

2020 City Council and Committee Meeting Schedule

ISSUE

City Council is required to annually hold an organizational meeting in September, with the exception of an election year, and at that organizational meeting, Council shall establish, in part, the dates, times and places for regularly scheduled meetings of Council and Council Committees for the following year. 2020 is an election year. What is the best meeting schedule for 2020 in order to accommodate the meeting requirements in an election year and to address the compressed timelines?

BACKGROUND

2.1 History

Bylaw No. 9170, *The Procedures and Committees Bylaw, 2014*, provides that no Council or Council Committee meetings be held between nomination day under *The Local Government Election Act* and election day for a general election. Recent amendments to *The Local Government Election Act* have moved municipal elections from the fourth Wednesday of October to the second Wednesday of November. In 2020, the date of the general election has been set for Monday, November 9th, as the second Wednesday falls on Remembrance Day. Nomination day is the fifth Wednesday before Election Day (October 7, 2020).

Bylaw No. 9170 also provides for the first Council meeting following a general election to be held on the Monday immediately following the general election. At the first Council meeting:

- (a) The returning officer shall provide Council with a copy of the declaration of results with respect to the election;
- (b) every Council member shall take the oath of office; and
- (c) Council shall appoint a Deputy Mayor and members of the Standing Policy Committees for the remainder of the current year.

In addition, an organizational meeting shall be held each year and in an election year shall be part of the Regular Business meeting in November. At the organizational meeting, Council shall establish for the following year:

- (a) the term and rotation schedules for the positions of Deputy Mayor and Acting Mayor;
- (b) dates, times and places for regularly scheduled meetings of Council and Council Committees; and
- (c) Standing Policy Committee appointments.

2.2 Current Status

A Council and Council Committee meeting calendar is generated annually for approval by City Council. In 2019, the schedule provided for one scheduled Council Regular Business and Public Hearing meeting in every month, a scheduled GPC meeting in July (if required), no scheduled SPC meetings in July, scheduled Special/Joint GPC meetings held quarterly and for the months of March and June on the fourth Wednesday.

2.3 Current Approach to Scheduling in an Election Year

The approach during the last general election in 2016, is included as Appendix 5. The general election was held on Wednesday, October 26, 2016. The inauguration, or first meeting was held the following Monday at 6:00 p.m., followed by four scheduled days for Orientation. The Organizational meeting of City Council was held the fourth Monday of November on November 28, 2016 and three scheduled days for budget deliberations followed the same week November 30 – December 2 (Wednesday to Friday). A compression of the 2016 schedule would be required following the general election in order to adopt a similar schedule in 2020.

2.4 Approaches in Other Jurisdictions

A scan of general elections in other provinces shows that the majority of provincial elections are held during the month of October. The provinces of PEI and Quebec hold general elections during the first week of November. The Procedures Bylaw as well as the timing of budget deliberations differs from one jurisdiction to another. As this is the first year for municipal elections to be held during the second week of November in Saskatchewan, a comparison of scheduling in other cities in Saskatchewan is not available.

OPTIONS

Option 1 - Scheduling Similar to Last Civic Election in 2016

Appendix 1 outlines a meeting calendar similar to that followed in 2016. Key elements include:

- Regular business and Public hearing meetings of City Council in all months with the exception of October;
- No meetings during the period of Nomination day (October 7) to Election Day (November 9);
- SPC meetings in all months except October and November;
- GPC meetings in all months except October (Note: A GPC meeting has been scheduled between the first meeting of Council following the civic election and the organizational meeting of Council in November)
- First meeting of Council following the civic election and organizational meeting of Council scheduled for November 16 and 30, respectively, in accordance with Bylaw No. 9170.

- One meeting of each of the SPCs following the civic election;
- A two-day Governance & Leadership session for members of Council following the civic election (November 12 and 13)
- Regular Meeting of City Council to deal with the Budget prior to yearend (December 2 & 3);
- Quarterly Special/Joint GPC meetings in March, June, September and December;
- No meetings the first week of January, 2020 to allow for preparation and circulation of agendas by Administration and the City Clerk's Office over the Holiday season;
- No meetings the first week of February (SUMA Convention) and week following FCM Conference in June;
- Strategic Planning session in January, 2020;
- City Council Regular Business and Public Hearing meetings held on December 21.

Implications

There are no financial, environmental, social, legal or privacy implications with this option.

Advantages

- Follows the standard scheduling of meetings in an election year;
- Provision is made for meetings of Council, SPCs and GPC following the civic election;
- Budget deliberations are concluded before year end; and
- A Governance & Leadership session is held in a timely manner following the civic election.

Disadvantages

- Considerable time commitment following the civic election to year end;
- Minimal time period to prepare for budget deliberations; and
- Minimal time period for new Councillors to familiarize themselves with roles on SPCs.

Option 2 – Delay of SPC meetings following Civic Election

Appendix 2 outlines a meeting calendar similar to the meeting calendar followed during the last civic election in 2016, and similar to the calendar provided in Appendix 1. Key differences to the calendar provided in Appendix 1 include:

- Budget deliberations are moved to the week of December 7th (December 7 & 8); and
- No SPC meetings are scheduled following the civic election.

Implications

There are no financial, environmental, social, legal or privacy implications with this option.

Advantages

- More time for preparations for budget deliberations.

Disadvantages

- No SPC business conducted for the months of October, November and December.

Option 3 – Delay Budget Deliberations to Following Year

Appendix 3 outlines a meeting calendar similar to the meeting calendar followed during the last civic election in 2016, and similar to the calendar provided in Appendix 1. Key differences to the calendar provided in Appendix 1 include:

- Budget deliberations are removed from the Calendar and to be considered in January, 2021.

Implications

There are no financial, environmental, social, legal or privacy implications with this option.

Advantages

- More time for preparations for budget deliberations.

Disadvantages

- Budget is not finalized before yearend.

Option 4 – Delay Budget Deliberations to Following Year and Delay SPC meetings following Civic Election

Appendix 4 outlines a meeting calendar incorporating changes proposed in both options 2 and 3 above. Key elements include:

- No SPC meetings following the civic election;
- Budget deliberations removed and planned for January, 2021;
- Only a GPC meeting and a Regular Business Meeting and Public Hearing meeting of City Council in both November and December; and
- Moves the Regular Business Meeting and Public Hearing meeting in December one week earlier (from December 21 to December 14).

Implications

There are no financial, environmental, social, legal or privacy implications with this option.

Advantages

- More time for preparations for budget deliberations;
- More time for new Councillors to settle into their new roles;
- Reduces the number of meetings following the Civic Election; and
- Removes meetings the week leading into the Holiday season.

Disadvantages

- Budget is not finalized before yearend; and
- No SPC business conducted for the months of October, November and December.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend to City Council, at its organizational meeting to be held on September 30, 2019, that it adopt Option 1 – 2020 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

RATIONALE

The recommended option maintains status quo and follows a format similar to past civic election years. This option attempts to balance the policy development and decision making processes of City Council. If there is a desire to move to an option where Budget deliberations would take place in January, 2021, further direction is required with respect to a date. Administration would prefer a date prior to January 15, 2021.

ADDITIONAL IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

There are no further additional implications or considerations.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The 2020 City Council and Committee meeting schedule is to be considered by City Council at its organizational meeting, as part of the Regular Business Meeting on September 30, 2019. Once a calendar is approved, it will be posted to the City's website and circulated to all Boards and Commissions.

APPENDICES

1. Appendix 1 - Option 1 – 2020 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar
2. Appendix 2 - Option 2 – 2020 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar
3. Appendix 3 – Option 3 – 2020 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar
4. Appendix 4 – Option 4 – 2020 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar
5. Appendix 5 – 2016 Council and Committee Meeting Calendar

2020 City Council and Committee Meeting Schedule

Report Approval

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