



**Policy #62**

**Council Correspondence Policy**

**Approved by Council on:** April 20, 2022

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**Council Correspondence Policy**

**Purpose**

This policy is meant to cover all communications/correspondence received by the Township of Southgate addressed to Council and/or Staff Members and/or any correspondence requested to be included on a Council agenda. This Policy is to ensure that the communications are dealt with in an efficient and consistent manner.

**Application**

This policy applies to all communications/correspondence received by direct mail, hand delivery, fax, courier or any electronic means.

**Procedures**

Communications shall be processed as soon as possible after they are received. Once received, the communications shall be date stamped (if not already provided for electronically), scanned into the system and provided to the Clerk's office for review.

Any communication that contains defamatory statements, allegations, inferences, disrespectful or improper matters shall not be forwarded to Council or staff and shall be given to the CAO for review and returned to the sender.

General correspondence from the public shall not be included on the Council agenda, unless:

1. It is used as supporting information to a staff report;
2. It is the topic for a scheduled delegation as per the Procedural By-law; or
3. It is included as supporting information to a Notice of Motion by a Council Member.

Communications shall be distributed as follows:

**Invoices:**

Any invoices addressed to any member of Council shall be stamped with the invoice approval stamp and are to be distributed to the appropriate member for sign off and then forwarded to the Finance Department for processing.

**General Communication:**

Any communication received by the Township through the Clerk's office or the information email account and directed to Council, shall be placed on the Consent Agenda of the next available Council Meeting under the "Correspondence" section. Should any Council member wish to move a motion regarding the communication item, they are able to do so at the meeting by pulling the item off the consent agenda and make a further recommendation for Council's consideration. Current or past communication items may be pulled from the files and placed on an upcoming agenda either through the consent agenda or as an attachment to a staff report as required.

**Inquiries or Complaints:**

Any communications in relation to an inquiry or a complaint shall be dealt with, or forwarded to, the appropriate department for first consideration and brought to the CAO and/or Mayor's attention if necessary.

**Resolutions from other Municipalities:**

Any communications from other municipalities requesting support shall be placed on the Consent Agenda of the next available Council Meeting under the "Resolutions of other Municipalities" section. Should any Council member wish to support the resolution, they are able to do so at the meeting by pulling the item off the consent agenda and moving a further recommendation for Council's consideration. Should any staff member wish to support a recommendation, they shall prepare a staff report with the relevant information and provide to Council at the next available Council meeting for Council's consideration.

**Updates from Associations or Organizations:**

Correspondence provided for Council and public updates (i.e., association update newsletters or minutes from meetings) shall be placed on the Council Consent Agenda of the next available Council Meeting under the "Correspondence" section and be received for information.

**Proclamations:**

All requests for proclamation endorsement shall be placed on the Consent Agenda of the next available Council Meeting under the "Correspondence" section. For the Proclamation to be approved, a member must pull the item off the consent agenda and move that Council approve the request. Once approved, the Mayor shall sign the proclamation and a signed copy of the proclamation shall be forwarded to the requesting organization and published on the Township website and social media outlets.

**Funding Requests:**

All requests for funding shall be forwarded to the Finance Department for consideration as per the approved Donations, Funding and Grants policy. Communications requesting funds after the deadline for applications has closed may be brought forward to Council for consideration through a staff report from the Treasurer.

**Funding Announcements:**

When the Township receives communications related to funding announcements and approval of funding agreements, staff will provide that information on the next scheduled Council meeting agenda when permitted to do so. On occasion, Township staff receives information on funding applications success that is to remain as a confidential notice of funding approval that is a condition to be observed by the Municipality until the Ministry or agency funder makes their official announcement first.

**Time Sensitive Communications**

Communications that are received and are deemed to be of a time sensitive manner shall be sent to Council Members as soon as possible via electronic means and placed on the next available Council agenda for information.

**Personal Information Collection Notice**

Individuals who submit communications and other information to Council and its Committees or Boards should be aware that it may become part of the public record and may be made available through the agenda process which includes publication on the Township's website.

All information submitted to the Township of Southgate is being collected under the authority of the Municipal Act and subject to disclosure under the Municipal Freedom of Information Act (MFIPPA). Questions about this collection should be directed to the Clerk's Department.