

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Amy Humphries, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer & City Clerk

Re: Proclamation and Community Flag Raising Policies

AIM

To update Council Policies GA002 – Proclamations and GA012 – Lowering Flags to Half-Mast.

BACKGROUND

It has been a long-standing practice in the City of Woodstock for the Mayor to have decision-making authority regarding the approval of proclamations and community flag raising requests. The current proclamation policy does not provide criteria for the approval or denial of proclamation requests. Further, the Council policy for lowering flags to half-mast does not speak to community flag raisings and the criteria for the approval or denial of such requests.

COMMENTS

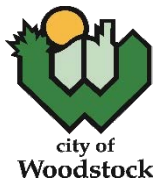
The inclusion of criteria for the approval and denial of these requests ensures that applications are considered in a consistent, fair, and inclusive manner. A redlined version of the proposed updates to these policies is attached to this report for Council's consideration. The proposed amendments ensure that approved requests are generally with respect to charitable campaigns, public awareness campaigns, and celebrations and special events of significance to the City of Woodstock. Further, criteria for the denial of requests are included such as matters contrary to City of Woodstock strategic goals, policies or by-laws or matters that incite discrimination, hatred, disorder, violence, or racism.

RECOMMENDATION

That Woodstock City Council approve updates to Council Policy GA002 – Proclamations and GA012 – Raising of Community Flags and Lowering Flags to Half-Mast.

Authored by: Amy Humphries, B. Math, M.P.A., Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/City Clerk

Approved by: David Creery, M.B.A., P. Eng., Chief Administrative Officer

	City of Woodstock Policy Manual
Subject:	Proclamations
Policy Number:	GA002
Revision:	02¹
Approved by Council:	October 8, 1970
Amended:	<u>April 7, 2011</u><u>September 21, 2023</u>

Statement Of Principle

To provide a framework for the issuance of proclamations ~~by the Mayor.~~ Proclamations are ceremonial documents issued and signed by the Mayor on behalf of Woodstock City Council that officially recognize public awareness campaigns, charitable fundraising campaigns, arts and cultural celebrations, and special events of significance to the City of Woodstock. The requester must clearly identify the significance and connection of the proclamation to the mandate and goals as set out in the City of Woodstock's Strategic Plan. A proclamation does not constitute a personal or civic endorsement.

Administration

Requests for the proclamation of various days/weeks/months for various purposes from any organization will be submitted to the Office of the Mayor for consideration. Such applications shall be in writing, must provide sufficient background information about the organization and cause or event being proclaimed, and contain the wording of the proclamation desired.

After examination of the merits of each request, the Mayor is authorized to approve or deny any proclamation in accordance with this policy. If the request is not approved, the Mayor's Office will prepare a letter of denial, outlining the reasons for the denial in accordance with this policy.
~~for the setting aside of various periods of time for purposes such as "Fire Prevention Week" or "Credit Union Day" or any similar proclamation. The authorization for the Mayor to approve such proclamation will apply only to those organizations which, in the opinion of the Mayor, clearly merit the endorsement of the City. If it is not clearly the case, the application for such proclamation may be referred to the City Council for a decision.~~

If approved, ~~The~~ the applicant organization will be advised of the endorsement of such proclamation in a manner suitable to the occasion either in writing or as otherwise may be deemed desirable by the Mayor.

The Mayor, whenever possible, will read the proclamation at an open Council meeting prior to the commencement of the meeting and present the proclamation, once read, to a representative of the organization, or the proclamation will be read at a location agreed upon by the Mayor and the organization.

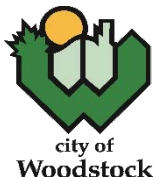
In the event that such proclamation is to be published in any manner which would incur costs for such publication, the applicant organization shall pay all associated costs relative to the proclamation.

Proclamation Criteria

Proclamations will not be issued for:

- Matters of political controversy, ideological or religious beliefs or individual conviction.
- Matters contrary to City of Woodstock Strategic Goals, policies, or by-laws.
- National, Independence or Republic Days.
- Campaigns or events intended for profit-making purposes.
- Matters that incite discrimination, hatred, disorder, violence, or racism.
- Matters attempting to influence government policy.
- Political parties/organizations or election campaigns.

Revision Date	Rev #	Particulars
April 7, 2011	01	Process updates
<u>September 21, 2023</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>Include criteria regarding the approval of proclamations</u>

	City of Woodstock Policy Manual
Subject:	<u>Raising of Community Flags and</u> Lowering of Flags to Half-Mast
Policy Number:	GA012
Revision:	<u>032</u>
Approved by Council:	May 17, 2001
Amended:	<u>October 7, 2021</u><u>September 21, 2023</u>

Statement Of Principle

To define the criteria and process for raising community flags and half-masting of flags.

Note: Canadian and provincial flags shall be flown in accordance with their respective flag protocols. All flags raised shall be displayed in accordance with proper flag etiquette, including appropriate sizing, positioning, and maintenance.

Community Flag Raisings

This policy aims to ensure that community flag raisings are conducted in a fair, inclusive, and respectful manner while promoting community pride, diversity, and civic engagement. Flags raised in Woodstock should generally align with the values of the community, promote inclusivity, and comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The raising of community flags on the municipal flagpole in Museum Square is permitted in order to recognize non-profit or charitable organizations, support public awareness campaigns, and celebrate achievements or civic events. The requester must clearly identify the significance and connection of the flag raising to the mandate and goals as set out in the City of Woodstock's Strategic Plan.

Requests for community flags to be raised will be submitted to the Office of the Mayor for consideration. Such applications shall be in writing and must provide sufficient background information about the organization and purpose and significance of the flag raising.

After examination of the merits of each request, the Mayor is authorized to approve or deny any flag raising request in accordance with this policy. If the request is not approved, the Mayor's Office will prepare a letter of denial, outlining the reasons for the denial in accordance with this policy.

If approved, the applicant organization will be advised of the endorsement of such flag raising in a manner suitable to the occasion either in writing or as otherwise may be deemed desirable by the Mayor. The City of Woodstock flag will be temporarily removed to permit approved flags to be flown. If there are multiple requests for the same time period, the timing of the flag raisings can be coordinated at the discretion of the Mayor's Office. The requesting organization shall be responsible for providing the appropriate flag to be raised.

Flag raisings will not be approved for:

- Matters of political controversy, ideological or religious beliefs or individual conviction.
- Matters contrary to City of Woodstock Strategic Goals, policies, or by-laws.
- National, Independence or Republic Days.
- Campaigns or events intended for profit-making purposes.
- Matters that incite discrimination, hatred, disorder, violence, or racism.
- Matters attempting to influence government policy.
- Political parties/organizations or election campaigns.

Half-Mast

Flags are authorized to be lowered to provide for a public tribute to a past or present elected official, City employee, or other individual, upon their death. Upon notice of the death of a past or present Member of Parliament or a Member of Provincial Parliament representing Oxford or a Woodstock municipally elected official or City employee, the flags located at the following City of Woodstock locations will fly at half-mast until sunset of the day of the funeral service:

Woodstock City Hall, 500 Dundas Street
Engineering Services, 944 James Street
Reeves Community Complex, 381 Finkle Street
Museum Square, 466 Dundas Street
Fire Hall, 1203 Parkinson Road
Fire Hall, 251 Vansittart Avenue

The City Clerk will be authorized to order the raising or the lowering of flags at properties and facilities listed above.

The Fire Chief may order the lowering of the flags at the fire stations in mourning for other fire and emergency personnel who have died in the line of duty, or any other commemoration or solemn occasion.

The flags may also be flown at half-mast for a person or persons not specifically identified in this policy, or for a local, National or Internationally significant event, at the discretion of the Mayor and/or CAO.

The onus for notifying the City Clerk's Department of a death would be the responsibility of either, the family, the public, a member of Council, or the Mayor and/or CAO.

Revision Date	Rev #	Particulars
July 12, 2012	01	Formerly GA015
October 7, 2021	02	Add other city facilities and allow Mayor and/or CAO to have discretion for lowering of flags
<u>September 21, 2023</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>Inclusion of Community Flag protocols in the policy</u>