



**GRAND VALLEY**

## **STAFF REPORT**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Donna Tremblay, Deputy Clerk/Communications Coordinator  
**Meeting Date:** October 22, 2024  
**Report Number:** **2024-080**  
**Subject:** 2025 Draft Grand Valley Council Meeting Schedule

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### **Recommendation**

**THAT** Council receive the Report – 2025 Draft Grand Valley Council Meeting Schedule;  
**AND FURTHER THAT** Council approves the draft 2025 Grand Valley Council Meeting Schedule in accordance with Attachment 1;  
**AND FURTHER** that Council directs staff to provide Public Notice of the approved Council meeting dates by listing the dates on the Council and Committee Calendar in accordance with By-Law Number 2007-56, Public Notice By-Law;  
**AND FURTHER THAT** Council directs staff to prepare and present the necessary By-law to amend the Town's Procedural By-law for Council's approval.

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### **Executive Summary**

#### **Purpose**

To provide a draft 2025 Grand Valley Council meeting schedule for Council's consideration and approval.

## **Key Findings**

Council generally approves the next year’s Council meeting schedule in October or November of the preceding year.

The meeting schedule is based on past practices with the following exceptions:

### **2025 proposed exceptions**

- Council meeting placeholder date for August 2025;
- Closed Session be relocated from the end of Agenda order to the beginning, with a dedicated one-half hour for closed discussions and the Agenda reflecting an Open meeting start time one-half hour later.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications to this report.

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## **Report**

### **Background**

Generally, Council approves their yearly meeting schedule in October or November of the preceding year.

#### **Regular Meetings:**

Council’s Regular meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month, with the second Tuesday meeting commencing at 6:00 p.m. and the fourth Tuesday meeting commencing at 10:00 a.m. Exceptions to this schedule include the months of July, August and December, where only one meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am.

#### **Budget Meetings:**

Budget meetings are scheduled as Special Council Meetings and are generally held on the second Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. during the months of January, February, October and December with approval of the yearly budget in March. In 2024, Council approved a Special Council Budget meeting for a public input, this meeting will be held on November 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

## **Discussion**

To support the legislative process for Town Council, and to provide accountability and transparency to the public, it is recommended that Council approve a regular meeting schedule annually.

## **Guiding Principles**

The following principles guided the development of the 2025 proposed Council meeting schedule:

1. Agendas are published a minimum of four days prior to a meeting.
2. Regular Council meetings are generally scheduled the second and fourth Tuesday of the month.
3. Planning matters requiring public meetings are generally scheduled during Regular Council meetings with scheduled start times on meeting agendas.
4. Closed Council meetings scheduled for one-half hour at the beginning of meetings with the open meeting start time listed on Agendas.
5. Changes to the meeting calendar are posted publicly as soon as possible.
6. Council budget meetings scheduled in collaboration with the CAO/Clerk and Director of Finance/Treasurer.

## **Annual Conferences and Statutory Holidays**

The proposed Council meeting schedule has been drafted to take into consideration statutory holidays and various annual conferences that Council members may attend including:

- Rural Ontario Municipal Association (January 19 to January 21, 2025)
- Ontario Good Roads Association (March 30 to April 2, 2025)
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (August 17, 2025 to August 20, 2025)

## **Remembrance Day – 2025**

In 2025, November 11<sup>th</sup> falls on the second Tuesday of November, which would normally be the date of a regular 6:00 p.m. council meeting. November 11 is a regular workday for staff. During this day, Town Hall, including Council Chambers, is utilized for the Remembrance Day ceremony preparation and staff participate in the set-up and organizing of the ceremony.

It is proposed that in 2025, the November 11<sup>th</sup> Council meeting dated be moved one day earlier to Monday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. This will allow staff and Town Hall resources to be allocated to the November 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Day ceremony activities.

In addition, moving this meeting date one day earlier will result in minimal impacts to agenda circulation and delegation deadlines.

If this change from routine affects any boards or committees, they will have time to adjust their schedules since this calendar is being established well in advance of November 2025.

### **2025/2026 Budget Meeting Dates**

The Deputy Clerk has worked with the CAO/Clerk and Director of Finance/Treasurer to propose a list of budget placeholder dates for the 2025/2026 budget process.

### **August Meeting – Council Meeting Placeholder**

Staff are proposing that the August Council Meeting be scheduled as a “placeholder meeting”. Historically, August Council Agendas are light, as many committees, agencies and boards do not meet during the summer months. Staff are proposing scheduling the August meeting as place holder, with the date to be held in Council’s calendar. By scheduling the meeting as a placeholder, it will provide flexibility to either hold the meeting or cancel the meeting if items can be dealt with at the first meeting in September. In addition, section 4.4 of the Town’s Procedural By-Law permits the calling of a Special Council Meetings should an emergency situation arise, with the date, time and location set in consultation with the Mayor or by petition or vote of the majority of the Members. The use of a council meeting placeholder will not require amendments to the Procedural By-Law.

### **Closed Council Meetings**

In accordance with section 6.20 of the Town’s Procedural By-Law, Closed Council meetings are scheduled at the end of the agenda order, with the start time listed as “immediately following” the completion of open session items. On average, closed meetings take between 15 to 30 minutes with Council rising and reporting into open session to disclose, in a general manner, how the agenda items were dealt with in the closed meeting. The closed summary is then followed with the remaining agenda items, confirm proceedings by-law and adjournment.

In 2023, Council requested the Deputy Clerk to review current meeting practices to identify where meeting effectiveness and efficiencies could be found. Although the current practice with closed meetings is working well, staff have identified that by

moving the closed session to the beginning of the agenda, it will result in meeting efficiencies for the following reasons:

- Staff required only for closed session will not be required to remain for open session items to be completed.
- Increased openness and transparency. By relocating closed session to the beginning of the meeting, it permits the rising and reporting the closed session items at the beginning of meetings, and not at the end with the two remaining procedural items.
- The time allotment of one-half hour for closed will be adequate time to cover items and will encourage focused discussions.

Council's approval of Closed Session being relocated to the beginning of the Council Agenda Order will require an amendment to Part VI- Order of Procedure for Regular and Special Council Meetings of the Town's Procedural By-Law.

### **Next Steps**

Should the calendar be approved as presented in Attachment 1, the Council approved 2025 Council meeting schedule will be published on the Town's website, with dates provided on the Town's website Council and Committee Meetings Calendar. Council will be provided with Outlook calendar invites to hold meeting times in their respective calendars. Any changes to the Council meeting schedule will be posted to the Town's website, communicated to the Public as a Public Notice and to Council through updates to Outlook calendars.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact to this report.

### **Consultations**

Steven Frietas, Director of Finance/Treasurer

Mark Kluge, Town Planner

**Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Draft 2025 Council Meeting Schedule

**This report was submitted by**

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**This report was approved by**

Meghan Townsend

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