

# Report

Date December 21, 2022

File: 0570-01

Subject 2023 Regular Council and Committee of the Whole Meeting Schedule

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## PURPOSE

To consider rescheduling the 2023 Council and Committee of the Whole meeting dates where conflicts exist and determine whether meetings shall be conducted by electronic means.

## BACKGROUND

### Setting the Regular Meeting Schedule

The meeting schedule and content of this report are based on the assumption that Council Procedure Amendment Bylaw No. 3888, 2022, received first three readings on December 7, 2022, and will be adopted by Council prior to considering this report at the December 21, 2022, regular Council meeting. The Council Procedure Bylaw, as amended, establishes the dates and times of regular meetings of Council and requires that:

- Council meetings be held on the first and third Wednesday of each month, beginning at 5:00 p.m., with the exception being that no meetings are held on the first Wednesday in January, July and August;
- Committee of the Whole meetings be held on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning at 5:00 p.m.;
- the schedule of the dates, times and places of regular Council meetings be prepared on or before December 21, for the following year; and,
- the schedule be advertised in accordance with Section 94 of the *Community Charter* [requirements for public notice] and made available to the public by posting it at the public notice posting places (i.e. the notice board at the main entrance of the Municipal Hall and the municipal website).

If a meeting is cancelled or rescheduled to another date that is not due to a holiday, then Council must adopt a motion with a vote of at least 2/3 of members present for those changes to occur (i.e., if there are seven members present, then at least five must vote in the affirmative, if five or six members are present, then the vote must be at least 4 in favour to pass).

If there were no changes required to the regular meeting dates of Council or the Committee of the Whole, the Corporate Officer would be authorized to publish the notice of the 2023 Council and Committee of the Whole Meeting schedule in accordance with Section 5 (1) (d) of [Delegation of Authority Bylaw No. 3814](#), pursuant to Sections 94 and 127 of the *Community Charter* [notice of council meetings].

## Conducting Regular Meetings (In-person or Electronic (Hybrid))

Pursuant to Sections [128](#) to [128.2](#) of the *Community Charter* and the Council Procedure Bylaw, as amended, if a regular meeting of Council or the Committee of the Whole is to be conducted by electronic means, then Council must pass a resolution at least 72 hours prior to the regular meeting that the meeting will be held by electronic means (i.e., via Webex) and notice that it will be held electronically must be posted at the public notice posting places.

## DISCUSSION

When a regular Council meeting or Committee of the Whole (CoW) meeting falls on a statutory holiday, the meeting must be held on the next business day that the Municipal Hall is open. When a regular Council meeting or CoW meeting conflicts with one of the conferences that Council is authorized to attend under the [Council Conference Attendance Policy](#), past practice has been to reschedule the meeting to a different date.

## 2023 Conference Dates

The 2023 Council Conference Schedule is as follows:

- [Local Government Leadership Academy \(LGLA\)](#)  
The LGLA Elected Officials Seminar will be held in Nanaimo at the Vancouver Island Convention Centre from February 15 – 17, 2023
- [Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities \(AVICC\)](#)  
The AVICC will be held in Nanaimo at the Vancouver Island Convention Centre from April 14 – 16, 2023
- [Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\)](#)  
The FCM will be held in Toronto, Ontario, from May 25 – 28, 2023
- [Union of BC Municipalities \(UBCM\)](#)  
The UBCM Convention will be held in Vancouver from September 18 – 22, 2023
- [Vancouver Island Economic Alliance \(VIEA\)](#)  
The VIEA Summit is scheduled to be held from October 25 – 26, 2023. No further details are available at this time

## Meeting Date Conflicts

Staff determined that there are no meeting conflicts in 2023 with statutory holidays but did find conflicts with the following conferences:

- LGLA Elected Officials Seminar conflicts with the second regular Council meeting in February (Feb 15) and determine impacts members of Council by having a CoW regular meeting on February (Feb 14) immediately prior to a three-day conference
- UBCM Convention with the second regular Council meeting in September (Sep 20)

Additional conflicts included:

- When the first of the month falls on a Wednesday, it creates back-to-back CoW and Council meetings, as follows:
  - CoW on Feb 14 [second Tuesday] and Council on Feb 15 [third Wednesday]

- CoW on Mar 14 [second Tuesday] and Council on Mar 15 [third Wednesday]
- CoW on Nov 14 [second Tuesday] and Council on Nov 15 [third Wednesday]

### Proposed Changes to the 2023 Council and CoW Meeting Dates

Staff is recommending that Council amend their 2023 regular Council meeting dates as follows:

- Postpone the Wednesday, February 15, 2023, regular Council meeting to **Tuesday, February 21, 2023**, to avoid the conflict with the first day of the LGLA Elected Officials Seminar and ensure that quorum can be obtained for the meeting
- Postpone the Wednesday, September 20, 2023, regular Council meeting to **Tuesday, September 26, 2023**, to avoid the conflict with the UBCM Convention and ensure that quorum can be obtained for the meeting. Staff is recommending holding the Council meeting on a Tuesday as the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Staff is recommending that Council amend their 2023 regular CoW meeting dates as follows:

- Reschedule the CoW meeting from Tuesday, February 14, 2023, to **Tuesday, February 7, 2023**, to avoid scheduling a meeting back-to-back with a conference
- Reschedule the CoW meeting from Tuesday, March 14, 2023, to **Tuesday, March 7, 2023**, to avoid back-to-back meetings (regular Council meeting on March 15, 2023)
- Reschedule the CoW meeting from Tuesday, November 14, 2023, to **Tuesday, November 7, 2023**, to avoid back-to-back meetings (regular Council meeting on November 15, 2023)

The 2023 Council and CoW Meeting Schedule (Attachment 1) illustrates the above noted recommended changes.

### Public Hearings

Public hearings are not included in the 2023 Council, and CoW Meeting Schedule as a public hearing will only be held on the third Wednesday of the month for which the Director of Planning and Building has given notice in accordance with section 466 (1) of the *Local Government Act* and section 54 (4) of Council Procedure Bylaw, as amended.

### Conducting Regular Meetings (In-person or Electronic (Hybrid))

In 2022, Council and Committee of the Whole meetings were conducted using the hybrid model, which provided Council, staff, and members of the public the choice to attend either in-person or electronically. Continuing with this practice provides members of the public who are unable to be physically present in council chambers for whatever reason the ability to join electronically from the comfort of their homes. It also provides Council and staff with the flexibility to participate electronically. Conducting meetings using the hybrid model has modernized how we conduct our meetings - it is inclusive, convenient, and reaches far more citizens than the pre-pandemic in-person meetings.

Council needs to decide whether to continue conducting their regular Council and CoW meetings using the hybrid model or whether to return to in-person meetings.

Council must determine whether they wish to:

- (a) continue the hybrid format, which enables members of the public, in addition to Council and staff, to attend the meeting either in person or electronically; or,
- (b) return to the pre-COVID routine of in-person meetings, where only members of Council are permitted to participate electronically in accordance with section 7(12) of the Council Procedure Bylaw, unless Council adopts a resolution to allow the meeting to be conducted electronically as per sections 7(2) and 7(7.2).

## OPTIONS

1. **(Recommended Option)** Endorse the proposed meeting changes for 2023 (Attachment 1) and authorize meetings to be conducted by electronic means.

THAT Council:

- (1) Reschedule the February 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to February 7, 2023, the March 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to March 7, 2023, and the November 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to November 7, 2023;
- (2) Reschedule the February 15, 2023, Regular Council meeting to February 21, 2023, and the September 20, 2023, Regular Council meeting to September 26, 2023; and,
- (3) Direct that the regular Council and Committee of the Whole meetings for 2023 be conducted by electronic means.

2. Endorse the proposed meeting changes for 2023 (Attachment 1) and return to in-person meetings in January.

THAT Council:

- (1) Reschedule the February 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to February 7, 2023, the March 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to March 7, 2023, and the November 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to November 7, 2023;
- (2) Reschedule the February 15, 2023, Regular Council meeting to February 21, 2023, and the September 20, 2023, Regular Council meeting to September 26, 2023;

3. Choose alternative dates for meeting conflicts

THAT Council:

- (1) Reschedule the February 14, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting to *[insert new meeting date]*;
- (2) Reschedule the March 14, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting to *[insert new meeting date]*;
- (3) Reschedule the November 14, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting to *[insert new meeting date]*;
- (4) Reschedule the February 15, 2023, Regular Council meeting to *[insert new meeting date]*;
- (5) Reschedule the September 20, 2023, Regular Council meeting to *[insert new meeting date]*; and,
- (6) Directs that the regular Council and Committee of the Whole meetings for 2023 be conducted by electronic means.

4. Do not make any changes to the schedule, regardless of meetings being back-to-back or conflicts with conferences, as members could attend electronically as the meetings do not start until 5:00 p.m. (Attachment 2).

THAT Council direct that the regular Council and Committee of the Whole meetings for 2023 be conducted by electronic means.

## IMPLICATIONS

Dependent upon which option Council endorses, the Corporate Officer would then publish the schedule, as illustrated in Attachment 1 or Attachment 2, to the website and notice board and publish a notice in the newspaper for the December 29, 2022, and January 5, 2023 editions.

Returning to in-person meetings would prevent members of the public (who have grown used to participating through Webex) from participating in the public input and question period portions of the meeting electronically and exclude those members of staff who are unable to participate in person. Only members of Council who are authorized under section 7 (12) of the Council Procedure Bylaw would be able to participate electronically.

The fourth option would result in conflicts with conferences and back-to-back meetings and may result in the failure to achieve quorum (after waiting 30 minutes) for the meeting, which could create a heavy agenda at the next meeting.

## RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

- (1) Reschedule the February 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to February 7, 2023, the March 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to March 7, 2023, and the November 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting to November 7, 2023;
- (2) Reschedule the February 15, 2023, Regular Council meeting to February 21, 2023, and the September 20, 2023, Regular Council meeting to September 26, 2023; and,
- (3) Direct that the regular Council and Committee of the Whole meetings for 2023 be conducted by electronic means.

Report prepared by:



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Report reviewed by:



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Manager, Legislative Services

## Approved to be forwarded to Council:



Ted Swabey  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Attachments:

- (1) 2023 Council and CoW Meeting Schedule as proposed
- (2) 2023 Council and CoW Meeting Schedule with no changes