

## **COUNCIL MEETING MANAGEMENT OPTIMIZATION**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The opportunity to review Council Meeting management optimization evolved during the analysis of the 2017 Council Calendar. This report investigates alternatives for the chairmanship role at Council and responds to the subsequent referral by the Legislative Governance Task Force to broaden the scope of this work to include methods of meeting management optimization.

### **CITY CLERK'S RECOMMENDATION**

That the Priorities and Finance Committee recommend that Council receive this report for information.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

At the 2016 December 13 meeting of the Legislative Governance Task Force, the Committee referred Report LGT2016-0958, Speaker of Council Legislative Model, to the City Clerk's Office to examine models of improving Council Meeting efficiencies, including the Speaker of Council Model and return to Council through the Priorities and Finance Committee no later than 2017 May.

At their 2016 November 28 Regular Meeting, Council adopted the following motion, "...that the Council Calendar Task Force Recommendation 4, as follows, contained in Report CTF2016-0920, with respect to a Speaker for Council, be referred back to the Council Calendar Task Force for an update from the City Clerk and the City Solicitor no later than 2016 December 31:

"4. Request Administration to consult with Law and look at best practices for speakers system in conducting Council Meetings."

### **BACKGROUND**

Calgary City Council receives its authority to set the rules for the governance of its meetings through the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c. M-26 (the "MGA") section 145 (b) which states Council may enact a bylaw regarding the procedure and conduct of Council. As identified through Council priorities, the procedure Council chooses should promote transparent decision making.

Council has enacted the Procedure Bylaw 44M2006 for this purpose. Administration is, in consultation with Members of Council, drafting a new procedure bylaw for Council's consideration. The new procedure bylaw is intended to make procedures at Council meetings both more efficient and easier to understand. Procedure bylaws outline the rules agreed to by Members of Council and provide the framework for meeting procedures through certainty on the process and delivering a fair and transparent decision making process.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

In order to evaluate opportunities to maximize Council Meeting management efficiency this report explores both alternate chairmanship models and optimization through tools identified in the Procedure Bylaw.

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### Chairing Council Meetings

The MGA section 154 provides that the Chief Elected Official (Mayor) presides at Council meetings, but Council may by bylaw provide that another person preside at Council meetings. As per the legislation of the MGA and Procedure Bylaw, the current chairmanship model of Calgary City Council has the Mayor presiding at all Council Meetings. There is the opportunity for the Mayor to leave the chair in order to participate in debate. In this instance, the Mayor calls upon the Deputy Mayor and/or Acting Mayor to move into the chairmanship role for conclusion of the item under debate. Section 60 (1-7) of the Procedure Bylaw 44M2006, provides the role of the Mayor as the Chair of Council meetings as follows;

1. *"shall maintain order and preserve decorum and may, if necessary, call a Member to order;*
2. *shall decide Points of Order and Points of Procedure without debate or comment*
3. *shall determine which member has the right to speak;*
4. *shall ensure all Members who wish to speak on a motion have spoken, that the Members are ready to vote and shall subsequently call the vote;*
5. *shall authorize, at the Meeting, the distribution of additional material for Corporate Record;*
6. *shall rule when a motion is out of order; and*
7. *shall rule when a motion is contrary."*

In order to evaluate the introduction of an alternate chairmanship model to Council Meetings, the City Clerk's Office engaged a third party parliamentarian to provide insight into the impact of chairmanship models, including the status quo, on meeting efficiency. Mr. Eli Mina, in his capacity as a Registered Parliamentarian, provided an opinion on chairing options contained in Attachment 1. Attachment 2 outlines the various chairmanship models, with implementation considerations, and a review of two Canadian jurisdictions with alternate chairing models in place. Should Council wish to pursue a chairing model scenario, which moves away from the status quo, direction will be required based on the implementation considerations contained in Attachment 2.

### Immediate Meeting Management Optimization Opportunities

Effective chairmanship under any model is contingent upon all Members of Council actively managing factors that contribute to meeting optimization. Existing tools under the Procedure Bylaw, when adhered to, ensure business can be conducted effectively and expeditiously. Based on the foundations set in Roberts Rules of Order as modified by Council, the Procedure Bylaw positions all members to contribute to efficient meetings through compliance with the rules. While the chairmanship model plays a part in the equation of meeting management optimization, the other part is the commitment of the shared responsibility of all participants to maximize the use of the tools of the Procedure Bylaw.

Suggestions identified by the City Clerk's Office through engagement, provide immediate considerations to introduce greater efficiency in the management of Council Meetings and are contained in Attachment 3. Immediate efficiencies are opportunities for improvement that can be made within the existing rules. Implementation of immediate Council Meeting management

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optimization opportunities will be supported by mandatory Council Orientation training received after the 2017 General Election and ongoing through the term of office.

When considering an item as delivering a beneficial Council Meeting management optimization opportunity, care has been taken to balance the outcomes within the various perspectives of the roles the participants deliver during a council meeting. For example, an efficiency that drives a time saving in a Council Meeting must be balanced with potentially negatively impacting the fairness and transparency of the decision being made.

### **Future Meeting Management Optimization Opportunities**

Future Council Meeting management optimization opportunities are dependent on Procedure Bylaw changes and are best supported by tool development and additional stakeholder engagement to drive successful implementation. Through research and engagement future opportunities focussed on improvements to streamlining public hearing processes and improved citizen and participant experience have been identified. These opportunities are highlighted to advise Council that work is underway that provides for opportunity to modernize the legislative meeting experience and align with a citizen focused delivery of services.

Lastly, an opportunity has been identified built from the success of the Committee review conducted in the summer of 2016, where more consideration has been given to the type of reporting forwarded to Council. The purpose of the Standing Policy Committees is to alleviate the workload of Council Meetings by empowering Committee members to provide recommendation to the larger body of Council within their specified Standing Policy Committee mandate. Successful leveraging of Committee work and acceptance of recommendations results in limited need to further debate Committee items at Council, leading to time savings.

Building on the philosophy that the majority of items before Council are for decision, the City Manager's Office and the City Clerk's Office have been investigating a new approach to "for information reporting". This reporting, that requires no decision of Council, can be time consuming and contributes to the length of the meeting. Administration suggests a new approach be taken that addresses both existing Council direction received "for information reporting" and a strategy to manage future "for information reporting" requests. The strategy must balance the benefits and transparency of quarterly, semi-annual and annual reporting being included in the legislative process, or providing for an efficient path for this communication either within meeting or through other communication channels. A future report on this topic will follow exploration of strategy options.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

The City Clerk's Office engaged with the City Manager's Office, Planning, the Law Department and Members of Council on potential Council Meeting management optimization. In addition to third party opinion solicitation from a Registered Parliamentarian, Members of Council were also engaged with respect to chairing of meetings and a possible change to the chairmanship model. Other jurisdictions provided information with respect to informing both the chairmanship model and meeting management optimization opportunities.

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### **Strategic Alignment**

The evaluation of the chairmanship model and presentation of Council Meeting management optimization opportunities aligns with Council's priority of a well-run city: "Calgary's government is open, responsive, accountable and transparent, delivering excellent services at a fair price. We work with our government partners to ensure we have the tools we need" (*Action Plan 2015-2018*).

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

Meeting management optimization delivers transparency and public benefit.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### **Current and Future Operating Budget:**

Requirement for a paid Speaker of Council identified under an alternate chairmanship model would necessitate identification of a budget source for funding. Estimated cost of a third party providing chairmanship based on 2016 Council Meeting hours would be approximately \$170,000 based on \$400.00 per/hr charge based on 31 Council Meetings.

The cost to deliver ongoing annual parliamentary training to maximize meeting efficiency and participation is approximately \$5000.00/year.

#### **Current and Future Capital Budget:**

None

### **Risk Assessment**

None

#### **REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Opportunities exist to improve all participants experience in the legislative process without compromising fair and transparent decision making. Optimizing the time spent in meetings drives effectiveness and a satisfying participant experience for the public, Council and Administration. In addition, the management of "for information" reporting through a defined strategy will strive to improve meeting optimization.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Parliamentary Opinion: Presiding Officer Options for Council Meetings
2. Chairmanship Models
3. Immediate Council Meeting Management Optimization Opportunities