



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 13.1.2**  
**Executive Standing Committee**  
**September 25, 2023**

**TO:** Mayor and Members of Executive Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:**



Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** September 19, 2023

**SUBJECT:** 2024 Halifax Regional Council Meeting Schedule

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**ORIGIN**

Halifax Regional Council must adopt a schedule for meetings of Regional Council for the upcoming year.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Administrative Order 1, the *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order* (Administrative Order One), as follows:

8. The Council shall meet on such Tuesdays determined by Council, and shall be held at such an hour as deemed appropriate by the Mayor and CAO jointly.

**Schedule 6, Executive Standing Committee - Terms of Reference**

8. The Executive Standing Committee shall act as a review committee for matters related to the general self-governance and administration of the Council as directed by the Council.

Appendix A

2. (1) A public hearing held by Council shall be advertised to commence at 6:00 p.m., or such other time as set by resolution of the Council

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. approve the proposed 2024 Regional Council meeting schedule as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report; and

2. direct, in accordance with Administrative Order One, Appendix A, Subsection 2(1), that if the only business for Regional Council listed on the agenda for the meeting is one or more Public Hearings, then the public hearing shall be advertised to commence at 5:00 p.m. rather than 6:00 pm.

## **BACKGROUND**

In accordance with Administrative Order One, Section 8, regular Council sessions are held on those Tuesdays determined by Council at an hour deemed appropriate by the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) jointly. Regularly scheduled meetings of Council may be cancelled with the agreement of the Mayor and CAO. Other meetings of Council may be added with appropriate notice provided it is done in accordance with the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter and Administrative Order One.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since amalgamation Regional Council has adopted a meeting schedule for the coming year. This process allows members of Council, staff and the public to be notified and plan in advance for the Council meetings.

The proposed modified bi-weekly schedule has been adjusted this year to allow for additional, if required, meetings for public hearings only (Attachment 1). This schedule proposes 20 regular meetings, 3 if required meetings, and 3 if required public hearing meetings which are proposed to commence at 5:00pm. The purpose of this is to allow for additional meetings for hearings if required, have them start earlier and allow for more strategic agenda planning, holding other items for regular meetings where possible and directing public hearings to specific dates.

The proposed schedule considers statutory holidays, March Break, Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Annual Conference, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities' Fall Conference, the proposed 2024 Budget Committee schedule, and the number of meetings provided for in 2023.

Where 2024 is an election year, with polls anticipated to open as early as October 10 and the Municipal Election on October 19, 2024, Council meetings are anticipated to end following the close of nominations on September 10, 2024, until the Swearing in Ceremony on November 5. Although there are no restrictions in the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* or the *Municipal Elections Act* preventing Council from conducting business close to an election, there may be a perceived benefit to incumbents. If meetings are needed during this period, an if required meeting is proposed for October 1 and additional special meetings of Council could be called to deal with urgent business.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications associated with the recommended course of action.

## **RISK CONSIDERATION**

A delay in approval could result in additional delays for other meeting schedules, as consideration of the approved Council schedule is used when proposing other Committee meeting dates.

In terms of Council not holding meetings from September 10 until November 5, due to the 2024 Municipal Election, while there is nothing in legislation that would prevent Regional Council from holding meetings, there have been concerns raised in the past about holding meetings during the election period.

There may be a corporate risk with no meetings for this duration where approvals required by Council may delay items. This risk can be mitigated by early communication of the 2024 schedule and planning to have any items that require Council approval dealt with no later than the September 10, 2024. Finally, an if required meeting is proposed for October 1 and additional special meetings of Council could be called to deal with urgent business if needed.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The 2024 meeting schedule once adopted, is posted online at Halifax.ca to enable members of the public and media to have access to the meeting schedule.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Amendments to the proposed 2024 Regional Council meeting schedule as outlined in Attachment 1 may be made as required.

Executive Standing Committee could recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve the proposed 2024 Regional Council meeting schedule as outlined in Attachment 2 of this report. If this alternative is passed, part 2 of the recommendation would not be required and item 1 would need to be amended to change the Attachment number from 1 to 2.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Proposed Modified bi-weekly 2024 Council Schedule with If Required Meeting Dates for Public Hearings

Attachment 2 – Proposed Modified bi-weekly 2024 Council Schedule

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Laura Lewis, Council Coordinator – 902.490.4210

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**Attachment 1 – Proposed Modified bi-weekly 2024 Council Schedule with if required Public Hearing meetings**

**2024 HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL SCHEDULE**

Meetings of Regional Council are scheduled to commence at 10:00 a.m. with final meeting time to be confirmed at the approval of the agenda.

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEETING</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEETING</b>
<b>January</b>	January 2	No scheduled meeting	<b>July</b>	July 2	No scheduled meeting
	January 9	Regional Council		July 9	Regional Council
	January 16	No scheduled meeting		July 16	No scheduled meeting
	January 23	Regional Council		July 23	No scheduled meeting
	January 30	Regional Council – 5pm (if required Public Hearings)		July 30	No scheduled meeting
<b>February</b>	February 6	Regional Council	<b>August</b>	August 6	Regional Council (If required)
	February 13	No scheduled meeting (Budget Committee)		August 13	No scheduled meeting
	February 20	Regional Council (If required)		August 20	Regional Council
	February 27	No scheduled meeting		August 27	No scheduled meeting
<b>March</b>	March 5	Regional Council	<b>September</b>	September 3	Regional Council
	March 12	No scheduled meeting (March Break 11-15)		September 10	Regional Council ( <b>Nomination Day</b> )
	March 19	Regional Council		September 17	No scheduled meeting
	March 26	Regional Council		September 24	No scheduled meeting
<b>April</b>	April 2	No scheduled meeting (Easter)	<b>October</b>	October 1	Regional Council (If required)
	April 9	Regional Council		October 8	No scheduled meeting
	April 16	No scheduled meeting		October 15	No scheduled meeting ( <b>Election Day Oct 19</b> )
	April 23	Regional Council		October 22	No scheduled meeting
	April 30	Regional Council (If required - Budget Approval Contingency Date)  Regional Council – 5pm (if required Public Hearings)		October 29	No scheduled meeting ( <b>Last Day for Recount Application</b> )
<b>May</b>	May 7	Regional Council	<b>November</b>	November 5	Regional Council - 6pm Swearing in Ceremony
	May 14	No scheduled meeting		November 12	Regional Council
	May 21	Regional Council		November 19	Regional Council (Deputy Mayor Selection)
	May 28	Regional Council – 5pm (if required Public Hearings)		November 26	No scheduled meeting (NSFM Nov 26-29)
<b>June</b>	June 4	Regional Council	<b>December</b>	December 3	Regional Council
	June 11	No scheduled meeting (FCM June 6-9)		December 10	Regional Council
	June 18	Regional Council		December 17	No scheduled meeting
	June 25	No scheduled meeting		December 24	No scheduled meeting
				December 31	No scheduled meeting

**Other Dates:**

- January 1 – New Years Day
- February 19 – Heritage Day
- March 29 – Good Friday
- April 1 – Easter Monday
- May 20 – Victoria Day
- July 1 – Canada Day
- August 5 – Natal Day
- September 2 – Labour Day
- September 30 – Truth & Reconciliation Day
- October 14 – Thanksgiving
- November 11 – Remembrance Day
- December 25 – Christmas
- December 26 – Boxing Day

**Attachment 2 – Proposed Modified bi-weekly 2024 Council Schedule**

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