



Subject: 2024 Schedule of Meeting Dates - Council and Committees/Boards

To: Council

From: Corporate Services Department

Report Number: 2023-170

Meeting Date: December 12, 2023

Recommendation:

That Corporate Services Department Report 2023-170 be received; and

That the 2024 Council meeting schedule set out in Appendix A of Corporate Services Report 2023-170 be approved; and

That the 2024 Committees/Boards meeting schedule set out in Appendix B of Corporate Services Report 2023-170 be received for information.

Purpose:

This report provides a recommendation regarding the 2024 schedule of meeting dates for City Council and its Committees/Boards. The 2024 meeting schedule is being brought forward for approval to allow City staff time to plan for and conduct work on reports being brought to City Council and ensure that these reports are entered into the City's meeting management system in accordance with the required timelines.

Background:

Section 10.2 of the City of Port Colborne's Procedural By-law 6979/17/22 establishes Council meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and permits changes with a majority vote of Council.

Discussion:

Government transparency and the ability to observe the political process are foundational to democracy. The meeting requirements set out in section 239 of the

Municipal Act, 2001, permit the public to observe municipal government in progress; as such, municipalities are required to provide for public notice of meetings. Notice of meetings is an important factor in strengthening municipal accountability and transparency and encouraging public participation in local government decision making.

Appendix A of this report contains the proposed 2024 Council meeting schedule. This proposed schedule deviates from the Procedural By-law by including a tentative Statutory Public Planning Meeting scheduled on the first Tuesday of each month, resulting from the passing of Bill 109 and its impact on planning approval timelines. Previously, the Statutory Public Planning meetings were scheduled on the third Tuesday of the month but has been moved to the first Tuesday due to a conflict with the Port Colborne Museum, Heritage and Culture Board meeting schedule.

For the 2023 Council Meeting schedule, the Clerk's Division, in consultation with the Planning Division, implemented hosting Planning Public Meetings outside of Regular Council Meetings. This schedule has been well received and staff recommend the practice be continued for the 2024 Council Meeting schedule. In the event the Statutory Planning meeting is not required, Staff have indicated a Special meeting may be held on these dates for additional Council education, training, Strategic Planning sessions, or to present Council with new City initiatives.

There may be instances that a Public Meeting needs to be held prior to a regularly scheduled Council meeting. These are expected to be rarities and would only be employed if a regularly scheduled Public Meeting date would not suffice in meeting the new legislated timelines under the *Planning Act*.

Committee of the Whole – Budget Meetings to deliberate the budgets for the following year are proposed to occur in October and November of 2024, as depicted in the attached Appendix A, being the proposed 2024 Council meeting schedule.

To strengthen municipal accountability and transparency, the Clerk's Division has also created a schedule for local board and committee meetings in 2024, which is attached as Appendix B. As outlined in their terms of reference, local boards and committees are permitted to schedule Special meetings outside of their scheduled meeting dates as necessary, but this proposed meeting schedule has been provided to encourage public participation in local government decision making.

Internal Consultations:

The proposed 2024 Council Meeting schedule has been circulated to all City directors and received their approval before its inclusion in this report. The proposed 2024 Committees/Boards meeting schedule has been circulated to all local board and committee staff liaisons, who have provided feedback on the schedule before its inclusion in this report.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications.

Public Engagement:

Both Appendix A and Appendix B will be added to the City's website and all meeting dates will be added to the Committees, Boards and Council Calendar page to encourage public participation in the proceedings of Council and all local boards and committees.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Environment and Climate Change
 - Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
 - Economic Prosperity
 - Increased Housing Options
 - Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure
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Conclusion:

Staff recommend that Council approve the proposed 2024 Council Meeting Schedule and receive the proposed 2024 Committees/Boards meeting schedule for information.

Appendices:

- a. Proposed 2024 Council Meeting Schedule
- b. Proposed 2024 Committee/Boards Meeting Schedule

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.