



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** **Members of the Committee of the Whole**

**From:** **Patricia Lester, City Solicitor and Director of Legal Services**

**Meeting Date:** **June 1, 2015**

**Subject:** **Report OCS15-004  
Amendment To Chapter 16 Procedure – Lord’s Prayer**

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## **Purpose**

A report to recommend a change to Chapter 16 of the City of Peterborough Municipal Code, the Procedure By-law.

## **Recommendation**

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report OCS15-004 dated June 1, 2015 of the City Solicitor and Director of Legal Services as follows:

That Chapter 16 of the City of Peterborough Municipal Code be amended to remove the saying of the Lord’s Prayer.

## **Budget and Financial Implications**

There is no budget or financial implications to this report.

## Background

The **Municipal Act, 2001**, Section 238(2) requires that every municipality and local board shall pass a Procedure by-law for governing the calling, place and proceedings for meetings.

Section 16.8.7 of Chapter 16 reads as follows:

“16.8.7 Prayer - National Anthem – commencement of meeting

The Council meeting shall commence with The Lord’s Prayer led by the Chair, followed by 30 seconds of silent reflection. Following silent reflection, the National Anthem will be sung.”

In light of the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision in Saguenay and the finding by the Supreme Court that the recitation of the prayer was in breach of the state’s duty of neutrality, Staff recommend that section 16.8.7 be revised to read as follows:

“16.8.7 Opening of Meeting and National Anthem – commencement of meeting

The Council meeting shall commence with the following wording led by the Chair:

The Council for the City of Peterborough recognizes the principles contained in our Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that enshrine rights and freedoms for all.

We also acknowledge that our Constitution provides that Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.

We will now take 30 seconds to silently reflect on these principles.

Following silent reflection, the National Anthem will be sung.”

Submitted by,

Patricia Lester  
City Solicitor/ Director, Legal Services

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