



Council Policies and Bylaws Related to Councillor Absences and Departures

CSC2025-0110

2025 March 5 Council Services Committee

Recommendations

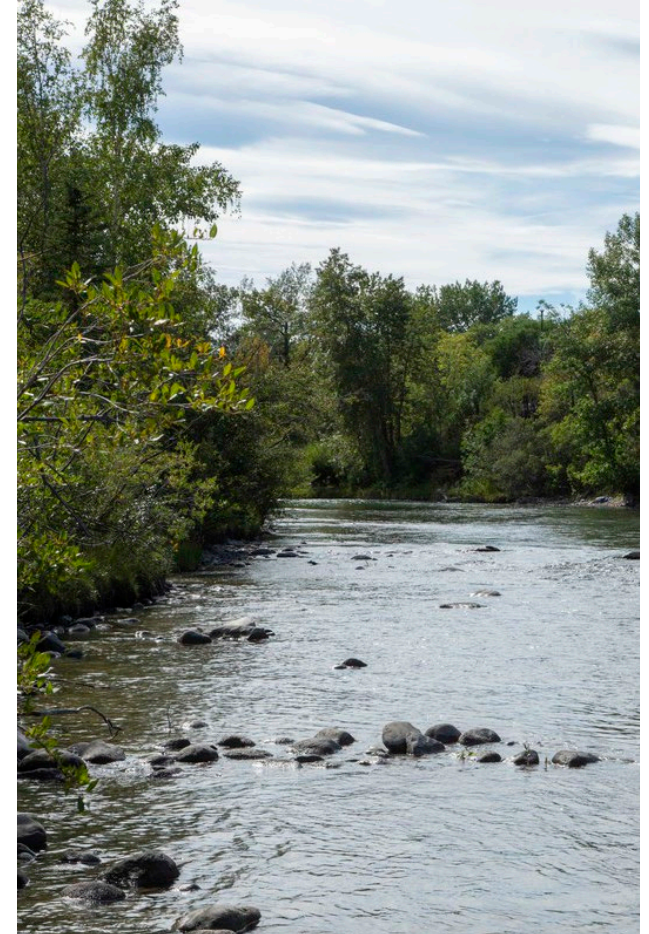
That the Council Services Committee recommend that Council direct Administration to report back to Council Services Committee no later than 2025 Q3 with:

1. A proposed Council policy respecting the vacancy of a councillor's seat, including a framework for Council to determine responsibilities for:
 - a. Interim representation of the impacted Ward;
 - b. Continued employment of Ward Office staff and provisions for service to constituents;
 - c. Service as deputy mayor;
 - d. Appointments to Board, Commission, and Committee vacancies arising from the vacancy of a councillor's seat;
 - e. Other matters as necessary; and
2. Amendments to existing bylaws and Council policies required to clarify the reporting structure for Ward Office staff in the event of a vacancy of a councillor's seat

Previous Council Direction



- At its 2024 December 17 Regular Meeting, Council directed Administration to:
 1. Review Council policies and bylaws relating to Councillors and Councillor Assistants (CC030, PAC010, PAC005, PAC012, PAC015) and identify amendments for discussion to a meeting of Council Services Committee in Q1 2025 that contemplate:
 - a. Departure of a Councillor before the end of the term;
 - b. Bereavement or medical leave of a Councillor;
 - c. Division of ward budgets;
 - d. Reporting structure for staff; and
 - e. Representation for communities
 2. Draft any new policies with respect to the absence of a Councillor as required, and return to Council through Council Services Committee in Q3 2025.



Highlights



- The City of Calgary does not have a specific Council policy to guide Council's decision-making respecting the vacancy of a councillor's seat.
- Establishing a new Council policy to address the implications of a vacant councillor's seat would address gaps in Council policy and provide Council with a framework to guide its decision-making, and to ensure continued representation of, and service for, constituents.
- An amendment to the *City Clerk Bylaw 73M94* may be required to align it with a proposed Council policy respecting the continued employment and reporting of Ward Office staff in the event of vacancy in a councillor's seat prior to the end of their term of office.
- Administration has reviewed options for bereavement and medical leave for Members of Council. While the *Municipal Government Act* ("MGA") provides explicitly for maternity and parental leave, no similar provisions are in place for other types of leave.

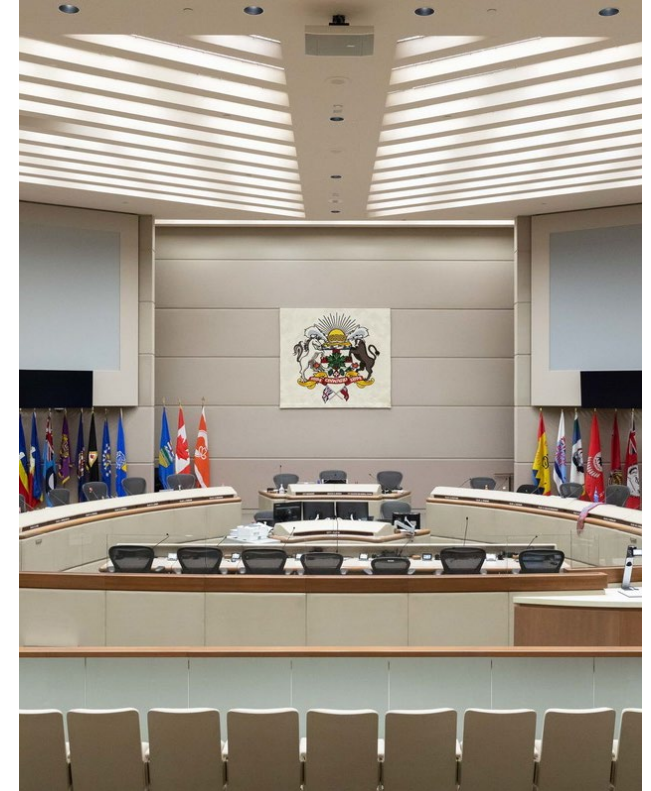
Current Policies and Bylaws

- There is no specific Council policy to guide Council's decision-making respecting a vacancy.
- Council has delegated authority to the City Clerk or their delegate to re-allocate a Ward Budget or use it to pay for approved expenses.
- Currently, Ward Office staff contracts terminate when the employing councillor's seat becomes vacant.
- The Councillors' Assistants Policy states that the Chair, Coordinating Committee of the Councillors Offices would become the employing councillor. This committee was disbanded and the Chair's responsibilities have been delegated to the City Clerk by Council in the *City Clerk Bylaw 73M94*.



Proposed Policy and Amendments

- A new Council policy respecting the vacancy of a councillor's seat would provide a framework for Council's decision-making with respect to:
 - Interim representation of the impacted ward
 - Continued employment of Ward Office staff
 - Service as deputy mayor
 - Appointments to Board, Commission and Committee Vacancies
 - Other matters as necessary.
- The circumstances leading to a vacancy could vary significantly in terms of cause, timing and other factors. The duration of a vacancy and capacity of individual councillors to assume additional responsibilities may determine Council's response in each instance.
- Administration will review existing bylaws and Council policies to clarify that the City Clerk does not become the employer of Ward Office staff in the event of a vacancy.



Leaves for Members of Council



- The MGA permits a Council to pass a bylaw respecting maternity and parental leave for councillors. The MGA does not provide for other types of leave.
- Administration is not aware of other jurisdictions with specific provisions for bereavement or medical leave.
- Absence from all Council Meetings within a 60-day period without the authorization of Council results in disqualification; however, Council may exercise its discretion to excuse a councillor's absence, by resolution on a case-by-case basis.



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