



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Meaghen Reid, Director, Legislative & Legal Services / Town Clerk

Date: January 18, 2021

Report No: CORS-003-21

Subject: Proclamation and Flag Raising Policy

Recommendation: THAT Council directs staff to proceed with Option 1, as outlined in the report;

THAT the proposed Proclamation and Flag Raising policy attached to Report CORS-003-21 as Appendix A be approved;

AND FURTHER THAT Corporate Policy 039 be amended accordingly in the Corporate Policy Manual.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council an update to the Proclamation and Flag Raising Policy to ensure clarity and consistency in how the Town responds to these activities.

Staff continue to monitor the effectiveness of its current Corporate Policy Manual, recommending changes through housekeeping amendments to clarify directions and consolidate provisions, where appropriate.

Staff brought forward a modified policy to Council on October 19, 2020. Council deferred the report at that time with a request to further investigate considerations with respect to proclamations for national independence days or republic days or raise flags of other nations. The revisions to this policy are based on the additional research and environmental scans from other municipalities.

Staff recommend, as included as Option 1, that the Town of Milton no longer issue proclamations for national independence days, republic days, or raise flags of other nations, which is consistent with the practices of neighbouring municipalities. This practice takes into account several considerations (e.g., staff time processing and organizing requests, international political landscape, and consistency in municipal practices).



REPORT

Background

The current Proclamation and Flag Raising Policy No. 39 was adopted in 2011. The existing policy is general in nature and does not provide specific details about the protocol for managing incoming requests, eligibility criteria for approving these requests, nor does it have a standardized application process. To avoid inconsistencies with the application of this policy, staff have reviewed and have provided updates for Council consideration.

The updated policy will provide more clarity for staff and applications and will help to ensure consistency with regard to staff's response to these requests. It also proposes a more thorough purpose, process and effective utilization of staff resources required to handle these requests.

Discussion

The purpose of a Proclamation and Flag Raising Policy is to recognize and celebrate achievements, and raise public awareness of important initiatives in Milton. Proclamations are ceremonial documents issued and signed by the Mayor, on behalf of Town of Milton Council, which officially recognize public awareness campaigns, charitable fundraising campaigns, as well as arts and cultural celebrations of organizations that reside/operate within the Town of Milton.

Staff brought forward a modified policy to Council on October 19, 2020. Council deferred the report at that time with a request to further investigate considerations with respect to proclamations for national independence days or republic days or raise flags of other nations. The revisions to this policy, as attached in "Appendix A," are based on additional research and environmental scans from other municipalities.

All flags at Town facilities are flown displayed and disposed of in a consistent and appropriate manner and are positioned in Order of Precedence in accordance with the National Flag of Canada etiquette. (This falls under a separate Town policy related to half-masting.) The Government of Canada website states: "The National Flag can also be flown with the provincial or territorial flags, or those of organizations and other nations, in which cases it would take the position of honour. Individuals can always see our flag proudly being flown on Parliament Hill."

Related policies were reviewed from a number of other municipalities, including Oakville, Burlington, Halton Hills, the Region of Halton, Toronto, Brampton and Ottawa. The proposed, updated policy is consistent with many of the practices of neighbouring municipalities.



The proposed, updated draft in “Appendix A” outlines a clear eligibility criteria and application process to ensure that a fair and equitable process is followed in serving the best interest of the requestor, the constituents and Corporation of The Town of Milton.

Staff recommend Option #1 for Council consideration. This option is consistent with practices in other municipalities in Halton Region and is the most equitable process in considering the staff resources required to review applications. A future option can include ceremonial community flag poles in the future proposed design scope of the Milton Civic Precinct/Square (former Post Office property across from Town Hall), and then revisit this policy at that time.

Staff have considered the following options below in the development of the revised policy.

Option 1 (Recommend option)

The Town of Milton no longer issues proclamations for National independence days, republic days, or raise flags of other nations.

If this option is selected: To ensure consistency, flags of other nations will not fly at facilities even if a group who has rented a facility would like to fly their flag during the duration of their rental that is permitted.

National Flag Protocols are followed for visiting dignitaries, international competitions and sporting events.

Option 2

The Town of Milton continue to issue proclamations and raise flags of other nations in recognition of National Independence days or republic days on our designated flagpole.

If desired: Language can be included in the policy/proclamation outlining that use of the community flag pole neither implies nor expresses support for the politics or policies of these nations and/or organizations, but raises the flag in recognition of those citizens or members that have made the request.

Option 3

The Town of Milton continue to issue proclamations for National Independence days or republic days and offer ceremonial reading of the proclamation and photo opportunity (based on Mayor’s availability), but will not fly flags of other nations.

If this option is selected: To ensure consistency - flags of other nations will not fly at facilities even if a group who has rented a facility would like to fly their flag during the duration of their rental that is permitted.

National Flag Protocols are followed for visiting dignitaries, international competitions and sporting events.



Financial Impact

None arising from this Report

Respectfully submitted,

Troy McHarg
Commissioner, Corporate Services

For questions, please contact: Laura Nelson, Executive Phone: Ext. 2102
 Advisor, Office of the Mayor
 and CAO

Attachments

Appendix A: Proclamations and Flag Raising Policy

CAO Approval
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

POLICY: Proclamations and Flag Raising	POLICY NO. 039
EFFECTIVE DATE: XXX, X, 2021	REVISED: January 18, 2021

Reference: Staff Report CORS-003-21

Former Policy:

Proclamations

The Mayor is hereby delegated the authority to approval all requests for proclamations received by the Town. No requests shall be turned down. A copy of each approval letter from the Mayor's Office will be circulated as information to Council.

The Town of Milton shall not subsidize any costs related to proclamation advertising. The sponsoring organization requesting a proclamation shall be responsible for all publicizing and shall bear the entire cost of same. The sponsoring organization shall ensure that the proclamation has been approved by the Mayor prior to publicizing.

Proclamation Flags

Unless a proclamation has been approved by the Mayor the Town of Milton shall not fly the flag of any person, group or organization.

Note: Flags may fly during the duration of the proclamation, however, in cases where there are duplicated proclamations from different organizations, then a 'core' flying time will be determined by the Mayor's office for each organizations' flag.

Recommended Policy:

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of a proclamation is to recognize and celebrate achievements, and to raise public awareness of important initiatives in Milton.

POLICY PURPOSE

Proclamations are ceremonial documents issued and signed by the Mayor on behalf of Town of Milton Council that officially recognize public awareness campaigns, charitable fundraising campaigns, and arts and cultural celebrations of organizations that reside/operate within the Town of Milton.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Proclamation Requests must be submitted to the Mayor's Office and shall meet all of the following criteria:

- Submitted by an organization that is a recognized charity with offices located in the Town of Milton or by a community group based within the Town;
- Will be issued only in respect of activities that support residents of the Town of Milton or related events taking place in the Town;
- Must demonstrate respect and tolerance for all Milton residents
- Must foster a sense of community
- Support public awareness campaigns or honour special achievements of individuals, institutions, or organizations.

Proclamations will not be issued for the following:

- Political parties or political organizations (*Political Organizations are defined as affiliate organizations or professional advocates to political parties. Examples can include advocacy groups, special interests groups or groups aimed at achieving clearly-defined political goals, which typically benefit the interests of their members*);
- Promotion of religious beliefs or religious events. (Cultural celebrations and heritage months are exempt as long as all other criteria is met) e.g., Hindu Heritage Month
- **National Independence Days or Republic Days** (*to be included if option one is approved- if not, it will be amended as such*)
- Shall not be used as a vehicle to attempt to influence government policy
- Promotion of business or commercial enterprise;
- If the intent is contrary to corporate policies or by-laws;
- If the intent is to defame the integrity of the Town;
- If the event or organization has no direct interest or relationship to the Town.

Additional Information (To balance the number and frequency of submissions received)

- An organization may request one proclamation per year;
- Organizations do not have exclusive rights to the day, week or month being proclaimed;
- Proclamations of a similar topic will be issued on a first come, first serve basis;
- Proclamations must be requested on an annual basis;
- Requests not covered by the evaluation criteria may be approved at the discretion of the Mayor.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Requests for proclamations, including the proposed wording of the proclamation and supporting information, must be submitted in writing to the Mayor's office at least three weeks in advance of an event;
2. The Mayor's office will review all requests in consultation with appropriate staff or departments, where necessary, and if required, make any appropriate amendments to the wording of the proclamation, which improves the structure and or intent of the requested proclamation;

3. Upon approval, proclamations will be issued by the Mayor and copied to Members of Council through regular information updates;
4. The Mayor's Office will provide one copy of the signed proclamation to the applicant;
5. The Mayor's Office will regularly circulate signed proclamation's Milton Town Council
6. Notification to the media and advertising is the responsibility of the applicant;

Flag Raising

Requests for an organizations flag to be raised are to be submitted to the Mayor's Office. Requests will be granted only if the all the following are met:

- Flag raisings are to be accompanied by an annually approved proclamation from the Town of Milton's Mayor's office and requested in writing at the same time as the proclamation
- **Flags of other Countries or Nations will not be flown at Town Facilities**, including rental of a facility by a group (*to be included if option 1 or 3 is selected, if option 2 is selected, it will be removed*)
- **Official flag raisings must take place at Town Hall, not at Town facilities.**
***If a group who has rented a facility would like to fly their flag during the duration of their rental that is permitted on a first-come first-serve basis** (*This will be removed if Council approves Option 1 or 3*)
- For flag raisings with more then 25+ people attending, the group will have to speak to our staff events teams for approval.
- Flag raisings are conducted Monday-Friday during business hours
- Flag raisings cannot be booked more than 365 days in advance
- Requests will be processed and confirmed on a first come first served basis.
- Flags will be raised and displayed for a maximum of one month when the flag pole is available and no conflicting requests have been received, at the discretion of the mayor's office.
- Individuals, groups or associations required to provide the flag to be raised.
- The Mayor's Office will review all requests in accordance with Town policies and procedure in consultation with the appropriate staff, when required.
- The Mayor's Office will notify the Town of Milton Operation's staff of the flags to be raised and displayed as appropriate.
- Operations staff will be responsible for the raising and displaying of flags, as required.