



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

## GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

**Monday, April 17, 2023 at 12:05 p.m.**

Report of a meeting held on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 12:05 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber. The following Committee members were in attendance:

Chair: Deputy Mayor S. Arden-Smith,  
Councillor G. Cochrane,  
Councillor R. Fequet,  
Councillor B. Hendriksen,  
Councillor C. McGurk,  
Councillor T. McLennan,  
Councillor S. Payne, and  
Councillor R. Warburton.

The following members of Administration staff were in attendance:

S. Bassi-Kellett,  
C. Greencorn,  
P. Mackenzie,  
M. Roland,  
T. Setta,  
K. Thistle,  
C. White,  
S. Woodward, and  
S. Jovic.

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<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.	(For Information Only) Deputy Mayor Alty read the Opening Statement.
2.	(For Information Only) There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.
3.	(For Information Only) Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to amend Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended, by amending Parts 1, 4, and 12 of Schedule B to reflect Community



Services User Fee changes approved in Budget 2023.

Committee noted that Fees and charges are collected, managed, and used in the delivery of programs and services across most City departments, and in 2023 are expected to comprise 24% of the City's overall revenues.

Prior to 2007, they were embedded in the individual by-laws associated with the programs and services provided by the City. In 2007, all fees and charges were consolidated into a new by-law, Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, to improve transparency and to simplify the associated administration.

The Fees and Charges By-law is typically amended each December to reflect any changes arising from budget deliberations, and each spring to incorporate Community Services fee adjustments approved in the Budget.

This spring the required amendments incorporate a general 3% increase in Community Services fees.

Administration will provide Committee with a comprehensive overview of the fees and charges component of the City's revenues later this quarter.

Committee noted that Council's policies, resolutions or goals include:

2019 – 2022 Goal # 2                      Delivering efficient and accountable government.

Committee noted that applicable legislation, by-laws, studies or plans include:

1. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* section 72 (e);
2. Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended; and
3. Financial Administration By-law No. 4206, as amended

Committee noted that the changes reflected in the amending by-law are required to implement the 3% increase in Community Services fees and charges approved in Budget 2023.

For the past several years, these fees have been increased at a steady rate of 3% per year to strike a balance between keeping pace with general increases in labour, material, and utility costs and maintaining prices that remain within the financial capabilities of the majority of the community members. This gradual approach provides stability and predictability for users and user groups, and implements the necessary increases in a consistent and transparent manner.

Committee noted that the Community Services fees and charges adjustments contained in this by-law amendment reflect the 3% increase in Community Services revenues approved in Budget 2023.



Committee recommended that By-law No. 5068, a by-law to amend Parts 1, 4, and 12 of Schedule B of Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended, be presented for adoption.

4. **Committee discussed the Access for All policy criteria.**

Committee noted that on March 27, 2023 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Committee discussed whether to adopt the Access for All Policy and recommended that Council adopt the Access for All Policy. At Council meeting on April 11, 2023, Council referred that motion back to the Governance and Priorities Committee for further consideration.

Committee discussed whether to change the eligibility criteria for the Access for All Policy. Committee noted that currently Yellowknife residents qualify for the Access for All Program if any one of the following criteria are met:

- a. the applicant's household income is at or below the applicable Northwest Territories Market Basket Measure Threshold (NMBM) for the number of people in the household;
- b. the applicant qualifies for and is receiving Income Assistance from the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education Culture and Employment; or
- c. the City Manager otherwise determines that providing the applicant with an Access for All pass fits within Purpose 2(a) of this Policy.

Committee further noted that Administration should provide options for raising the maximum income for households to qualify and expanding the program because our transit services and some recreation services such as the Fieldhouse are underutilized. Committee noted that there are different options that can be used as a cut off such as: The Low Income Measure (LIM); Targeting household who pay more than 37.5% of their income for shelter; and the NMBM plus inflation. Committee further noted that each of these options would have a unique cut off for various household sizes.

Committee debated this issue at length and requested that a discussion regarding a different measure to calculate the threshold to qualify for the Access for All Program criteria be placed on the upcoming Governance and Priorities Committee meeting along with philosophical discussion on how fees and charges are established.

Committee requested that the time period for the Access for All Program be extended from 24 months to 36 months.

**Committee recommended that Council adopt the Access for All policy.**

**MOVE APPROVAL**

5. The meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.