

TOWN OF LUNENBURG
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, May 30, 2023 | 6 pm
Lunenburg Town Hall – Council Chamber



Notice: Council meetings are held in person at Town Hall. Members of the public can attend meetings in person or view meetings through the Zoom livestream. To livestream this meeting starting at 6 pm, use this Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88956545878>

Recordings of all meetings are available on [YouTube](#).

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgement of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Draft motion: Moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda for the May 30, 2023 special meeting as presented.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 2023 Special Election

Draft motions: Moved and seconded that Council appoint Kayla Byrne as Returning Officer for the Town of Lunenburg to conduct regular and special elections.

Moved and seconded that Council appoint Kelly Jardine as Assistant Returning Officer to assist the Returning Officer.

Moved and seconded that Council set Saturday, August 12, 2023 as the date of the Special Election.

Moved and seconded that Council set June 7, 2023 through June 21, 2023 as the revision period for the List of Electors; and that the Returning Officer have an amended List of Electors by July 5, 2023.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Subject: 2023 Special Election
From: Kayla Byrne, Municipal Clerk
Reviewed by: Jamie Doyle, CAO
Date: May 30, 2023



Recommendation

That Council appoint Kayla Byrne as Returning Officer for the Town of Lunenburg to conduct regular and special elections.

That Council appoint Kelly Jardine as Assistant Returning Officer to assist the Returning Officer.

That Council set Saturday, August 12, 2023 as the date of the Special Election.

That Council set June 7, 2023 through June 21, 2023 as the revision period for the List of Electors; and that the Returning Officer have an amended List of Electors by July 5, 2023.

Alternatives

- That Council direct staff to hire a Returning Officer who is not a staff member.
- That Council direct staff to determine an earlier or later day for the 2023 Special Election.

Background

Matt Risser officially resigned as the Mayor of Lunenburg on May 9, 2023. As per the Municipal Elections Act (MEA), Council must set a date for the special election within four weeks of the vacancy. This special meeting of Council was called to ensure this timeline is met.

Discussion

Alternative voting

The [Town's Alternative Voting By-law](#) authorizes that the Town may conduct municipal elections using alternative voting methods. The 2023 special election will be paperless, meaning voting will only take place by telephone or online. On Election Day, Aug. 12, Town Hall will be open as a polling station for anyone who needs assistance voting — staff will have computers set up and will be able to walk voters through the process if needed. Advance polling will take place starting on Aug. 3, 2023 through until Election Day. During this time, voters will be able to vote online or by telephone at time of day or night. Voters needing assistance may also come into Town Hall during regular business hours.

Alternative voting services will be provided by Intelivote Services Inc. — the same company that provided alternative voting services for the Town's last municipal election in 2020.

As was demonstrated in the 2020 Municipal Election, the voters of the Town of Lunenburg responded well to alternative voting methods and staff received positive feedback respecting increased accessibility whether that be by virtue of those who found voting to be more accessible due to physical access, time, flexibility and convenience.

A paperless election also requires less supplies (such as ballots, ballot boxes, voting stations, etc.) and less staff or hired poll workers to physically run advanced polls and election day polls.

The paperless 2020 municipal election saw an increase in voter participation over the previous two municipal elections. Voter participation for the 2020 election was 64.1% compared to 45.6% in 2016 and 58.8% in 2012. A full breakdown of the 2020 municipal election is available on the Town's website.

More recently, the Town of Mahone Bay (TOMB) held a paperless special election in November of 2022. TOMB staff confirmed their experience with a paperless special election was a positive one.

Vacancy created by a councillor running for mayor

As per the MEA, if a current councillor decides to file their nomination papers for the mayor's position they must vacate their councillor seat. Should this happen then the special election will be held to fill both the mayor's vacancy and the councillor's vacancy.

If the councillor who had vacated their seat to run for mayor isn't the successful candidate, they cannot return to their original position as a councillor — they are no longer a member of Council.

Relevant Legislation

- [Municipal Elections Act](#)
- [TOL Alternative Voting By-law](#)

Financial

Council approved \$10,000 for the special election in the 2023/24 Operating Budget.

Staff estimate a decrease in election costs in comparison with what has been spent on previous TOL elections. This decrease in cost is mostly due to appointing a staff member (the Municipal Clerk) to serve as the Returning Officer – the Municipal Clerk will conduct these duties as a part of their daily work duties. For previous TOL elections, the role of the Returning Officer had been contracted to a third party.

The Town has received a quote of \$4,770 +HST from Intelivote for their services.

Other costs will be for required advertisements in the local newspaper, postage fees, and possibly some miscellaneous supplies.

Communications

The following notices will be published in the local newspaper:

- Notice of revision period for the list of electors
- Notice of the special election and that nominations are open
- List of candidates running in the election
- When and how electors can vote

This information will also be available on the Town's website and shared on the Town's social media platforms. Notice of the revision period and a call for nominations will also be mailed to all residents.

Information for prospective candidates will also be available on the Town's website and promoted on the Town's social media platforms.