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NEWS LOCAL

City council examines its appointment policy

By Elaine Della-Mattia, Sault Star
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City council is embarking upon a review that may change the way it appoints members and others to boards and committees.

Council passed a resolution Monday to launch a process that will review how other communities appoint boards and committee members and determine the best solution for Sault Ste. Marie.

In the meantime, while the policy is under review, council determined it will make any new appointments to boards and committees during open council meetings and will not make any appointments or endorsements to private or share capital boards.

The appointment process was first raised at the new council's first business meeting in December when a discussion took place questioning why board and committee appointments were made behind closed doors.

The city's existing policy dates back to Nov. 1, 1982 and has not been updated.

The policy states that council will make appointments to boards and committees in caucus.

Mayor Christian Provenzano told city council Monday that he drafted the resolution, moved by Ward 6 councillors Ross Romano and Joe Krmpotich, after several conversations he had with councillors after the December discussion.

The resolution also notes that the existing policy is silent on whether city council can, or should, make appointments or endorsements to share capital corporation boards or any boards and committees that are private operations or enterprises.

The five-part resolution strikes a committee to examine the policy, reviews best practices in other municipalities and determines how best to adapt updated practices into the local policy.

Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker and Romano will serve on the committee, along with the city clerk.

The committee is also being charged to determine what authority city council has to make appointments to share capital corporations and private enterprises.

The policy will be reviewed by council during an open council meeting.

Romano said he liked the idea of reviewing the policy from the outset.

He said any privacy issues that arise can be dealt with in a closed session, but the majority of council's work should be done in the public eye.

"This ought to be done on the record, in public," he said.

Based on his first experience with appointing boards and committees, Romano said he also believes the process should be conducted at its own special council meeting "and show we give it the due care and attention it deserves."

Ward 2 Coun. Susan Myers agreed to the policy review but stressed that citizen input is also necessary since council is charged with appointing public citizens to its various boards and committees.

That process will occur during the committee meetings, which will also be held in public, council was told.

A time frame for the committee to report back to council has not been set.

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Why has Ward 5 Councillor not removed himself from the Algoma Public Health Board he appointed himself to during the audit and investigation? His presence taints the investigation because he can influence and manipulate.

Why was Rothberg not removed from the having access to the Algoma Public Health premises and offices and files when his appointment was over? He was able to help Kim Barker remove boxes and files from the building after Barker resigned?

When Rothberg was at APH he terminated 3 APH employees to orchestrate the design he wanted, and walked them out the door and prevented them from any further access. Chair Bruni did not have the wherewithall to know the proper process.

Many doubt this will be a fair and unbiased audit and investigation>

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