



REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: September 12, 2022

TITLE: CP-1039-22 - Proclamation Policy

DIVISION: Corporate Services

SUMMARY:

For the past 15 years, it has been the practice of the City of Spruce Grove to not issue proclamations. However, Council has expressed a desire to reverse this practice in order to highlight dates and events that are significant to the community. The City Clerk's Office conducted a jurisdictional scan of other municipalities to ascertain their approach to issuing proclamations. Based on this scan, the City Clerk's Office has developed a proposed Proclamation Policy. The proposed Proclamation Policy was reviewed, and feedback was provided by Committee of the Whole on August 15, 2022. The attached Proclamation Policy has been amended to address some matters raised at Committee, however the final determination of Standing Proclamation dates (4.1 (a)) has not been amended from what was presented on August 15 to allow for Council to determine the dates they wish to amend through motion.

PROPOSED MOTION:

THAT CP-1039-22 - Proclamation Policy be approved.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

Based on a jurisdictional scan, the City Clerk's Office has developed a proposed Proclamation Policy where there are three avenues for issuing a Proclamation:

1. Standing Proclamations:
 - These would be proclamations that are proclaimed annually and have either an international, national, or provincial foundation and are generally seen as uncontroversial. A list of proposed Standing Proclamations is included in the

policy. The proposed Standing Proclamations has been limited to under 15 proclamations to prevent the issuing of proclamations from becoming too onerous.

- In consultation with subject matter experts, Communications will draft these proclamations.

2. Proclamation Request by a Charitable or Not-for-Profit Organization

- The main two criteria for permitting the proclamation are that the requesting organization has a community presence and that the proclamation topic would be of benefit or interest to the residents.
- For these proclamations, the requesting organization would be responsible for the wording of the proclamation and organizing any advertising or activities/events and the associated costs.

3. Councillor Request for Proclamations

- Councillors may request a proclamation by discussing with the Mayor. The decision will be at the discretion of the Mayor.
- The requesting Councillor will write their own statement for the proclamation.

The proposed Proclamation Policy was reviewed by Committee of the Whole on August 15, 2022 and feedback was provided. Below is a summary of the feedback and Administration's recommendations with respect to this feedback.

Proposed Additional Standing Proclamations

The following Standing Proclamations were proposed:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Earth Day
- Filipino Heritage Day
- Emancipation Day
- Remembrance Day

Administration recommends that the Standing Proclamations refrain from highlighting specific ethnic groups (e.g., Filipino Heritage Day) outside of Indigenous because it may result in one or more ethnic groups in Spruce Grove being overlooked. Administration reviewed data from the 2016 Census (such level of information is not yet available from the 2021 Census) to gain a greater understanding of the ethnic origins identified in the municipality and notes it would be challenging to address the breadth of ethnicity in the community through a formal proclamation listing. Administration recommends that if a Councillor wishes to highlight or acknowledge a specific ethnic group that a proclamation be brought forward under section 4.3 -

Councillor Request for Proclamations. Administration is also developing opportunities for deeper learnings about the various ethnicities that make up the City of Spruce Grove to continue to mature the lens of how Administration develops policy and delivers programming as presented in the 2022-2025 Council Strategic Plan.

Administration also recommends not adding Remembrance Day since the City recognizes Remembrance Day through the of lowering flags under the Flag Protocol Policy, holding a Remembrance Day event, and conducting a Poppy Ceremony during the Council meeting before Remembrance Day.

Although Committee did not request that National Indigenous History Month be removed, upon a subsequent review of the policy, Administration is recommending that it be removed given the number of Standing Proclamations that would occur in June and that there are three other Standing Proclamations related to indigenous peoples (i.e. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit People Day of Awareness, National Indigenous People's Day, and National Day of Truth and Reconciliation). The logic for the recognition of the Indigenous Peoples dates is tied to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and Council's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

It is recommended that at the start of each term, the new City Council review this policy and the Standing Proclamations to affirm what dates they wish to formally recognize through policy and/or through independent Councillor statements at Council.

It is recommended that if members of Council wish to add and/or remove certain dates to the Standing Proclamations as currently presented, that this be done so by amending motion(s).

Multiple Proclamations at One Council Meeting

There was feedback that having more than one proclamation at a Council meeting was not ideal as it may dilute the meaning or awareness of a proclamation. Administration can advise that there likely will not be many instances of more than one proclamation occurring at a Council meeting. However, when issuing a proclamation, it is important the proclamation occur before the date being proclaimed, and depending on the Standing Proclamation listing, the number of proclamation requests received and the proclamation dates that fall within a certain timeframe, it is possible there could be more than one proclamation made at a Council meeting.

Lighting to Align with a Proclamation

There was a question regarding whether lights will be used to bring awareness to a date/topic. For example, some municipalities light up their City Hall in certain colours to recognize specific proclaimed dates; the City does not have the infrastructure in place to align lighting with proclamations at this time. The City is looking at lighting options, and if installed in the future, there may be an opportunity to align lighting with proclamations.

Honouring Individuals in Proclamations

There was feedback that it would be valuable to have the option to honour individuals in proclamations. Section 5.1(d) has been amended to include special honours for individuals to account for proclamations that may honour an individual rather than an organization.

Proclamations That Will Not Be Considered

Section 5.3(f) indicates that a proclamation will not be considered if it “is not related to the community and does not benefit or represent the interests of the majority of residents”. There was feedback that the wording “the interests of the majority of residents” should be removed because even though a proclamation may not be of interest to the majority of residents, it may be important to bring awareness to residents on certain dates/topics. This section has been amended accordingly.

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:

Council may choose to make amendments to the policy.

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:

The proclamation policies and approaches of other municipalities were reviewed to ensure best practices.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:

A [Proclamation's webpage](#) has been developed where all proclamations for a given year will be posted. Councillors can then choose to share a specific proclamation after it is issued via their social media accounts.

IMPACTS:

Proclamations will provide Council as a whole, Councillors, and charitable/non-for-profit organizations an opportunity to highlight and bring awareness to an issue or topic.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

If any advertising or events were held to align with Standing Proclamations or Councillor Request for Proclamations, there may be a budget impact.