
Subject: Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy

Report to: Corporate Services Committee

Report date: Wednesday, June 17, 2020

Recommendations

1. That Policy C-A-010 Flags – Lowering of at Niagara Region Headquarters (Appendix 1 of Report of CLK 6-2020) **BE REPEALED**; and
2. That the Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy (Appendix 2 of Report of CLK 6-2020) **BE APPROVED**.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of a new Flag Raising and 'NIAGARA' Sign Lighting Policy.
- The Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy was developed in response to the inclusion of the 17 flag poles and Niagara sign as part of the International Plaza design.
- Some of the International Plaza flagpoles have been designated to accommodate community flags, which is not contemplated in the current flag policy (C-A-010).
- The Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy provides consistent protocols for the displaying and half-masting of flags, as well as the framework to govern requests for community flag raisings and the lighting of the Niagara sign.
- Some of the provisions in the existing policy C-A-010 Flags – Lowering of at Niagara Region Headquarters have been incorporated into the Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy.

Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications associated with the Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy.

Analysis

The Region requires a policy to ensure that flags are displayed in a consistent and appropriate manner across all Regional facilities and properties. With the International Plaza set to accommodate community requests for both flag raisings and lighting of the Niagara sign, the Region also requires a policy that will ensure these requests are appropriately approved and administered. The current C-A-010 Flags – Lowering of at Niagara Region Headquarters policy has not been revised since May 2011 and does not provide provisions for the display and maintenance of flags, or include information on community flag and lighting requests.

To create the policy, a scan of comparable policies from various municipalities and universities across Ontario was completed. The scan provided an overview of best practices to include in the policy. In developing this policy, feedback from multiple internal stakeholders was also taken into consideration. The final draft has been reviewed by Legal, Facilities Management, Planning and Development Services, Clerks, Corporate Services, Regional Chair's Office, as well as the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

This comprehensive review resulted in a policy that includes high-level details on how flags are to be displayed across Regional facilities and properties and establishes a guideline to recognize occasions and events where a flag should be half-mast. The policy also includes criteria for community flag and lighting requests to ensure that requests are processed fairly and in a timely manner.

Alternatives Reviewed

Council could choose to continue with the use of C-A-010 Flags – Lowering of at Niagara Region Headquarters. This is not recommended given that this policy does not provide comprehensive direction on the displaying and half-masting of flags and does not address community flag and lighting requests.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report ties to the Council Strategic Priority of Healthy and Vibrant Communities. The policy aims to highlight inclusivity and diversity within the Region by providing community organizations with an opportunity to request flag raisings and lighting of the Niagara sign that enhance awareness of special occasions and activities.

Other Pertinent Reports

Prepared and recommended by:

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Administration

Submitted by:

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This report was prepared in consultation with Pam Abeysekara, Corporate Policy Advisor, and reviewed by Matthew Trennum, Deputy Regional Clerk.

Appendices

Appendix 1 C-A-010 Flags – Lowering of at Niagara Region Headquarters

Appendix 2 Draft Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy

SECTION	NAME OF POLICY
ADMINISTRATIVE	FLAGS – LOWERING OF AT NIAGARA REGION HEADQUARTERS

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DEVELOPED BY: Integrated Community Planning – Clerk's Department

APPROVED BY: CMT

APPROVAL DATE: April 1, 1986

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 18, 2008; Revised May 2011

POLICY STATEMENT

Flags at Niagara Region Headquarters shall be lowered to half mast at the time of a death which should be accorded notice by the Niagara Region.

POLICY PURPOSE

This policy was created to accord appropriate respect upon notification of death of individuals cited below by the lowering of the flags at Niagara Region Headquarters.

PROCEDURE

It shall be the responsibility of the appropriate department to notify the Office of the Clerk of any death which should be accorded notice by the lowering of the flags. The Office of the Clerk shall be responsible for notifying Building Maintenance to lower the flags.

Flags shall be flown at half-mast from receipt of the notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral of:

- the reigning monarch
- a member of the reigning monarch's family
- the Governor General or Lieutenant Governor
- the Prime Minister of Canada
- the Premier of Ontario
- a member of Federal Parliament in the Niagara region
- a member of Provincial Parliament in the Niagara region
- a serving member of Regional Council
- an employee of the Niagara Region

Flags shall be flown at half mast on the day of the funeral of:

- a former Regional Councillor
- a former employee of the Niagara Region

At the discretion of the Regional Chair, the above practice may be extended to include others whose death should be accorded notice.

<i>Policy Category</i>	<i>Name of Policy</i>
Administrative	Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy

Policy Owner	Office of the Regional Clerk
Approval Body	Council
Approval Date	
Effective Date	July 1, 2020
Review by Date	

1. Policy

Niagara Region recognizes that flags are important symbols of honour and pride and must be treated in a respectful and consistent manner.

The Region supports lowering flags to half-mast as a symbol of mourning or commemoration.

To celebrate together the strength of Niagara Region's diversity and inclusivity, the Region offers the opportunity for the raising of Nation Flags and Community Flags on the Region's designated Community Flag poles, and lighting of the Niagara sign, to enhance awareness of special occasions and activities.

This policy establishes a consistent protocol for the flying of flags and half-masting at Regional properties and facilities, as well as the framework to govern requests for community flag raisings and the lighting of the Niagara sign.

1.1 Displaying Flags

- The Region will follow the Order of Precedence and National Flag of Canada etiquette established by Canadian Heritage when flying flags
- Flags must be in good condition
- The Regional flag takes precedence over all charitable and non-profit organization and community flags unless otherwise established by the Canadian Heritage.
- The following flags will be permanently flown:
 - The National Flag of Canada, Province of Ontario flag, the Niagara Region flag, and the 12 flags of Niagara's local area municipalities.

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1.2 Half-Masting

- Flags at Niagara Region Headquarters shall be lowered to half-mast as a symbolic expression of collective mourning
- Half-masting will occur from time of notification of death until the end of the day of the funeral, or as determined by the Clerk, for:
 - The Sovereign or their spouse or the Heir to the Throne or the Heir of the Heir to the Throne
 - The Governor General of Canada or a former Governor General
 - The Prime Minister of Canada or a former Prime Minister
 - The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
 - The Premier of Ontario
 - A local Member of Parliament or local Member of Provincial Parliament
 - A member of Niagara Regional Council or a former member of Niagara Regional Council
 - A current Niagara Region employee
- Half-masting will occur on the following special days:
 - April 28, Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace
 - June 23, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism
 - Second Sunday in September, Firefighters' National Memorial Day
 - Last Sunday in September, Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day
 - November 11, Remembrance Day
 - December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
- If flags are already lowered to half-mast for one reason, like a special day, then flags may be lowered on the next business day
- Half-masting for special circumstances not specifically identified in this section may occur at the discretion of the Office of the Regional Clerk in consultation with the CAO and the Office of the Regional Chair

1.3 Nation and Community Flag Raising

- There will be two designated flag poles to accommodate community flag requests
- Requests for displaying flags and flag raisings may be approved for:
 - Non-profit or charitable organizations
 - Recognition of dignitary visits and delegation visits
 - Recognition of a Nation
- The Region will not approve flag raising requests for:
 - Nations that are not recognized by the Government of Canada for flag raisings

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- Organizations or groups that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties or political organizations
- Organizations or groups that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind
- Religious organizations or religious events
- Nations and organizations or groups that have already flown a flag on the designated Community Flag Poles within the same calendar year
- Commercial entities
- Corporate events
- Organizations or groups whose mandates, programs or activities are contrary to Regional policies or by-laws
- It is the responsibility of the requesting organization or group to submit an application for a community flag raising
- Requests and approvals for the use of the community flag poles will be granted on a first come, first served basis
- Requester must provide a flag in good condition if their flag raising request is approved, along with any other information pertaining to their flag raising program, in advance of the flag raising
- The Office of the Regional Clerk, in consultation with the Office of the Regional Chair, may apply discretion to approve or deny a request for a flag raising and reserves the right to cancel a flag raising as necessary

1.4 Maintenance and Disposal of Flags

- When a flag becomes worn, noticeably faded or otherwise unfit for display, it must be disposed of in a dignified manner
- Maintenance and disposal of flags at the Region will be done in accordance with the National Flag of Canada etiquette

1.5 Lighting Requests for the Niagara Sign

- Requests for the lighting of the Niagara sign may be approved for:
 - Non-profit or charitable organizations or groups
- The Region will not approve lighting requests for:
 - Organizations or groups that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties
 - Organizations or groups that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind
 - Religious organizations or religious events
 - Commercial entities
 - Corporate events

<i>Policy Category</i>	<i>Name of Policy</i>
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- Organizations or groups whose mandates, programs or activities are contrary to Regional policies or by-laws
- Other than where specifically outlined in this criteria, lighting for any specific organization, group, cause, event or commemoration will only take place once per calendar year
- It is the responsibility of the requesting organization to submit an application for the lighting of the Niagara sign
- Requests and approvals for the lighting of the sign will be granted on a first come, first served basis
- Requester must provide information pertaining to their request in advance of the lighting
- The Office of the Regional Clerk, in consultation with the Office of the Regional Chair, may apply discretion to approve or deny a lighting request and reserves the right to cancel a lighting request as necessary

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the following:

- All flags at Regional properties are displayed in a consistent and appropriate manner
- Nation and community flag and lighting requests are properly administered

3. Scope

This policy applies to the following:

- The display, maintenance, and disposal of flags flown at Regional properties
- Nation and community flag and lighting requests

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1. Office of the Regional Clerk

Interprets and administers this Policy.

Processes and approves flag and lighting requests in consultation with the Office of the Regional Chair.

<i>Policy Category</i>	<i>Name of Policy</i>
<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy</i>

Provides advice to the Office of the Regional Chair on flag raising protocols, half-masting protocols, nation and community flag raising and lighting protocols, or other flag and lighting requests not identified in this Policy.

Notifies Facilities Management to administer approved flag and lighting requests, as well as the half-masting of flags upon the notification of a death.

Notifies Strategic Communications and Public Affairs when a flag is half-mast, when a nation or community flag is raised, or when a lighting request is administered for internal communication purposes.

3.1.2. Facilities Management

Facilities Management is responsible for half-masting flags, administering nation or community flag requests, and lighting requests that have been approved.

Responsible for the maintenance, replacement and disposal of flags.

Consult with the Office of the Regional Clerk when planning to add or remove flags or flagpoles at Regional facilities.

3.1.3. Strategic Communications and Public Affairs

Provide internal and external (as required) communication when a flag is half-masted, when a nation or community flag is raised, and when a lighting request is administered.

3.1.4. Departments

It is the responsibility of the appropriate department to notify the Office of the Regional Clerk of any death, which should be accorded notice by half-masting flags.

4. References and Related Documents.

4.1. Legislation, By-Laws and/or Directives

<i>Policy Category</i>	<i>Name of Policy</i>
Administrative	Flag Raising and Niagara Sign Lighting Policy

National Flag of Canada etiquette: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/flag-canada-etiquette.html>

4.2. Procedures

5. Related Policies

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6. Document Control

The electronic version of this document is recognized as the only valid version.

Approval History

Approver(s)	Approved Date	Effective Date

Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Summary of Change(s)	Changed by