

CITY OF SASKATOON COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER

C01-027

POLICY TITLE <i>Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance</i>	ADOPTED BY: <i>City Council</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE <i>June 27, 2016</i>
		UPDATED TO <i>October 23, 2017</i>
ORIGIN/AUTHORITY <i>Governance and Priorities Committee Report, Item 9.11.1 – June 27, 2016; Item 9.5.2 – February 27, 2017; Item 8.5.1 – May 23, 2017; and Item 8.5.3 – October 23, 2017.</i>	CITY FILE NO. <i>CK. 4670-5</i>	PAGE NUMBER <i>1 of 10</i>

1. PURPOSE

To provide a communications and constituency relations allowance to support members of City Council in communications with constituents as part of their role as members of City Council for the City of Saskatoon.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Members of City Council – means the Mayor and individual Councillors.

2.2 Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance – A provision in the Mayor’s Office and City Councillors’ Office budgets, reviewed by City Council on an annual basis, for communications relating to City Council business, as set out in this policy.

3. POLICY

The policy is applicable to all members of City Council regarding the use of the communications and constituency allowance.

3.1 General Guidelines

- a) Funding must be used within the fiscal year and cannot be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

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- b) Members of City Council must adhere to the requirements of the Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, the portions dealing with “Actions during Civic Election Periods”. Any irregularities will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- c) No member of City Council may use funds allocated to engage the services of a member of their family, as defined in Section 114 (c) of *The Cities Act*.
- d) The Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance is not to be used for the purposes of fundraising for a member of City Council or for raising election funds.
- e) Assistance will be provided by the City’s Communication Branch by preparing and distributing the Agenda in Brief and the Decisions in Brief, prior to and following City Council meetings, and providing background information on civic programs and services to be used for responding to inquiries or for preparing speeches as a member of City Council or as Deputy Mayor.
- f) In the year of a civic election, 8/12 of the allowance will be allocated to the sitting members of City Council and 2/12 of the allowance will be allocated to the newly elected members of City Council.
- g) In the year of a civic election, the allowance cannot be used from September 1 through October 31.
- h) No goods or services purchased by a member of City Council with the allowance may be used from September 1 through October 31. This would include, but not be limited to, items such as a website annual domain registration or billboard signage.

3.2 Allowable Expenses

This section summarizes alphabetically the categories and examples of the types of allowable expenses that could be charged to the Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance for members of City Council.

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a) Administrative Staff Support

The fund can be used individually or pooled together with other members of City Council for the hiring/engagement of support staff to assist with constituency related tasks. These tasks may include:

- i) Research related to constituency issues.
- ii) Support for the development of constituency communications.
- iii) Rental of office space to base staff support.

b) Advertising and Promotion

- i) Paid advertising that is related to the business of the City in all types of media.
- ii) Advertising that supplements City departments' advertisements that are placed to promote specific programs or specific events.
- iii) Messages in Community Association Newsletters, Newspapers, and Magazines (e.g. introductory messages, congratulatory messages, event announcements).

c) Books and Magazines

- i) Books, magazines, and periodicals that are related to the business of the City. Name of the book or magazines must be included on the invoice.

d) Community Events

- i) Tickets to:
 - functions or business/community events (banquets, theatres, shows) when the Councillor has been invited to attend in their official capacity or when the Councillor is performing their duties as Councillor;
 - charitable events or fund-raising events such as golf tournaments, walkathons, organized by non-profit organizations;

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- Chamber of Commerce and Business Association events.

Conditions

- Event tickets for family members, spouse or guest are ineligible.
- Council member must provide a copy of the event notice or flyer as well as any accompanying request for attendance.
- Raffle tickets, silent auctions, table prize tickets at events, alcohol, unless included in the price of the ticket are ineligible.
- Tickets to professional theatre, concert and sporting events are ineligible.

e) General Office Supplies

- i) General office supplies not provided by the City Clerk's Office.
- ii) Personalized stationery, greeting cards, holiday cards, including envelopes and stamps and Canada Post regular mail services.
- iii) Photocopy charges.
- iv) Photographic supplies and services.
- v) Courier delivery costs.

f) Constituency Relations

- i) Promotional items such as fridge magnets, t-shirts, pens.
- ii) Table prizes for local community groups.
- iii) Facility rental for hosting an event.
- iv) Council members' expenses for food and non-alcoholic beverages related to community events, meals or receptions when hosting constituents or representatives of other levels of government.

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Conditions

- Ineligible expenses include gifts for staff or other employees of the City, boards and committees.
- Members of City Council must provide an original invoice or receipt detailing gift items, quantity, cost and purpose of the items.
- Members of City Council must provide the date, purpose and details of the expense, and where applicable or feasible, original itemized receipt showing items consumed and names of participants attending.

g) Meeting Expenses

- i) Facility rental.
- ii) Catering order for meetings including non-alcoholic beverages, snacks and light foods.
- iii) Venue set-up fees, including audio-visual equipment, flip charts, cleaning charges.
- iv) Transportation assistance.
- v) Interpretation assistance (translation, transcription, sign language, etc.).
- vi) Childcare.

Conditions

- Members of City Council must provide date and purpose for meeting, original itemized receipt, names of participants or group name with number of participants attending.

h) Newsletters and Flyers

- i) Design, writing, copy-editing, printing costs.
- ii) Distribution costs through Canada Post, Admail, by private distribution firms or by other means.
- iii) Clip art or stock photo fees.
- iv) Electronic newsletter distribution costs.

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v) Translation fees

Conditions

- Members of City Council are permitted to use the City Crest and care must be taken in the appropriate use of the Crest.
- In the year of a civic election, all Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance funded communications must cease from September 1 to October 31.

i) Professional and Contract Services

- i) Firms or individuals whom members of City Council retain for specific business purposes with clear deliverables, fee structures and timelines.
- ii) The engagement of a business or person(s) as a contractor and/or the cost of supplies, rental of facilities and equipment relative to production, presentation and/or distribution of information to residents relevant to City Council business.
- iii) The engagement of a professional or consulting service for the purposes of preparing speeches, conducting research, etc.

j) Websites, Social Media Tools, Software & Accessories

- i) Costs associated with the creation of twitter accounts, Facebook accounts, web pages, or other social media tools for communicating as a member of Council.
- ii) Additional communications management tools such as database management tools and software accessories.

Conditions

- Tools or software accessories not supported or not integrated with the City systems or connected to the corporate network are not supported by the City's Information Technology Division.

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- Members of City Council are responsible for the protection of any personal information collected or used for City Council business in accordance with *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Members of City Council must adhere to the requirements of the Code of Conduct dealing with “Actions during Civic Election Periods”, including conversion of any city-funded websites and social media tools to an election campaign site.

3.3 Purchasing Procedures

Purchases of goods, services and work from outside parties are to be made in accordance with Policy C02-030 – Purchase of Goods, Services and Work. Information and advice on purchasing procedures, vendor lists, obtaining quotations and preparation of purchasing documents can be obtained from the Director of Materials Management.

Regardless of the value, it is recommended that competitive prices be obtained.

- Purchases up to \$250 attained locally allows for payment by Automatic Payment Voucher (administered by City Clerk’s Office)
- Purchases up to \$5000 (including taxes and freight) may be made through a Departmental Purchase Order (administered by City Clerk’s Office). It is recommended that competitive prices are attained; however, this is to be balanced off with the value of the purchase, the time required to get competitive prices, and the potential (or lack of) savings that can be achieved.
- Consulting Services must follow standard procedures (consult with the City Clerk’s Office).

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3.4 Reimbursements

Members of City Council must provide the City Clerk's Office with proper documentation, including detailed original receipts for claims. Credit card receipts or statements alone are not sufficient and will not be accepted. In the case of any online purchases, a copy of the confirmation must be attached to the claim.

Dated invoices/receipts must include a description of the goods purchased or services rendered, the cost, and any applicable taxes.

Expenses must be charged to the year in which they occurred. Expenses cannot be carried forward to future years. Charges for goods against the current year must be received by members of City Council and/or services from the vendor before December 31st of that year.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Members of City Council – Members of City Council are responsible for adhering to this policy and any violation of this policy would be a violation of the Code of Conduct and irregularities would be reported to the City Clerk for investigation.

4.2 City Clerk's Office

The responsibility of the City Clerk's Office in administering the Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance support to City Councillors includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Reviewing usage requirements and parameters with a view to bringing forward recommendations to the Governance and Priorities Committee for amendments;
- (b) Providing support to City Councillors by processing payments for expenditures;

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- (c) Reviewing supporting documentation for expenditures, and requesting the City Councillors to provide the required supporting documentation for any expenditures where supporting documentation is not place;
- (d) Identifying expenditures which may not fit within the parameters and guidelines of the Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance and bringing these forward to the Governance and Priorities Committee;
- (e) Advising City Councillors on the status of their communications allowance and expenditures;
- (f) Within 60 days of the end of the quarter, posting all expenses, individually and in detail, on the City's website and providing the Governance and Priorities Committee with monthly usage updates for the last quarter.
- (g) Redacting all personal and other exempted information governed by *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* from the detailed Councillor expenses prior to the disclosure of Councillor expenses on the City's website.
- (h) Facilitating/coordinating the review of the Communications and Constituency Relations Allowance, either through an independent body or a third party.

4.3 Municipal Review Commission Remuneration Committee

Two years after the establishment of this policy, the Saskatoon Municipal Review Commission Remuneration Committee will review the following, and that time, report on how often a review is required:

- (a) Usage of funds – by whom, where, types of expenses submitted.
- (b) Summary of impacts – in an attempt to measure community engagement through the fund.

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- (c) Validation of expenditure appropriateness based on policy.
- (d) Validation that the current policy reflects needs of the allowance and provides for an opportunity to revise policy as required.

4.4 Governance and Priorities Committee

The Governance and Priorities Committee is responsible for reviewing proposed amendments to the policy and forwarding recommendations to City Council.

4.5 City Council

City Council is responsible for reviewing and approving amendments to the policy.