



French Language Services Advisory Committee

Minutes

Meeting #: 8
Date: Thursday, September 11, 2025
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Electronic Participation

Present: Chair Neiges Sénéchal, Vice-chair Mireille Brownhill, Fatouma Ali-Ismaïl, Josiane Barebereho, Diane Desaulniers, Yalowan Dossa, Katherine Dupuis, Danièle Filion, Musset Pierre-Jerome

Absent: Lina Nada Maach

Present non-voting Member: Councillor Stéphanie Plante

1. Notices and meeting information for meeting participants and the public
Members of Committee and Council, City staff, media and the general public may join the meeting with this link:
[Zoom no. 871 4896 5626](#)
Notices and meeting information are attached to the agenda and minutes, including: availability of simultaneous interpretation and accessibility accommodations; personal information disclaimer for correspondents and public speakers; notices regarding minutes; and remote participation details.
Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.
The deadline to register to speak by phone or email, or submit written comments or visual presentations is 4 pm on the day of the meeting.
2. Declarations of Interest
No Declarations of Interest were filed.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 FLSAC Minutes 7 – 8 May 2025

Carried

4. Finance and Corporate Services Department

4.1 Presentation - Human Resources Services on supporting the recruitment and hiring of bilingual City staff

Jessica Nihmey, Manager, Learning and Development, Human Resources Services, provided a presentation with an overview of the current recruitment and hiring efforts of bilingual City staff. Michelle Fleury, Program Manager, Talent Development, was also available to answer questions from the Committee.

The Advisory Committee discussed and asked questions regarding the following topics:

- Staff have indicated that for job postings where bilingualism is a job requirement, there is no financial incentive attached to job postings for bilingual candidates as language requirements are considered a job requirement.
- Some front-facing positions in the City (such as recreation services) are not designated bilingual and can create barriers to accessing these services.
- Language qualification testing takes place after a successful interview and results are considered valid until a candidate applies to a position with a higher language skill requirement. There are concerns about losing language aptitude over time, so it may be beneficial to ensure employees continue to maintain their language skills.
- 16.7% of all job postings are designated bilingual. For management positions, it is 100% designated bilingual, but exceptions may be made by Council.
- If a candidate fails their language aptitude test, they may be rejected for the position, may be asked to retake the test, or may receive an exception from management on the condition that they pursue language training.
- There are language training courses available in both English and in French, so potential candidates that speak primarily French can also receive language training to become more fluent in English.

- The public's understanding of bilingualism differs from reality, so it may be helpful to better define the competency level requirements in job postings.
- Employee training is prioritized when giving budgetary allocations as it is an essential service in the organization. The City has a contract with *Interlangués* to provide language training and language aptitude testing. The City is always evaluating new options for language training and aptitude testing.
- Recommendations:
 - Start recruiting at the high school level for positions geared to students.
 - Collect more specific data on the primary official languages spoken by staff throughout the organization, regardless of whether a job is indicated as bilingual.
 - Use more inclusive language in written materials instead of using the masculine as a "neutral" gender (applies across the organization).
 - Widen the criteria used for designating positions as bilingual (ex.: communications staff should be fluent in both official languages).
 - Ensure that potential candidates are aware that formal language training is available should they not meet the language requirements for a given job posting.
 - Conduct a language survey of all employees across the organization, to receive insight on what unilingual employees have learned in their positions.
 - Create partnerships with community organizations and cultural organizations.
 - Increase visibility of job opportunities using multi-lingual employment campaigns that are targeted to diverse communities, using traditional media, social media, open door events, and virtual information sessions.
 - Due to cultural differences, ensure that hiring panels have enough diversity so that potential candidates are comfortable in the interview process.
 - Create a "culture of bilingualism" to help employees feel comfortable using their weaker second language and receive opportunities to practice their language skills.

- Provide the evaluation form to candidates taking language aptitude testing so that they know what will be expected of them.

The Advisory Committee received the presentation for information. The Committee then formed a Working Group as outlined in Motion No. FLSAC 2025-08-01.

ACTION:

- Staff in Human Resources Services will provide clarity on what constitutes a “front-facing” staff position, and to confirm whether staff confirm a candidate’s primary language before giving them their language aptitude testing.

Recommendation

That the French Language Services Advisory Committee receive the presentation for information and provide feedback as appropriate.

Received.

Motion No. FLSAC 2025-08-01

Moved by Mireille Brownhill

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a working group comprised of Members of the French Language Services Advisory Committee be formed to prepare a recommendation report regarding the following objective in the Work Plan:

- **Goal 1, Activity 2: “Advise Human Resources Services regarding strategies to recruit bilingual staff and for second language training;”**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the working group be comprised of the following members:

- **Member Diane Desaulniers**
- **Member Katherine Dupuis**
- **Member Fatouma Ali-Ismail**
- **Member Yalowan Dossa**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the recommendation report from the working group be listed on the agenda for the February 12, 2026,

meeting of the FLSAC for consideration by the Committee as a whole, in accordance with the timeline outlined in the Council report titled “*French Language Services Advisory Committee 2024-2026 Work Plan*”.

Carried

5. Committee Items

5.1 Overview and FLSAC Recommendations - Community and Social Services Department

Member Filion provided a summary of the working group’s recommendations to the Community and Social Services Department in response to Goal 1, Activities 2 and 3 of the FLSAC 2023-2026 Work Plan.

Vice-Chair Brownhill noted that due to a shortage of francophone staff, the City has difficulty providing more access for Francophone-centered childcare.

Member Pierre-Jerome suggested including traditional media, such as radio and television, in the proposed marketing strategies.

The Advisory Committee approved the working group’s report as presented.

Recommendation

That the Chair provide an overview of the report and that the French Language Services Advisory Committee approve the report.

Carried

6. In Camera Items

There were no *in camera* items.

7. Notices of Motions (For Consideration at Subsequent Meeting)

There were no Notices of Motion.

8. Inquiries

There were no Inquiries.

9. Other Business

9.1 Good News Franco

Nathalie Lemire, coordinator, French Language Services, highlighted that members were invited to the raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag taking place on Thursday, September 25 at City Hall, and noted the events occurring in the community for this celebration.

Member Dupuis also highlighted events occurring at Francophone schools and in the West end of the City.

Member Pierre-Jerome noted that the Société franco-ontarienne du patrimoine et de l'histoire d'Orléans (SFOPHO) is publishing a book on Orléans' history and that an invitation on the matter will be shared with the Committee. He also highlighted the recent news of the Orléans sign being corrected within 48 hours.

10. Adjournment

Next Meeting

13 November 2025.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Original signed by M. Blais,
Committee Coordinator

Original signed by the Presiding
Officer