

## **Re: Item 14.1 - Member Motion - Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli - Permanently Eliminating the Green/Blue Bin Replacement Fee**

Councillor Perrelli has gone to great lengths to let residents know that he intended to bring this motion before council to remove the green/blue bin exchange fee so that residents can “permanently” exchange their broken bins free of charge. In addition to his various media posts on the matter, he has even sent email blasts to residents who never provided consent for their email address to be used for such purposes {*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act denotes that personal information can only be used if a) the individual consents to its use; b) it is used only for the reason for which it was collected; and c) for disclosure to a government institution*}.

A November 26, 2019 Deloitte report noted that Richmond Hill had been providing a lifetime warranty for Richmond Hill labelled blue/green bins which most residents probably never realized was available to them? Until the City made an announcement on its website advising of the introduction of a new exchange fee coming into effect on August 24, 2020 denoting a cost of \$8.45 (HST included), residents would not have readily realized that they could have previously exchanged their damaged or broken bins free of charge.

So why would Councillor Perrelli make such a big deal about an item that is costing residents less than \$10 to replace which, in general, only needs to be replaced once every 5 years? And more importantly why did he vote against removing this fee when Councillor West first introduced a motion to do so at a Budget of the Whole meeting on November 10, 2020?

When Councillor Perrelli voted against the motion to remove the fee late last year he indicated that his personal experience was that the waste contractors were “generally” respectful when handling the bins and that it was the residents who tended to use the bins for other purposes (i.e. carting stone and rocks) which added to the wear and tear of the bins. He further suggested that retaining the exchange fee would help keep the costs down and made a suggestion that residents are likely to be less than respectful for the care of the bins when there is no fee associated with replacement. He was of the opinion that free replacement could result in the broken bin replacement costs to double or triple.

Now, all of a sudden, Councillor Perrelli is saying that:

- *“the vast majority of green/blue bins are damaged through aggressive collection methods or circumstances which are beyond the control of residents”* and that
- *“residents should not be charged a fee on a circumstance, over which they have no control”*.

The question is why has Councillor Perrelli made such an about face? The answer may be in the timing of the “events”. In particular, it would seem that Councillor Perrelli suggested at an April 14<sup>th</sup> 2021 meeting that he had been

planning what turned out to be his “Environment Day Event”, for more than six months. This would mean that he was planning this event prior to voting against Councillor West’s motion to remove the bin exchange fee. Had Councillor West’s motion succeeded it would have seriously impacted Councillor Perrelli’s plans where sponsors were already secured to cover the costs of his main activity for his planned event... which was to offer free exchange for damaged or broken green/blue bins to Richmond Hill residents.

The “Environment Day Event” raises many more questions as well as it didn’t really provide residents with tips or awareness information on environmental concerns. It would appear that this event was predominantly about exchanging broken and damaged bins with some compost and flower seeds thrown in. Residents have already raised questions on why they had to register and provide personal information to an unsecured website in order to participate in the event.

No doubt the costs associated with Councillor Perrelli’s event should be questioned as well. When Councillor West originally raised this motion the former Director of Public Works Operations had stated that the bin exchange fee program costs the city approximately \$35K to \$40K a year. However, the costs associated with Councillor Perrelli’s bin exchange event will likely be substantially more once all costs are tallied (i.e. mailings, city facilities and resources, etc.). In addition, when looking at the event photos on Councillor Perrelli’s Facebook page, it appears that many of the bins he exchanged were not Richmond Hill labelled bins. Consequently, he has now placed more Richmond Hill labelled bins into the system that could be replaced free of charge (should this motion pass) that were never accounted for.

Something else that seems highly questionable is that the event sponsors are not being recognized for their support and Councillor Perrelli has noted that he will not be divulging their information. Why? Is it because this event appears to amount to nothing more than election campaigning? Was this whole unnecessary event a ploy to garner personal information to build an election distribution list (*We’ve already noted that Councillor Perrelli will use personal information to distribute information where consent was never provided for such purposes*)?

Did Councillor Perrelli deliberately vote against removing this fee late last year in order to hold his so-called Environment Day Event where he (figuratively speaking) rides in on his white horse to take credit for rescuing residents from this (albeit minor) expense? Whether true or not and regardless of whether or not this motion passes on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, it would certainly appear that Councillor Perrelli has got what he wanted from this sequence of events. It also appears to have come at the expense of the city and its residents.

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