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REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2020

SUBJECT Diversity and Inclusion Statement – Response to Notice of Motion

ISSUE SUMMARY

At the July 8, 2020 meeting the CRD Board directed consideration of an inclusion and diversity statement at the beginning of meetings. A proposed statement is included for consideration of the Board, with the intent that if approved it be added to CRD Board and standing committee meeting agendas going forward.

BACKGROUND

At the July 8, 2020 meeting the CRD Board endorsed the following notice of motion:
That the Board ask the Governance and Finance committee to consider the matter of the Board developing an inclusion and diversity statement at the beginning of the meetings after the First Nations Territorial Acknowledgement and report back to the Board.

In June 2019, the CRD Board amended the CRD Board Procedures Bylaw to include a territorial acknowledgement in the order of proceedings which requires all Boards, committees and commissions to follow the procedures bylaw to include an acknowledgement at meetings. This initiative arose out of the recommendations of the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations; the Task Force report also suggested work in the areas of “eliminating barriers and systemic discrimination to ensure a corporate environment that promotes equity and diversity in the workplace”. The Chief Administrative Officer is delivering on this recommendation through the Organizational Development Plan and internal initiatives and working groups.

Recent global events, including the Black Lives Matter movement, have turned significant attention to equality and diversity and the need for more awareness and sensitivity to how differences are treated and perceived culturally, socially, organizationally and individually. A statement acknowledging this and reminding the Board to be conscious of it in their meetings and deliberations is timely.

Other local governments include equity, diversity and inclusion statements for their organization or at their public meetings; a sample of those statements is included in Appendix A.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Governance and Finance Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That the following diversity and inclusivity statement be included on the agenda cover for each of the Capital Region Housing Corporation, Capital Regional Hospital District and Capital Regional District Boards and each of the standing committees of those Boards:

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and people are treated with dignity, regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin,

religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or economic status.

We are grateful for the efforts underway in our community while recognizing our ongoing responsibility to create a safe space for everyone to be heard. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

Alternative 2

The Governance and Finance Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That staff consult with internal working groups, organizational consultants and community leaders on the proposed statement and report back to committee.

Alternative 3

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information given the scope clarification provided by the Governance and Finance Committee.

IMPLICATIONS

The CRD Board would be joining many local governments in adopting a statement to be included in public meeting agenda documentation. The proposed statement includes a list of groups that is identical to the list included in the City of Victoria statement as it seemed to be the most inclusive. While we could draft a unique statement in consultation with community leaders, if the committee chooses to endorse this approach, staff would benefit from direction on who to select for consultation as there is potentially a broad group that would feel named or impacted by the statement. In addition, we would want to ensure that we are not duplicating the work of our member municipalities in this area, as we all live one region and serve the same constituents. If the Board chooses to endorse the statement as drafted, the Board could choose to update the statement at any time if it feels the need to refresh the message.

CONCLUSION

The CRD Board has requested consideration of the development of an inclusion and diversity statement at the beginning of CRD Board and committee meetings. A proposed statement is included for the review of the Board to adopt or to request community involvement in the refinement of the statement.

RECOMMENDATION

The Governance and Finance Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That the following diversity and inclusivity statement be included on the agenda cover for each of the Capital Region Housing Corporation, Capital Regional Hospital District and Capital Regional District Boards and each of the standing committees of those Boards:

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and people are treated with dignity, regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or economic status.

We are grateful for the efforts underway in our community while recognizing our ongoing responsibility to create a safe space for everyone to be heard. We pledge to make our

meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

Submitted by:	Emilie Gorman, MPA, Manager, Legislative Services & Deputy Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Sample Statements from other Local Governments