

Council Member's Motion

5. Plebiscite to Measure Public Support for a 2030 Winter Olympic Bid Held Concurrently with the 2022 Civic Election

Submitted by: Councillor Hardwick

WHEREAS

1. At the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services on March 31, 2021, Council received the Report Back on Council Motion "Beyond 2010: Consideration for the City of Vancouver to Participate in a Future Olympic Winter Games Bid", with amendments. As this was a report back, no public speakers were heard at the time;¹
2. A significant development occurred on December 10, 2021, when a news release was issued by the City of Vancouver entitled "Four prominent First Nations sign MOU with Vancouver, Whistler, to explore feasibility of hosting 2030 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games." It contains a link to an MOU dated October 29, 2021. The Vancouver 2030 Society website contains more information on the explorations of 'the viability of bringing back the 2030 Winter Games to Southwest British Columbia.' Vancouver electors/residents have not yet had the opportunity to express their views on this important matter that affects them;²
3. As a precedent, a vote was held on February 22, 2003, regarding Vancouver's participation in hosting the 2010 Olympics. There was a turnout of approximately 50%, with 63.89% in favour and 36.09% opposed;³
4. The decision to hold a vote regarding the 2010 Olympics was made on December 10, 2002. Council debated and approved the item Opinion of the Electors, 2010 Winter Olympic Games;⁴
5. Viewership of the Winter Olympics is falling. The recent 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics saw the lowest U.S. ratings ever, according to NPR. The Wall Street Journal reports that TV viewership of the 2022 Beijing Games dropped 42% from 2018. The CBC also received 'Dreadful TV ratings' according to the Montreal Gazette. TV viewership contributes to the financial viability of the games;⁵
6. The public shoulders significant financial costs. The 2010 Olympics showed that unforeseen circumstances and unbudgeted items do come up;⁶
7. The full records of the 2010 Olympics are still sealed and will remain sealed until 2025. It's difficult to determine the financial outcome of VANOC's activities without open access to these records;⁷
8. Given the significant financial commitment involved in hosting, Vancouver electors should have a say on whether they favour proceeding with a 2030 Olympic bid; and

9. The cost of a separate referendum in 2003 on February 22 was \$575,000. The 2017 by-election carried a cost of \$1,200,514. Incorporating a ballot question on the 2030 Olympics with the 2022 municipal ballot would cost less due to efficiencies of scale. Three questions surrounding the capital budget are already planned to be on the ballot.⁸

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct the City Clerk in capacity as Chief Election Officer to include on the October 15, 2022, municipal election ballot, pursuant to Section 184 under the *Vancouver Charter*, a question on the 2030 Olympics bid. In the event that any and all exploratory or concrete bids involving Vancouver for hosting the 2030 Olympics are dropped by the time ballots need to be finalized, this ballot question can be omitted.
- B. THAT the question wording be modelled on the 2010 Olympic vote, as follows:

"Do you support or do you oppose the City of Vancouver's participation in hosting the 2030 Olympic Winter Games and Paralympic Winter Games?

___ YES, I support the City of Vancouver's participation.
___ NO, I oppose the City of Vancouver's participation."
- C. THAT Council request the Mayor to send a letter on behalf of Council to the Vancouver 2030 Society, informing them of the City's intention to add an Olympic ballot question.
- D. THAT Council request the Mayor to send a letter on behalf of Council to the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), and copy the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC), informing them of the City's intention to add an Olympic ballot question.

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1. <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210331/cfsc20210331ag.htm>
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20210331/documents/cfsc20210331min.pdf>
2. <https://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/exploring-feasibility-of-hosting-2030-olympic-and-paralympic-winter-games.aspx>
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2030-winter-olympic-and-paralympic-games-mou.pdf>
<https://www.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/olympics-2030-vancouver-bid-1.6281069> [cbc.ca]
<https://www.vancouver2030.org/> [vancouver2030.org]
3. <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/2003-olympic-vote.aspx>
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/voters-support-vancouver-olympic-bid-1.393853> [cbc.ca]
4. <https://council.vancouver.ca/021210/ag021210.htm>
<https://council.vancouver.ca/021210/minutes.htm>
5. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/nbc-draws-lowest-olympics-ratings-ever-with-beijing-games-11645487782>

<https://montrealgazette.com/sports/hockey/nhl/hockey-inside-out/jack-todd-dreadful-tv-ratings-for-beijing-games-should-send-ioc-a-message>
<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/22/1082461546/no-medals-for-2022-beijing-olympics-the-games-drew-their-lowest-u-s-ratings-ever> [npr.org]

6. <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/calculating-the-true-costs-of-the-2010-olympics-1.368309> [bc.ctvnews.ca]
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-olympics-security-idUSTRE61269N20100205> [reuters.com]
7. <https://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2014/07/04/VANOC-Shuts-Its-Books/> [thetyee.ca]
<https://vancouver.citynews.ca/2015/02/11/five-years-after-vancouver-2010-the-price-of-the-party/>
8. <https://globalnews.ca/news/70997/timeline-the-evolution-of-the-2010-olympic-budget/>
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2018-215-release.pdf>