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Date: October 9, 2020
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Jennifer Astrologo, Director of Corporate Services
RE: Procedure By-law Amendments – Start Times and Closed Session
Report No.: CS-2020-22

AIM

To recommend that Council consider changing the start time of Regular Meetings to 6:00 p.m. (from the current 7:00 p.m. start), which change shall be effective January 1, 2021

-and-

To recommend that Council adopt By-law 99-2020, being a housekeeping amendment to the Procedure By-law, to add four additional permitted closed session exceptions.

BACKGROUND

At its Regular Meeting held on June 22, 2020 Council adopted the following resolution:

389-2020 Moved by Councillor Patterson, seconded by Councillor DeYong that the start time for the Regular Meetings of Council be changed, for the summer months, to commence at 6:00 p.m., rather than the current 7:00 p.m. start, with a curfew time of 10:00 p.m., rather than 11:00 p.m.; And Further That the matter of the start time for Regular Meetings be reviewed at the end of this year.

At the last August 24 Regular Meeting, Council requested that Administration prepare a report to retain the early start time permanently; said report to be provided prior to the end of October (Motion 509-2020 passed August 24) so that any changes could be captured in the collection calendar.

Bill 68, or the Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2017 amended the *Municipal Act, 2001* (the "Act") to expand upon the list of matters for which councils may

move into closed session. Under the *Act*, councils can now move into closed session to discuss matters as they relate to:

- information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them
- a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization;
- a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the municipality or local board and has monetary value or potential monetary value;
- a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board

DISCUSSION

Historically, Council meetings commenced at 7:00 p.m. with an 11:00 p.m. curfew. Over the summer months Council met four times and each meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m.

The early start was well-received by Administration. Not only did it reduce the time spent by staff “waiting around” for the meeting to begin, but the 10:00 p.m. curfew was also appreciated. Staff reported an improved work-life balance with the earlier start time. Moreover, the earlier start time did not conflict with public meeting participation and in fact, the Procedure By-law provides Council with the flexibility to adjust the order of business items to ensure public participation in its meetings. None of the Administrative staff reported receiving any concerns from the public in regard to the 6:00 p.m. start time during the four meetings held in July and August.

If Council elects to permanently change the start time of its Regular Meetings, the change will be presented in an amending by-law at a future meeting or as part of the comprehensive update that the by-law is currently undergoing. Additionally, notice of the time change will be posted to the Town’s website and on its social media pages to communicate the change to the public. The change to start time is proposed to take effect on January 1, 2021.

Housekeeping amendment RE: Closed Meetings

It is important that the Procedure By-law reflect the changes to the closed meeting rules outlined in the *Act*. Attached at Appendix A is By-law 99-2020, being a by-law to add four additional permitted exceptions to the closed meeting rules. In addition to those exceptions listed under Paragraph 22.a) through g) of the Town’s procedure by-law, the amending By-law adds provisions h) through k), as listed above. As Council is aware, the entire Procedure By-law is undergoing a comprehensive update, however, this addition should not be further delayed.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Effectively manage corporate resources and maximize performance in day-to-day operations.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations with respect to this report.

CONSULTATIONS

Administration

RECOMMENDATION

That Council directs Administration to amend the Procedure By-law to reflect the start time for Regular Meetings of Council to commence at 6:00 p.m. (with a curfew time of 10:00 p.m.) to be effective January 1, 2021, and that Public Notice of said change be provided on the Town's website and social media pages; and

That Council adopts Amending By-law 99-2020 at this Regular Meeting.

Jennifer Astrologo
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Director of Corporate Services/Clerk