

Report

Date November 9, 2021

File:

Subject 2022 Budget Meeting Schedule Update

PURPOSE

To consider changes to the 2022 Budget Meeting Schedule, including adding a grant in aid and utility rate review as part of the budget process timeline.

BACKGROUND

At the July 21, 2021, Council meeting, the 2022-2026 Public Engagement Plan and timeline were endorsed by Council. The plan included a schedule of the budget meetings as shown below.

| Date | Meeting Type | Topic |
|---------------|--------------|---|
| July 21, 2021 | Council | Budget direction, priorities, public participation plan |
| Oct, 2021 | | Public Consultation Launch |
| Nov 23, 2021 | Special COW | 2022 Departmental Business Plans presented |
| Nov 30, 2021 | Special COW | 2022 Departmental Business Plans presented |
| Jan 4, 2022 | Special COW | Five Year Financial Plan and Proposed Capital Plan |
| Jan 19, 2022 | Council | Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw 3 readings |
| Feb 2, 2022 | Council | Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw Adoption |

DISCUSSION

Two key items were missed in the initial budget meeting schedule; grant in aid and utility rate review. Additionally, staff are suggesting a change to the first meeting in January as Council traditionally cancels meetings that week each year.

The following schedule is proposed to include the grant in aid review and utility rate review while still enabling the adoption of the bylaw as early as possible in the year to allow projects to begin:

| Date | Meeting Type | Topic |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| July 21, 2021 | Council | Budget direction, priorities, public participation plan |
| Oct Nov, 2021 | | Public Consultation Launch |
| Nov 23, 2021 | Special COW | 2022 Departmental Business Plans presented |
| Nov 30, 2021 | Special COW | 2022 Departmental Business Plans presented |
| Jan 4, 2022 Dec 14, 2021 | Special COW | Five Year Financial Plan and Proposed Capital Plan |
| Jan 11, 2022 (New) | Regular COW | Grant in Aid Review |
| Jan 11, 2022 (New) | Regular COW | Utility Rate Review |
| Jan 19 Feb 2, 2022 | Council | Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw 3 readings |
| Feb 2-16, 2022 | Council | Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw Adoption |

Public consultation at the “inform” level of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of engagement will begin this month with an update to the information on the budget website. Staff are also developing the PlaceSpeak budget topic and drafting correspondence to community groups and major taxpayers inviting them to request an in-person or virtual event with staff and members of Council.

OPTIONS

1. **(Recommended Option)** THAT the Committee of the Whole endorse the updated 2022 Budget Meeting Schedule contained in the November 9, 2021 report by the Director of Financial Services.
 - Committee of the Whole endorsement will enable posting the updated schedule to the municipal website so that people are aware of the dates and can participate in the public meetings. Additionally, the proposed timeline allows for the adoption of the financial plan bylaw early in the year so that tendering of projects may begin as quickly as possible.
2. THAT the Committee of the Whole suggest the following amendments to the updated 2022 Budget Meeting Schedule:
 - (1) *[Council to identify, by topic, the new meeting date(s)]*
 - Alternative dates could be proposed, such as having a Special meeting in January to consider the Grants in Aid and Utility rates instead of having these discussions during the regular Committee of the Whole meeting that month.

IMPLICATIONS

The proposed schedule attempts to keep the number of special meetings to as few as possible while allowing a sufficient amount of time to consider budget information. Choosing the dates themselves is important to allow as much notice as possible to be provided to both Council members and the public to enable attendance and participation at the meetings. As Council has delegated its powers to give direction to staff on matters being considered by the Committee of the Whole to the Committee of the Whole, this direction does not require Council’s endorsement to update the budget meeting schedule.

While the legislation does not require the Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw to be adopted until May 15, early adoption ensures staff have the approval to begin tendering projects and, in some cases, to start performing the works so that projects can be completed within planned timeframes.

Staff will bring a proposed Tax Rates Bylaw based on previous council direction to a subsequent meeting in April or May following the release of the Revised Assessment Roll.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee of the Whole endorse the updated 2022 Budget Meeting Schedule contained in the November 9, 2021 report by the Director of Financial Services.

Report prepared by:



Talitha Soldera, CPA, CGA
Director, Financial Services

Report reviewed by:

[George Farkas]

George Farkas
General Manager

Approved to be forwarded to Council:



Ted Swabey
Chief Administrative Officer