

MEETING DATE: September 16, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: C. Belke, City Clerk

PREPARED BY: C. Belke, City Clerk

REPORT TITLE: Meeting Schedule Options for 2024-2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two options for the schedule for Council Meetings for the year beginning after the Organizational Meeting on October 28, 2024 are presented for discussion by Committee-of-the-Whole.

BACKGROUND

Section 193(1) of the Municipal Government Act states that "A council may decide at a council meeting at which all the Councillors are present to hold regularly scheduled council meetings on specified dates, times and places."

At the Organizational Council meeting on October 28, 2024, Council is expected to set the schedule for Regular Council Meetings for the period until the 2025 Organizational Meeting, and for the 2025 Strategic Planning Committee meeting.

This matter is presented for consideration by Committee-of-the-Whole so that discussion of the schedule for upcoming meetings can occur prior to consideration of a resolution at the upcoming Organizational Meeting. The resolution to establish the schedule must specify the place, times, and dates for upcoming meetings.

After the meeting schedule has been established, Council could add or cancel meetings by resolution. Special Council Meetings could also be called at times when no meeting is scheduled.

Meeting Locations

It is recommended that meetings continue to be held in Council Chambers and the Strategic Planning Committee meeting be held in the Lede Room at the Leduc Civic Centre. Council has the option to schedule one or more meetings at different locations.

Meeting Times

It is proposed that Regular Council Meetings be scheduled to start at 5:30 pm and the Strategic Planning Session to run from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. For 2025, the review and updating of the existing Strategic Plan is expected to only require one day.

Council could consider different start times. Later starts will typically lead to later end times for meetings, and it is generally accepted that the quality of decision-making can decline later in a day and meeting participants may be tired. Conversely, earlier start times would mean that Administration and Council Members that work full-time would not be starting the meeting after having already worked a full day. Earlier start times may be more convenient for some council members, but less convenient for others, depending on each person's personal and professional commitments. Another consideration could be how a different start time would be perceived by the public in terms of their ability to attend council meetings, either physically or online.

Meeting Dates

No meetings are proposed on Mondays when the Leduc Civic Centre is closed for holidays.

Three Regular Council Meetings have been scheduled for November, February, March, April, May and June. As in past years, only one meeting has been proposed for each of July and August, and two in each of December and January. The two presented Options include different numbers of meetings in the months of September and October.

In Option 1, it is proposed that no Council Meetings be scheduled from Nomination Day (September 22) until the Inaugural Meeting of Council after the 2025 General Election. Not holding meetings during this customary campaign season avoids incumbent Councillors who are running for re-election being perceived as unfairly benefitting from the public profile from being in Council Meetings. This would mean that there would be two Council Meetings scheduled in September and none in October. If any emergent business requires Council's attention during this time, a Special Meeting could be called.

Option 2 includes three meetings in September (one more than Option 1), and one meeting on October 6 (one more than Option 1), which, in total is two more meetings than in Option 1. In both Options, no meetings are proposed for October 13 (Thanksgiving Day), October 20 (Election Day), or October 27 (post-election).

It is proposed that the Inaugural Meeting for Council after the 2025 election be held on November 3, the latest date permitted by the *Municipal Government Act*. This will allow the most time possible for Council Orientation before the first Council Meeting of the new term.

The proposed meeting schedule does not conflict with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Annual Conference and Trade Show (May 28 to June 1, in Ottawa) or the Alberta Municipalities Convention and Trade Show, which will be held after the 2025 election (November 12 to 14, in Edmonton).

Other options

If the Committee chooses one of the presented options, it will be presented for Council approval at the October 28 Council Meeting.

If the Committee wishes, one or more alternate schedules could be prepared with either fewer Council Meeting dates or more Council Meeting dates, for consideration at an upcoming meeting.

NEXT STEPS

A report with a proposed meeting schedule will be presented for Council's consideration at the Organizational Meeting on October 28, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

- Proposed 2024-25 Council Meeting Calendar Option 1
- Proposed 2024-25 Council Meeting Schedule Option 1
- Proposed 2024-25 Council Meeting Calendar Option 2
- Proposed 2024-25 Council Meeting Schedule Option 2