

Priorities Committee Meeting_May11_2021

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE

Council Orientation Plan 2021

Report Purpose

To provide the Priorities Committee with an overview of the 2021 Council Orientation plan.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Continuously improving the way we work, as one organization, in an agile and sustainable manner

Report

In addition to fulfilling the municipality's legal obligations, a well-considered orientation serves as the foundation for a positive relationship between council and administration, provides an opportunity for councillors to get to know each other as well as administration, and supports the incoming council to be successful in its governing role.

While Legislative and Legal Services (LLS) leads the planning and development of the Council orientation plan, the plan relies on contributions and support from departments across the organization. Further, the 2021 orientation plan is shaped by the input of councillors who participated in the previous orientation.

This report provides an overview of the orientation plan, set out in enclosure 1, and invites the members of the Priorities Committee to offer their perspectives and feedback.

Municipal Government Act (MGA) and Orientation

MGA requires that the municipality provide orientation within 90 days of elected officials taking the oath of office. The MGA also requires that orientation must cover the following topics:

- role of municipalities in Alberta;
- municipal organization and functions;
- key municipal plans, policies and projects;
- roles and responsibilities of council and councillors;
- the municipality's code of conduct;
- roles and responsibilities of the chief administrative officer and staff;
- budgeting and financial administration; and public participation.

Elected Officials are not required to participate in orientation as per the MGA; however, the County's Code of Conduct Bylaw requires councillors to make every effort to attend orientation sessions.

Lessons Learned from 2017 Orientation

In response to the MGA changes made in 2017, the orientation program conducted after the 2017 election was much more extensive. Following the 2017 orientation, LLS conducted interviews with all County elected officials to gather input on what worked well and what could be improved. A summary of that input is provided in enclosure 2 of this report.

Considerations for 2021 Orientation

Aside from improving on the 2017 orientation, 2021 will have the additional challenge of planning for orientation sessions during a pandemic. LLS is working under the assumption that all sessions may need to be virtual. This change means that the sessions have been

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designed to be shorter with more breaks interspersed throughout. The first phase of orientation is planned over 4 weeks and follow-up sessions are anticipated for 6 months to a year after the election.

The swearing-in ceremony and reception may be the most challenging components to deliver virtually and require more consideration and research to ensure that our legal obligations can be addressed in a virtual environment.

Enclosures

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| 1 | 2021 Council Orientation Plan |
| 2 | Summary of Input from 2017 |
| 3 | 2021 Council Orientation Plan Presentation |