

2021 City Council and Committee Meeting Schedule – Governance & Priorities Committee – Meeting Start Time

ISSUE

The Governance and Priorities Committee has expressed an interest in obtaining information on any impacts to changing the start time of Governance and Priorities Committee meetings to 9:00 a.m. beginning in January, 2021.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on November 23, 2020, the Governance and Priorities Committee considered a report of the City Clerk presenting the 2021 City Council and Committee meeting schedule. It resolved:

that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend to City Council at its organizational meeting to be held on November 30, 2020, that the 2021 Council and Committee meeting calendar, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved; and that the Administration report to the same meeting, the impact of changing the start time for Governance and Priorities Committee meetings to 9 a.m., beginning in January 2021.

CURRENT STATUS

Section 86 of *Bylaw No. 9170, The Procedures and Committees Bylaw, 2014* lists the start (and in some cases end) time for the Standing Policy Committees (SPCs) the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) and City Council meetings. As codified in the bylaw, SPCs meet from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Regular Business meeting of City Council commences at 1:00 p.m. and the Public Hearing Meeting of City Council commences at 6:00 p.m.

In the case of GPC, the bylaw stipulates that regularly scheduled meetings shall commence at 1:00 p.m. and end no later than 11:00 p.m. Moreover, every GPC meeting shall recess for 15 minutes at the approximate midpoint of both the afternoon and evening. Every GPC meeting shall recess for 30 minutes at approximately 5:30 p.m. However, GPC may extend a regularly scheduled meeting beyond 11:00 p.m. with the consent of the majority of the members present.

If the business of a GPC (or SPC) meeting is not completed within the scheduled time, the unfinished business shall be placed on the agenda of either the next regularly scheduled committee meeting or a special meeting called to consider the unfinished business.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Given the legally mandated start times described in the previous section of this report, the Office of the City Clerk has established processes to manage meeting correspondence. For example, written requests to speak to a Council committee

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pertaining to a matter already on a Council committee agenda may be submitted online until 8:00 a.m. on the day of the Council committee meeting.

Consequently, for those SPC meetings that start at 9:00 a.m., this is a very tight turnaround for the City Clerk's Office to process the requests and have a revised agenda available prior to 9:00 a.m., particularly if many submissions are received. A 9:00 a.m. start for GPC meetings may potentially create a similar scenario, depending on the volume of correspondence. The logistical challenge of the 8:00 a.m. deadline for submissions followed by a 9:00 a.m. start of the meeting has been identified by City Clerk's staff as a matter to further review. However, a potential workable solution may be found in the practices of other cities.

A scan of the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Regina of similar-type meetings to GPC reveal the following:

Calgary (Priorities & Finance Committee)

- 9:30 a.m. start and must recess at 9:30 p.m.
- Breaks are 60 minutes at noon, 60 minutes at 6:00 p.m. and 30 minutes at 3:15 p.m.

Edmonton (Executive Committee)

- 9:30 a.m. start to 5:30 p.m.
- Meeting can be extended or continue the next day if not completed

Winnipeg (Executive Policy Committee)

- 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Regina (Executive Committee)

- 2 p.m. – and continues for up to 4 ½ hours.
- Remaining items tabled to a future meeting unless majority vote to continue the meeting.

This review shows that three of the four cities have established a 9:30 a.m. start time for their respective GPC type meetings. A 9:30 a.m. start would help to alleviate logistical challenges for the City Clerk's Office associated with the current 8 a.m. deadline for receipt of submissions.

Should there be a desire to adjust the start time of GPC meetings, City Council may also wish to consider an appropriate end time. Any recommended changes to the start and end times of meetings would require an amendment to *Bylaw No. 9170, The Procedures and Committees Bylaw, 2014*.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications resulting from the information in this report.

NEXT STEPS

Any changes to meeting times require an amendment to Bylaw No. 9170 and instructions to the Solicitor in that regard would be required. Appropriate communication around a change in meeting times for GPC would be required.

Report Approval

Written by: Joanne Sproule, City Clerk

Reviewed by: Cindy Yelland, City Solicitor; Mike Jordan, Chief Public Policy & Government Relations Officer

Approved by: Joanne Sproule, City Clerk

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