



Subject: *Special Election 2022 - District 4 - Shubenacadie*
To: Corporate & Residential Services Committee
Date Prepared: May 9, 2022
Related Motions:
Prepared by: Sheralee MacEwan, Assistant Municipal Clerk
Approved by: Kim Ramsay, Chief Administrative Officer

Summary

Due to the resignation of Councillor Ian Knockwood, there is need to conduct a Special Election for District 4 - Shubenacadie, in keeping with the Municipal Elections Act. This report recommends dates and proceeding with electronic vote options (Phone and Internet).

Financial Impact Statement

\$15,000 Based on costs for the 2021 Special Election District 7

(The balance in the Election Reserve is \$77,318.52)

Finance staff recommend use of the General Tax Rate 2021/2022 Year-End Surplus, to protect the election reserve for the 2024 Regular Election.

Recommendation

That the Corporate & Residential Services Committee recommends that Council authorize Staff to conduct a Special Election in District 4 by electronic methods and other decisions as outlined in the recommended motion.

Recommended Motion

Move that the Corporate & Residential Services Committee recommends to Council, that Council:

- *Appoint the Chief Administrative Officer as the Returning Officer for the 2022 Special Election for District 4;*
- *Gives authority to the CAO to determine the tariff of fees and expenses for the Special Election;*
- *Gives authority to the CAO to appoint an Assistant Returning Officer;*
- *Approves the date of the Special Election Regular Poll Day on Saturday, July 23, 2022 and Advance Polling Period starting Thursday, July 14, 2022;*
- *Authorize the expenditure of up to \$15,000 from the General Tax Rate 2021/2022 Year-End Surplus;*
- *Authorize the use of the Nova Scotia permanent registry of voters provided by Elections Nova Scotia as the preliminary list of electors;*
- *Authorize election staff to continue to amend the electors' list database in conjunction with the electronic voting system up to and including Poll Day, July 23, 2022; and that,*
- *Intelivote Systems Inc. be hired to provide electronic voting services.*

Background

The Municipal Government Act outlines the requirements to conduct a Special Election to fill a vacancy.

- Within four weeks of a vacancy, Council shall name a day for a special election to fill the vacancy
- The fixed day for the special election shall be a Saturday not more than eleven weeks after the meeting of Council at which the day was named

- Nomination day for a Special Election shall be the fourth Tuesday preceding ordinary polling day
- A Special Election shall be conducted as near as may be in accordance with the provisions governing general elections
- An advance poll shall be held on the Tuesday, the fourth day before ordinary polling day; And one other day fixed by Council, by resolution, which shall be either Thursday, the ninth day before ordinary polling day or Saturday, the seventh day before ordinary polling day.

2021 Special Election - District 7 - Lantz-Milford

The 2021 Special Election for District 7, was successfully conducted 100% electronically. The election participation increased 0.50% over the 2020 Regular Election which was a hybrid of electronic and in-person voting.

Election participation = 42.1%
 Voters who used the internet to vote = 75.9%
 Voters who used the phone to vote = 24.1%
 Paper Ballots were not provided

2020 Regular Election

Council was also satisfied with the success of using an electronic voting system (internet and phone) in the 2020 Regular Election. Voter turnout numbers were strong at 41.6%. 89% of those who voted used an electronic method.

Election participation = 41.6%
 Voters who used the internet to vote = 72.4%
 Voters who used the phone to vote = 16.4%
 Voters who used the paper ballot to vote = 11.2%

Electronic voting offers voters the ability to vote by phone or online which removes physical access barriers such as transportation and provides an opportunity for residents to vote from their own homes, which during a pandemic is especially important for some.

Costs (Paper vs. Electronic)

Cost to do electronic voting (internet & phone) was \$13/vote (2020) and \$14/vote (2021)
 Cost to run poll stations was \$74/vote (2020)

Electronic only voting reduces the need for rental space, staff, and materials. An electronic only election can be planned and executed internally by municipal staff.

Discussion

Based on the legislative requirements, the following schedule is proposed:

April 27, 2022- Councillor issued formal resignation notice effective this date
 May 25, 2022 - Council names the day for Special Election for Saturday, July 23
 June 28, 2022 - Nomination Day
 July 14 - July 22 - Advance polling period
 July 23 - Special Election - Regular Poll

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Organizational Values:

- Responsive, transparent & accountable
- Informed and sustainable decision-making

Key Strategies:

- Corporate Excellence

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Nova Scotia Municipal Elections Act
Section 13

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Use of the General Tax Rate Surplus would protect the Election Reserve balance for use for the 2024 Regular Election.

Alternatives

N/A

Attachments

N/A