20/hour (\$100 for 5 hours). The minimum hourly rate for the EPC is \$50/hour (\$150 for 3 hours) or two-and-a-half times higher than the EDC rates. Multiplying the estimate provided above based on the EDC experience by 2.5 would result in a potential cost of up to \$1,250,000 (excluding expenses).

Another option would be to provide a fixed annual amount for participation in one of these agencies. The Ward Boundary Commission and Independent Council Compensation Committee both received a flat rate of \$2000 for members and \$2500 for chairs for their participation on these committees. If this rate is applied to all applicable City agencies the annual amount would be approximately \$300,000.

Government of Alberta Example

Members of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council receive remuneration based on the number of time blocks worked (in blocks of up to four hours, four to eight hours, or over eight hours per day), which includes time spent on business of the Council. Members receive \$82, \$137, and \$191 and the chair receives \$110, \$164, and \$273

respectively. The minimum hourly rate for members is \$20.50/hour (\$82 for four hours). This is similar to the minimum hourly amount for EDC members, resulting in the same estimate (\$500,000/year).

Public Engagement

Engagement was conducted with current members of affected City agencies via survey, and results of this engagement are detailed in this report and attachments. Proposed Council Policy C628 Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies was developed based on this feedback.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play.			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play.	Percentage of civic agency members that feel their work is valued as demonstrated by remuneration.	Members of civic agencies feel their work is valued and their time is appropriately compensated.	100 percent of members of civic agencies feel that their work is valued as demonstrated by remuneration.

Attachments

1. [Remuneration and Expenses for City Agencies Policy C628](#)
2. [Survey Questions and Participation by Civic Agency](#)
3. [Responses to Q2: Rationale for Remuneration or Not](#)
4. [Responses to Q4: Barriers to Participation on Civic Agencies](#)
5. [Responses to Q5: Responses to Q5: Expenses or Other Arrangements:](#)
6. [Responses to Q6: Survey Results for Q6: Other Comments](#)
7. [Agencies, Boards, Committees and Commissions Council Policy C575D](#)

Others Reviewing

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- K. Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Planning and Economy
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor