



Meeting Date: September 7, 2022

Submitted by: James Hutson, Municipal Clerk

Report No: CLK-08-2022

Subject: Council Meeting Schedule for 2023

Recommendation:

THAT Report CLK-08-2022 re: 2023 Council Meeting Schedule be received;

AND THAT the 2022 Middlesex Centre Council meeting schedule attached as Appendix 'A1' be approved.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the proposed Council meeting dates which have been identified for the upcoming 2023 calendar year and to seek approval of these meeting dates.

Background:

In accordance with the provisions of the Middlesex Centre Procedural By-law #2017-2016, Council traditionally reviews and approves an annual schedule of Council meetings for the forthcoming year each fall. Confirming the meeting schedule ahead of the end of the calendar year will enable staff, Council and the public to prepare for the 2022 Council meeting dates and to give appropriate notice of these dates to stakeholders.

The establishment of a meeting schedule assists with prioritizing initiatives while ensuring deadlines are met by having a set date in place. For the 2023 year, consideration is being given for additional Special meeting dates.

Analysis:

A schedule of annual meetings must be established by Council prior to the first meeting of the calendar year. In keeping with the format of meetings held in previous years, staff are proposing that meetings continue to be held on Wednesdays adhering to a 2-week rotating basis. The first meeting of the month will be scheduled at 9:30 a.m., and the second meeting of the month (the Planning/Public Meeting) will be scheduled for a start time of 6:00 p.m.

All Council meetings are live-streamed and are available for viewing on the Middlesex Centre municipal website and YouTube channel. Council is continuing with a hybrid meeting format whereby members of Council, staff and the public may participate in-person or electronically.

The calendar will be updated to reflect changes that occur throughout the year, such as adding additional meeting dates. In addition, based on the volume of planning applications received, the start time for Planning Public meetings may be altered to allow for the hearing of additional applications. In these cases, proper notice of the meeting date, time and location will be provided to the public.

Staff have received feedback in 2022 noting that the start times and the ability for electronic participation was received positively by members of the public. This is further evidenced by an increase in viewership for live-streamed meetings from approximately 25 in early 2021 to upwards of 75 for meetings in 2022. The most popular meeting in 2022 received 432 views.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the timing for Council meetings in 2022 be set as 9:30 a.m. for the first meeting of each month, and at 6:00 p.m. for the second meeting of the month. Recognizing that there is flexibility based on the quantity of agenda matters, the meetings will be arranged with this model but could change from time-to-time. There are a number of benefits to continuing with this model, as it allows greater flexibility for members of the public to attend either an evening or a morning session of Council which coincides with other commitments. Further, there are financial savings to be realized by the organization in terms of potential overtime staffing costs by scheduling one meeting each month to occur during the day. Finally, the overall increase in live stream viewership of Middlesex Centre council meetings helps to mitigate the impact of meeting timing.

Financial Implications:

The financial costs to facilitate and conduct municipal Council meetings are covered through the annual operating budget.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Engaged Community

Establishing an annual meeting schedule in advance of the calendar year helps to foster community engagement by publicizing opportunities to participate in the municipal decision making process.

Attachments:

A1 – 2022 Council Meeting Schedule