

B.2

MOTION ON NOTICE

2. Urgent Action on Campaign Finance Reform

MOVER: Councillor Reimer

SECONDER:

WHEREAS

1. In 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2013 via a motion endorsed near unanimously by the UBCM, and in 2014, the City of Vancouver has brought forward formal requests to the Province requesting changes to the Vancouver Charter to allow Vancouver to create appropriate rules for municipal election campaign finance;
2. The funds used to campaign for elected office in Vancouver have grown 175% in the ten years Vancouver has waited for Provincial action on this issue, with the unprecedented case in the 2011 Vancouver municipal election of \$960,000 donated to one electoral organization from a single corporation and more than \$5.2 million spent by all parties;
3. All indications are that the 2014 election exceeded these markers, and the attempt at voluntary "rules" failed utterly with two major parties admitting to inaccurate pre-election day disclosures;
4. City Council has previously unanimously agreed (on March 25, 2010, and again on January 31, 2012) to a set of minimum rules for campaign finance in Vancouver elections. These rules are attached as Appendix A and include limits on campaign spending and contributions, bans on donations from corporations and unions, and provide for greater disclosure;
5. The Provincial Government established a special committee in October 2014 to look at the issue of campaign finance reform but, despite submissions from Vancouver residents and organizations calling for greater reforms and efforts by some MLAs, the terms of reference do not allow the committee to consider limits to contributions or bans on donations from corporations and unions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver urgently request that the Provincial Government expand the terms of reference for the Special Committee on Local Elections Expense Limits to allow for consideration of changes to the Vancouver Charter as outlined in Appendix A and which allow for limits on campaign spending and contributions, bans on donations from corporations and unions, and provide for greater disclosure.

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(APPENDIX A - from minutes of March 25, 2010 Planning and Environment Committee Meeting <http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20100325/documents/penv20100325min.pdf>)

1. Set limits on the annual amount of contributions that can be given by an individual to an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office.
2. Ban union and corporate donations.
3. Limit the amount of money that may be spent annually by an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office during a general local election campaign.
4. These limits on contributions and expenditures would be based upon a per-electoral/capita, per-candidate formula (with individual candidate resources allowed to be pooled for use by elector organizations) and would be no higher than provincial and federal spending limits.
5. Disallow contributions to an elector organization, campaign organizer, or an individual seeking elected office, from sources outside of Canada.
6. Require that all donations and expenses for candidates, elected officials and elector organizations be disclosed on a continuous basis at six month intervals.
8. Change the definition of "candidate" to include anyone seeking nomination within an elector organization for candidacy to a local government office.
9. Appoint the Provincial Chief Election Officer to oversee municipal elections in BC, and establish penalties and mechanisms for enforcement of offences under the amended local government elections legislation.
12. Provide local governments with the authority to use any method of elections they wish to use, and repeal the requirement for Lieutenant Governor in Council approval to adopt such a change.
13. Amend the definition of election offenses and related penalties to include individuals acting as an intermediary in third-party campaign contribution schemes.

NOTE: items 7, 10 and 11 were removed as they do not directly relate to increasing municipal authority for campaign or electoral reform and were specific to questions posed by the Local Government Elections Task Force. They are provided below for reference.

7. Implement a system of tax credits for municipal donations, similar to those for provincial and federal elections.
10. Extend municipal terms of office to four years.
11. Oppose allowing corporations the right to vote in local elections.