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Presented by: Marta Caufield, Director, Legal, Legislative and Records Services

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5.3

Recruitment & Onboarding for Committee of Council Appointments

Presented by: Marta Caufield, Director, Legal, Legislative and Records Services

RECOMMENDED MOTION(S)

1. That Administration implement the recommended recruitment and onboarding process improvements for Council Committee appointments as outlined in AR-24-208 beginning during the fall 2024 intake.
2. That Administration update the relevant Council Committee bylaws as outlined in AR-24-208 and present them to Council for approval by Q4 2024.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Administration is bringing forward recommendations related to a Council Motion brought forward at the December 5, 2023 Council meeting regarding recruitment and onboarding for appointments of members to Council Committees.

*Note - "Council Committees" is a term used throughout this agenda report, and it means only the following, unless indicated otherwise:

- Advisory Committees: Arts Development Advisory Committee (ADAC), Community Services Advisory Committee (CSAC), Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC), Policing Committee (PC), Seniors' Advisory Committee (SAC), Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).

- Steering Committees: Internal Audit Steering Committee (IASC).
- Boards: Assessment Review Board (ARB), Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB), Library Board (LB).

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

1. Current practice/approach for recruitment and onboarding

Recruitment

Council Committee recruitment is conducted on an annual basis each fall in accordance with Council Policy C-CC-12 Civic Agencies, with the goal of having successful St. Albert citizen-at-large applicants commencing their appointment to their respective Council Committee in January. In accordance with the *Procedure Bylaw*, members of the public are appointed to serve on Council Committees at the Organizational Meeting each year.

The *Procedure Bylaw* gives Committee of the Whole authority to recommend annual appointments of members of the public to Council Committees. Policy C-CC-12 outlines the procedure that is followed, which is that the mayor calls a Committee of the Whole meeting (held in camera), established for the purpose of interviewing applicants for appointments to Council Committees. The Committee of the Whole then makes recommendations to Council about who should be appointed to which Council Committee.

The recruitment process starts with a job advertisement going out for Council Committee vacancies. The applications are processed by administration in Legislative Services, and administration schedules the interviews. At the time of application for a Council Committee, applicants are asked to rank their preference, normally 1-10; this information is used by administration to schedule interviews. Typically, the interviews are scheduled for the applicant's first or second choice Council Committee, and all interested applicants are scheduled for an interview.

Committee of the Whole members are divided into groups of two to conduct the interviews. Administration endeavours to have the Committee member that currently serves on a Council Committee to interview those applicants who applied for that Council Committee.

Onboarding

Once appointments are complete, the newly appointed members are provided a "Committees of Council Orientation" by administration. The Orientation includes an overview of related policies and bylaws, with emphasis placed on member responsibilities, important Council Committee procedures, and the Committee Members' Code of Conduct. Other topics include roles of Council, Council Committee members, the chair, and administration (including the staff liaison and other support).

2. Municipal Scan

Administration undertook a municipal scan to ascertain what strategies and tactics other municipalities use to appoint members of the public to Council Committees. The following are the strategies from the municipalities which were able to respond to our request for information.

Edmonton

The Chair of the Committee and staff liaison to the respective Committee performs all duties related to recruitment and forwards recommendations for appointment to Council for consideration.

When a committee member re-applies (when the term of their appointment is up) a Reappointment Form is completed by the Chair and provided to Committee members for consideration.

City of Leduc

The Board Selection Committee is comprised of the Mayor and the Council member(s) currently serving on the respective Committee(s). The Board Selection Committee is provided with all applications received for each respective Committee for review along with a report from the Senior Administrative Liaison outlining the appropriate skill set for the related Board/Committee. The Board Selection Committee reviews the above noted information and may choose to conduct an interview of the applicant(s). The recommendation of appointments made by the Board Selection Committee is forwarded to Council for consideration.

Spruce Grove

An Application Review Panel, consisting of the Administrative Liaison and member of the City Clerk's Office, reviews applications and interviews all applicants and rates them based on established criteria which is related to the ability of perform the duties related to the Committee; qualifications must be clear, defining areas of experience, community service or areas of specialization where required. Qualifications are specific to the respective Committee. Once this process is completed the recommended applicants are presented to Council in closed session.

Red Deer

The Nominating Committee, which consists of three Council members, reviews all applications and makes its recommendation to Council for appointments to boards and committees at its Organizational meeting (no interviews are conducted).

Medicine Hat

The recruiting process is conducted by Council sitting in a committee manner and those Council members currently serving on the respective Board/Committee are provided with all applications received for the respective Board/Committee for review along with a report from the Senior Administrative Liaison outlining the appropriate skill set related to the respective Board/Committee. In some cases this may include an interview of the applicant(s). Recommendation of appointments by the Committee is forwarded to Council for consideration.

3. Recommendations for Recruitment Process

Based on discussions between Legislative Services and Human Resources & Safety, and based on the municipal scan done by administration, the following changes are being recommended to be implemented during the recruitment process for Council Committee members:

A. Applicant Screening

Administration's recommendation is that wherever objective criteria is established for a Council Committee, administration will screen applicants against these objective criteria prior to applicants being scheduled for interviews.

The types of criteria that will be screened for are:

- Residency: Is the applicant a resident of St. Albert? If not, no interview will be

scheduled.

- Employee: Is the applicant an employee of the City of St. Albert? Is yes, no interview will be scheduled.
- Specific qualifications needed to serve on a particular Council Committee, as applicable. If none of the qualifications are met, no interview will be scheduled. If some of the qualifications are met, an interview will be scheduled to further screen for suitability.

[No change to Council Policies or Bylaws is required to implement this change]

B. Development of Matrix

Screening for suitability for a Council Committee can occur through interviews, and administration recommends that a matrix be developed for certain Council Committees for use during interviews. The matrix would be a preferred method for appointing applicants to Council Committees and would be developed by Legislative Services in consultation with the Council Committee Chair and the Staff Liaison.

[No change to Council Policies or Bylaws is required to implement this change]

4. Recommendations for Onboarding Process

Based on discussions between Legislative Services and Human Resources & Safety, and based on the municipal scan done by administration, the following changes are being recommended to be implemented during the onboarding process for Council Committee members:

A. Police Information Checks

Police Information Checks should only be required for a specific purpose. This purpose could be for verification that prospective Council Committee members have high integrity and ethics, and no prior pattern or examples of inconsistent conduct with the Council Committee for which they are being considered. If a Police Information Check is requested, it means that applicants may be disqualified if a record is identified that is inconsistent with the work that the Council Committee is tasked to perform.

Through discussion with Human Resources & Safety, Legislative Services is recommending that a Police Information Check be required for prospective members of the IASC and Policing Committee, as a condition of appointment (which is a condition that would need to be met by applicants before after recruitment but before appointment can occur).

[No change to Council Policies or Bylaws is required to implement this change]

B. Confidentiality Agreements

All employees and contractors sign a form of confidentiality agreement prior to engaging in their work with or for the City. Currently, members of Council Committees are not uniformly required to enter into a confidentiality agreement upon their appointment.

The recommendation is for all new prospective members of Council Committees to be

required to enter into a confidentiality agreement prior to commencing their term. However, it is important to note that Legislative Services will also require any current member of Council Committees to enter into a confidentiality agreement, an additional process will occur outside of the onboarding process for 2025.

[No change to Council Policies or Bylaws is required to implement this change]

C. Advisory Committee Bylaws

Administration reviewed the Advisory Committee bylaws for consistency in terms of objective criteria for committee membership, as well as for the existence of a Code of Conduct.

Although implemented in practice, the bylaws do not consistently and uniformly state that all members must be residents of St. Albert or make it clear that City employees may not be members of Advisory Committees. In addition, not all of the Advisory Committee bylaws contain a code of conduct for their members, even though all Advisory Committee members are provided training about the Code of Conduct.

It is recommended that the Advisory Committee bylaws be updated to uniformly state that all members must be St. Albert residents and that City employees may not be members of Advisory Committees, as well as to ensure that all Advisory Committees have a robust Code of Conduct appended to them.

D. Onboarding

Once new Council Committee members are appointed, Legislative Services provides a “Committees of Council Orientation” for all members. The Orientation includes an overview of related policies and bylaws, with emphasis placed on member responsibilities, important Council Committee procedures, and the Committee Members’ Code of Conduct.

The recommendation is for onboarding to be updated to include more robust FOIP training for Council Committee members, in addition to the above.

[No change to Council Policies or Bylaws is required to implement this change]

5. Next Steps

Depending on direction received from SCOW, administration will bring forward all necessary bylaw or policy amendments for Council consideration.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS OR ENGAGEMENT

After Council passed motion CM-23-47 in December 2023, the Executive Director of the Library contacted administration to offer their perspective regarding the civil agency appointments process. Administration understands that the Executive Director would prefer for the Library Board to have more involvement in the recruitment process for Library Board members. If a new applicant screening and matrix process is implemented, administration could look at ways of integrating the Library Board chair into applicant screening based on objective criteria and development of a matrix, similar to how other Council Committee chairs would be integrated into the creation of matrices.

Administration has notified the Executive Director that this agenda report is coming before SCOW today, and advised of the process to register to speak.

IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

Financial:

None at this time.

Compliance & Legal:

None at this time.

Program or Service:

None at this time.

Organizational:

Depending on the process selected, staff capacity may be impacted to screen applicants and complete matrices for Council Committees.

Risks

None at this time.

ALIGNMENT TO PRIORITIES IN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

None at this time.

ALIGNMENT TO LEVELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

None at this time.

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL DIRECTION OR MANDATORY STATUTORY PROVISION

City Council Policy C-CG-09 - Council Committees

City Council Policy C-CC-12 Civic Agencies

On December 5, 2023, Council approved the following motion:

CM-23-47

That by Q2 2024, Administration makes recommendations regarding best practices regarding recruitment and onboarding for Committee of Council appointments, and associated recommendations for amendments to applicable policies or bylaws.

IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. Direct administration to make different changes to the recruitment or onboarding process for Council Committee members.

Financial:

None anticipated.

Compliance & Legal:

None anticipated.

Program or Service:

None anticipated.

Organizational:

Depending on the process selected, staff capacity in Legislative Services and various supporting departments may be impacted.

Risks

None anticipated.

2. Do nothing.

If Standing Committee of the Whole does not wish to support the recommendations, administration will continue with its current practices for recruitment and onboarding of Committee/Board members.

Financial:

None at this time.

Compliance & Legal:

None at this time.

Program or Service:

None at this time.

Organizational:

None at this time.

Risks

If nothing is changed, the Council Committee bylaws will not be updated and will not all align in terms of objective criteria for Council Committee membership (residency, and not employed by the City of St. Albert), or their Codes of Conduct.

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