

**To:** David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Amy Humphries, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/City Clerk  
**Re:** Procedure By-law Update – Public Release of Agendas

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### **AIM**

To amend Municipal Code Chapter 16 - Procedure to release the Council agenda publicly at the same time as it is released to Council and staff.

### **BACKGROUND**

The current process for releasing the agenda for regularly scheduled Council meetings is to circulate the agenda to Council and staff on the Friday before the Council meeting and to publish the agenda on the City website for the public by noon on Monday.

### **COMMENTS**

Staff was recently made aware that the current process for releasing the agenda creates uncertainty around whether agenda documents can be shared or discussed with anyone outside of Council and staff before the agenda becomes public on the Monday. The purpose of the current process is to allow members of Council the opportunity to review the material before they start receiving questions and inquiries from the public or the media. However, the wording of the Procedure By-law does not explicitly state the agenda is considered confidential until released publicly.

Staff performed a jurisdictional review of all Oxford municipalities with respect to publishing of agendas. The County of Oxford and all other lower-tier municipalities in Oxford make the agendas public at the same time as it is released to Council. As such, it is recommended that Woodstock follow this same standard practice. Alternatively, Council could direct that the Procedure By-law be updated to explicitly state that the agenda is considered a confidential document until the Monday preceding the Council meeting.

If Council is supportive of releasing the agenda publicly on the Friday before the meeting, staff request that the deadline for agenda items be changed from 2:00 p.m. to 12 noon on Friday to allow staff additional time to ensure the agenda can be published to the agenda management software as well as the City website in a timely manner on that day.

Minor amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 16 – Procedure are required in order to effect this change and are included as a by-law in this agenda.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Woodstock City Council refer the 'Procedure By-law Update – Public Release of Agendas' report to the by-law section of the agenda.

*Authored by: Amy Humphries, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/City Clerk*

*Approved by: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer*