



## Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of March 26th, 2020

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** March 24, 2020  
**From:** Chris Coates, City Clerk  
**Subject:** Council and Committee of the Whole Schedule – COVID-19

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### RECOMMENDATION

That Council forward to the March 26, 2020 daytime Council meeting the following recommendations:

That Council:

1. Direct staff to amend the 2020 Council and Committee of the Whole meeting Schedule until further notice to provide for:
  - a) the suspension of evening Council meetings effective immediately;
  - b) conducting Council meetings during the day following Committee of the Whole;
  - c) conducting both Council and Committee of the Whole on the second and fourth Thursday of each month beginning April 9, 2020.
2. Direct staff to give public notice of the revised Meeting Schedule in accordance with Section section 127 (1)(b) of the Community Charter.
3. Forward the March 26<sup>th</sup> Council meeting agenda items to the daytime Council meeting April 2, 2020.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff continue to examine city-wide operations and seek ways to limit opportunities to minimize the potential for COVID-19 exposure and have considered and implemented modifications to meet the intent of the provincial Health Orders that are intended to curb the spread of COVID-19 as well as protect the health and safety of staff, council members and the public. .

Section 124 of the *Community Charter* requires every local government to provide advance notice of Council and Committee of the Whole meetings, and section 127 requires publication of an annual schedule of meetings. The current meeting schedule establishes Committee of the Whole and Closed Council meetings on the first 4 Thursdays of each month beginning at 9 am. Open Council meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of each month commencing at 6:30 pm.

In response to COVID-19, Council, at the daytime Council meeting of March 20, 2020, approved changes to the Council Procedures Bylaw to permit, under emergency circumstances, full electronic

participation by all members of Council at the call of the Mayor. These Bylaw changes can be fully implemented after adoption of the Bylaw which is on the agenda for the daytime Council meeting of March 26, 2020. In addition, Council suspended the holding of public hearings and Question Period and placed a limit of 6 Request to Address Council presentations either by telephone (if technology permits at that time) or written submissions read aloud by staff. A copy of staff report for the March 19, 2020 meeting is attached as Appendix A.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to further modify processes by reducing the frequency of meetings of Council in response to COVID-19.


Public participation is a principal component of the items of business that occur during evening council meetings in order that the public can attend to the greatest extent possible. With the changes approved by Council already that limit this most significantly, Council may wish to consider that a reduction of meetings is now practical, and in particular the possible elimination of the evening meetings to reduce the number of times people (staff and Council) gather to attend to Council meeting processes. There is a core of staff that must be present at City Hall to facilitate Council meetings and webcasting services, despite how many electronic participants there may be.


Staff have developed, for Council's consideration, the following meeting schedule and meeting content during the pandemic (until further notice):

- Eliminate Evening meetings.
- Reduce Committee of the Whole to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month.
- Hold Council meetings (open and closed) after Committee of the Whole
- Forward time sensitive Committee of the Whole recommendations to the Council meeting to follow.
- Forward all other Committee of the Whole recommendations to the Council meeting two weeks hence.
- Special meetings can be established (with minimum 24 hours notice) to attend to any urgent business.

The suggested reduction in meetings are intended to minimize the number of times that people need to gather at City Hall. Council may wish to consider other modifications to what is proposed which could be considered as a minimum level at this time.

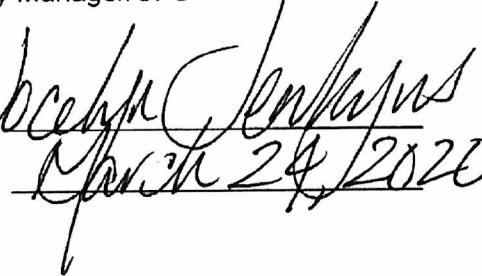
Respectfully submitted.

  
Chris Coates  
City Clerk

  
Susanne Thompson  
Deputy City Manager/CFO

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:

  
March 24, 2020

List of Attachments

Appendix A: March 19, 2020 Committee of The Whole Report – Council Processes