



## **Council Member Motion**

### **Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 04, 2021**

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**Date:** January 30, 2021

**From:** Councillor Thornton-Joe

**Subject: Celebrating the Lunar New Year**

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#### **Background**

This year the Lunar New Year is on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Year of the Rat has been a difficult one and there is hope that the Year of the Ox will be a better one for all of us.

Lunar New Year celebrations are about being with family and friends, honouring our elders and ancestors, eating our favourite foods and wearing red to bring in good luck and good health.

As Victoria has the oldest Chinatown in Canada, citizens throughout the Region regularly take part in the celebrations by coming down to Chinatown to see the annual Lion Dance. This is the Chinese community's opportunity to say farewell to the old year and to welcome in the new year.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, celebrations such as these cannot take place. Families and friends will not be able to gather. In addition, our tradition of visiting our elders to show respect will be difficult.

However, a couple of uplifting initiatives have been brought to my attention. One is the story of a family in New Westminster who encouraged their neighbours to put up Lunar New Year decorations on their doorways and windows. Another is that of the Kitchener, Ontario Mayor who encouraged his constituents to keep their Christmas lights on until the end of January in hopes that the lights would help spread some cheer. It would be incredible if the neighbours in Victoria, and perhaps the entire Region could come together to help celebrate the Lunar New Year by decorating their doorways and windows with New Year or red decorations, and to wear red on February 12<sup>th</sup> to help bring in the new year.

We all hope that the Year of the Ox will be a healthier, more prosperous and happier one for all. Together we can celebrate together while being apart.

#### **Recommendation**

That Mayor and Council encourage citizens in the City of Victoria and throughout the Region, to help celebrate the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Ox by decorating their doorways and windows with Lunar New Year decorations and red decorations from now until the end of February and that on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 that we wear red to bring good luck and good health to all our communities.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Charlayne Thornton-Joe*

Councillor C Thornton-Joe