



REQUEST FOR A DECISION

Regular City Council - December 13, 2021

To: Her Worship Mayor Kate Rogers
From: Jennifer Lawson, City Clerk
Date: November 25, 2021
Title: Extension of Meeting Schedule Pilot

ISSUE:

The City Clerk is requesting extension of the Meeting Schedule Pilot given that the fall has additional budget meetings, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the meeting pilot.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

A. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the following resolution be forwarded to City Council for consideration: BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Fredericton hereby approves continuing the meeting schedule pilot changing the schedule of when Council-in-Committee meetings will be held from the first and third Mondays of each month to the second and fourth Mondays of each month from January to the end of August 2022; AND directs staff of the Legal Division to prepare the associated amendment to Section 13.03 of By-law No. A-19, A Procedural By-law of the City of Fredericton Municipal Council.

B. Other options: (If applicable, only complete if there are multiple options)

City Council can return to the schedule outlined in By-law No. A-19, A Procedural By-law of the City of Fredericton Municipal Council, where Council-in-Committee meetings are held on the first and third Monday's of each month.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to Section 13.03 of By-law No. A-19, A Procedural By-law of the City of Fredericton Municipal Council, Council-in-Committee meeting are held on the first and third Monday's of each month.

Over the past several years City Council has unanimously approved a change to the meeting schedule for Council-in-Committee meetings scheduled for the months of July and August. During the summer months of July and August, instead of holding Council-in-Committee meetings on the first and second Mondays of the month, Council would instead hold those meetings on the second and fourth Mondays prior to the regularly scheduled City Council meetings. In addition, City Council adopted the following resolution with respect to a pilot on August 23, 2021 "BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Fredericton hereby approves the change to the regularly scheduled Council-in-Committee meetings to take place on the second and fourth Mondays for the months of September, October, November and December of 2021."

At the beginning of the pandemic, the City of Fredericton needed to pivot to provide meetings that could be livestreamed to enable the public to view the meeting. During this time period, items that in the past may have been placed on an Open Council-in-Committee meeting were moved to Regular City Council meeting in an effort to make the meetings more efficient, accessible, and transparent. From an external resourcing perspective, ie Rogers Cable TV and Simultaneous Interpretation, it requires attendance only twice a month instead of four times per month. The twice monthly schedule has generally found to be more efficient and enables the City to satisfy requirements under the *Local Governance Act* and *Official Languages Act*.

For comparison purposes Saint John Council meetings are scheduled for every other week with Committee of the Whole commencing at 4:30 pm and Regular City Council at 6:00 pm. In 2021 they had meetings on 20 days. In 2021 Moncton had 20 Regular Council meetings (some months only 1 some 2) and 14 Committee of the Whole. If the City of Fredericton's schedule followed the By-law there would be 23 Regular City Council meetings and 24 Council-in-Committee meetings only 6 of which would be on the same night. By combining meetings on the same night it would free up the alternate nights for Council to be able to focus on responding to emails, ward meetings, training, etc.

- **FINANCIAL:** The City Clerk's office has determined there are no financial implications. The City Treasurer was not specifically contacted regarding the contents of this report.
- **LEGAL:** New Brunswick Regulation 2018-84 under the *Local Governance Act* prescribes that "the day of the week on which regular meetings of council are to be held..." shall be included in a procedural by-law. An amendment to By-Law No. A-19, A Procedural By-law of the City of Fredericton Municipal Council may be required depending on the decision of City Council.
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** No specific public communication is proposed. The Council meeting website should be updated to reflect the meeting schedule. This is where the public would look for such information. Corporate Communications will continue to email local media contacts about the weekly Council and Standing Committee meeting schedule.

SPOKESPERSON:

Prepared by: *Jennifer Lawson, City Clerk*

Approved by: *Steven Hart, CAO*