

Original Message

From: Andrew Lawton
Sent: Sunday, May 24, 2015 10:05 PM
To: Saunders, Cathy
Subject: National Anthem in Council Meetings

Andrew Lawton
London, Ontario

May 24, 2015

Cathy Saunders
City Clerk, City of London
300 Dufferin Ave.
London, Ontario N6A 4L9

ATTN: Chair and Members of the Corporate Services Committee of City Council, City of London

RE: The National Anthem in city council meetings

Dear Ms. Saunders,

I am writing to request an item be brought to the attention of the corporate services committee--or another relevant body--at the earliest available opportunity. I request consideration by committee members that Canada's national anthem, O Canada, be recited or sung to open meetings of London's city council.

Recently, the matter was discussed on the council of the Town of Richmond Hill, who voted against having the national anthem performed, citing issues that it may not be inclusive.

I would argue that there are few things more inclusive that could be embraced by London's lawmakers than the country's official anthem.

While the national anthem is not included in the proceedings of a great number of cities in Ontario (although it is in Toronto, and a smattering of others), I see no reason why London should refrain from including it just because others haven't. We show leadership in so many others ways--and this could be yet another.

Councillors come together to serve Londoners, but also to contribute to Canada as a whole--especially apparent given how many new Canadians choose to make London their home. I believe that having the national anthem--whether sung by councillors, played for councillors, or performed by a guest vocalist/musician--would not only remind councillors and Londoners of the national sense of pride that we all hold for our country, but also serve, in some manner, to dedicate the decisions of council to the good of the community, and more broadly the good of the country as a whole.

I welcome feedback on this request from you or any councillors, and hope to hear this wonderful song from the chambers of council in due course.

Kindest regards,

Andrew Lawton