



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of September 20, 2018

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** September 13, 2018
From: Susanne Thompson, Director of Finance
Subject: 2019 Fairfield United Church Permissive Exemption Application

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive this report for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is in response to Council's direction to bring forward information regarding square footage and weekly hours dedicated towards bible study, congressional support and weekly worship at Fairfield United Church as the church appears to be vacant.

During the September 6th Committee of the Whole Meeting, Council was presented with permissive exemption applications and staff recommendations. The report recommended that the Fairfield United Church, located at 1303 Fairfield Road be granted a full exemption based on their application submitted to the City. According to the application, the property supports the activities of the Fairfield United Church that include weekly worship, bible studies and congregational support groups. These activities benefit the community by providing a safe place to support the Fairfield Gonzales community and their spiritual needs and requirements, and complies with the City's Permissive Exemption Policy.

Recent correspondence from Fairfield United Church estimates that approximately 6 hours a week is dedicated to bible studies, 4 hours a week to congressional support and 8 hours for weekly worship. It is estimated that 40% of the building is used for these activities and that there are no new leases. Information regarding exact square footage of the church and amounts allocated to the activities were not provided. A letter from Fairfield United Church, which is included as Appendix A, indicates that through the generosity of the developer the church has been able to maintain their presence at 1303 Fairfield Road. Office space and staff administration remain and the congregation continues to use the space for some spiritual practice and church/council committee meetings.

The City has received a rezoning application for the property and a staff report is scheduled to come to Committee of the Whole this fall. Sunday morning services are being held in the Garry Oak Room at the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association instead of in the church according to a sign posted on the church doors.

Given the recent correspondence from the United Church and the pending rezoning application Council may wish to consider one of the following options:

Option 1

Grant Fairfield United Church an exemption that correlates to 40% of the space being used for bible studies, congressional support groups and other administrative activities. Approving this application would exempt the organization for \$6,008 municipal taxes and \$8,714 in total taxes.

Option 2

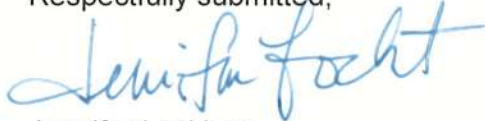
Grant Fairfield United Church an exemption for 100%. Approving this application would exempt the organization for \$15,021 municipal taxes and \$21,785 in total taxes.

Option 3

Do not grant a permissive tax exemption to the Fairfield United Church.

Providing permissive exemptions is entirely at Council's discretion. The Permissive Exemption Policy is simply the guiding document and would allow a 100% exemption.

Respectfully submitted,



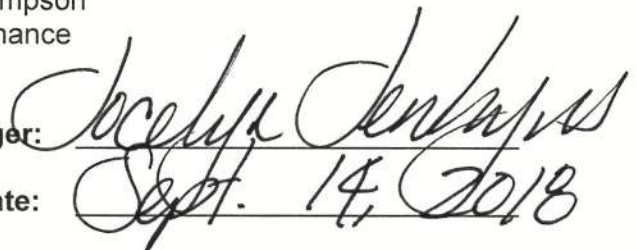
Jennifer Lockhart
Manager of Revenue



Susanne Thompson
Director of Finance

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:


Sept. 14, 2018

List of Attachments

Appendix A: Church Letter to the City dated September 12, 2018

Appendix B: Original Permissive Exemption Application