

By-election Update

Committee of the Whole

September 17, 2020



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Background

- November 4, 2019 -Vacancy on Council resulting from then Councillor Laurel Collins' resignation.
- April 4, 2020 By election was scheduled.
- March 18, 2020 Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing cancelled the by-election until Public Health Officials give advice under the Public Health Act that the pandemic no longer poses a threat to public health
- New by-election starts from the beginning



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Background

- June 6, 2020 staff sought advice from Medical Health Officer on moving forward with the by-election.
- July 31, 2020 response indicated that plans could proceed in consultation with Health Officials but qualified that a surge in cases around the by-election could result in revisiting decisions



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Background

- September 11, 2020 Officials from Municipal Affairs and Housing, Elections BC and Cities of Burnaby and Victoria met to discuss issues conducting an election during the pandemic in larger jurisdictions
- Burnaby and Victoria requested that the Province provide insight into safe windows to plan for by-elections
- Meeting with Provincial Health Officials is now being arranged



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Objectives

- Ensuring election process integrity, safety and accessibility for voters, candidates and election workers
- Provide voting options that contribute to those objectives and encourage voter participation
- Carry out voting in a suitable window for the by-election identified by Provincial Health Officials

Appropriate pandemic precautions preserve process integrity and increase voter participation



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Considerations

Timing

- General elections and by-elections are planned well ahead of voting day and the commencement of the formal process. 80 days from appointment of CEO to general voting day

Pandemic

- Pandemic adds further complexity and requirements around health, safety and security for the public and election officials

Logistics

- Logistical issues such as voting locations, staffing and infrastructure – pandemic increases complexity and planning requirements for all these areas



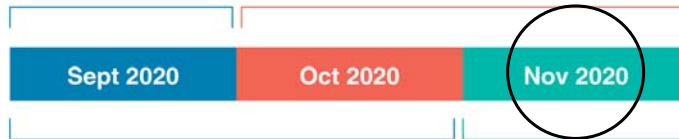
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By-election Planning

Request a Ministerial Order to expand Mail Ballot Voting

Determine locations and site-specific safety plans
Develop by-election budget



Review legislative requirements for Election Procedures Bylaw amendments and any further Ministerial Orders

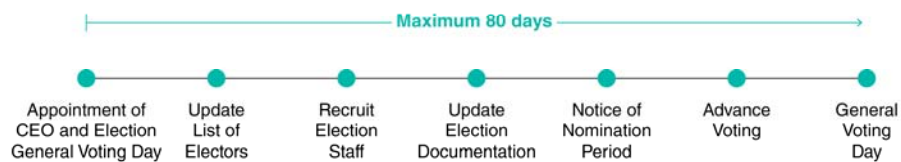
Report back to Council with recommendations and budget request



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Start of Election Process



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Recommendations

1. That Council direct staff to report back with a budget request and process for conducting a by-election during the pandemic once the planning has occurred.
2. That Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to expand mail ballot voting opportunities for anyone interested in that option.



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