



Committee of the Whole Excerpts  
April 09, 2024

**2024 MUNICIPAL AND CSAP ELECTIONS ADVANCE POLL DATES AND LOCATIONS EXCERPT**

The Municipal Elections Act (“the Act”) sets ordinary election day as Saturday, October 19, 2024. The date and time of the advance polls are set by the MEA and the Returning Officer. Section 114(4) of the Nova Scotia MEA provides for a legislated advanced poll to be held on Tuesday, the fourth day before regular poll (October 15th, 2024).

The MEA requires that the first advance poll be either Thursday, October 10, 2024, or Saturday, October 12, 2024 and signals the start date for electronic and telephone voting.

With Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup> being Thanksgiving holiday weekend, it was recommended that Thursday October 10<sup>th</sup> be set as the first advance poll date and Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup> be the second advance poll date.

The recommended motion was that Committee of the Whole recommend that ...

**COUNCIL APPROVES THURSDAY OCTOBER 10TH, 2024 BEING SET AS THE OTHER ADVANCE POLLING DATE FOR THE PORTION OF THE 2024 MUNICIPAL AND CSAP ELECTION CONDUCTED IN THE WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY.**

**COUNCIL APPROVES ALTERNATIVE VOTING COMMENCE ON THE FIRST ADVANCE POLL DAY STARTING 12:00 PM (NOON) ON OCTOBER 10TH, 2024 AND REMAIN 24 HOURS A DAY UNTIL 7:00 PM OCTOBER 19, 2024 (CONCLUSION OF ORDINARY POLL DAY).**

**COUNCIL APPROVES THAT THE PERMANENT REGISTER OF ELECTORS ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED BY ELECTIONS NOVA SCOTIA BE USED AS THE PRELIMINARY LIST OF ELECTORS FOR THE 2024 MUNICIPAL AND CSAP ELECTION CONDUCTED IN THE WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY.**



## WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

|                                      |                                                    |                                           |                                              |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Information <input type="checkbox"/> | Recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Decision Request <input type="checkbox"/> | Councillor Activity <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

**To:** Mayor Zebian and members of WHRM Council

**Submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

**Date:** April 9th, 2024 Committee of the Whole

**Subject:** Advance Poll Dates and locations for the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Elections

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### LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act (MGA) - Section 17

Municipal Elections Act (MEA)

### RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

#### Council approves....

1. ... that Thursday October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 be set as the other advance polling date for the portion of the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Election conducted in the West Hants Regional Municipality.
2. ... that Alternative Voting commence on the first advance Poll Day starting 12:00 pm (Noon) on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and remain 24 hours a day until 7:00 pm October 19, 2024 (conclusion of Ordinary Poll Day).
3. ... that the permanent register of electors established and maintained by Elections Nova Scotia be used as the preliminary list of electors for the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Election conducted in the West Hants Regional Municipality.

## BACKGROUND

|                                   |                                            |                                      |                                 |                                   |                                                            |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Property <input type="checkbox"/> | Public<br>Opinion <input type="checkbox"/> | Environment <input type="checkbox"/> | Social <input type="checkbox"/> | Economic <input type="checkbox"/> | Councillor<br>Activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|

## DISCUSSION

The Municipal Elections Act (“the Act”) sets ordinary election day as Saturday, October 19, 2024. The date and time of the advance polls are set by the MEA and the Returning Officer. Section 114(4) of the Nova Scotia Municipal Elections Act (“the Act”) provides for a legislated advanced poll on Tuesday, the fourth day before regular poll (October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024). The hours of the Advanced Polls are also set by the MEA to be noon to 8:00 p.m.

The MEA requires that the first advance poll to be either Thursday, October 10, 2024, or Saturday, October 12, 2024.

The second advance poll date is decided by council and can be either Thursday, October 10, 2024 or Saturday October 12, 2024. The date selected would also signal the start date for electronic and telephone voting.

Council may select one other day or delegate its authority to select the first advanced poll to the Returning Officer. The choices are either

- Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> (9 days prior to ordinary poll day) or
- Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> (7 days prior to ordinary poll day).

With use of electronic voting, a polling period can begin on the first date of October 10<sup>th</sup> and continue for the entire period up to the close of the Ordinary Poll Day on October 19, 2024 giving voters 24-hour voting for 10 days (for electronic and telephone voting).

Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 is the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. It is expected that voters may be more apt to be away or busy with family or other activities during this time which has potential to negatively impact in-person turnout. Additionally, there would be a considerable challenge in securing poll workers over the Thanksgiving holiday.

For this reason, Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 is **not** being recommended as the second advanced polling date. In an effort to maximize in person voter turnout, Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 is being recommended and also provides the opportunity to maximize the time allotted for electronic and telephone voting to ensure a high voter turnout and successful election.

The next important deadlines to be aware of for the 2024 Municipal Election are March 31, 2024 and April 15, 2024.

### ***Polling Districts***

Polling districts must be divided into divisions and reported to Council and must be available for public inspection by March 31, 2024 and Council must direct the RO to conduct enumeration or use recent elections list as the basis for the preliminary electors list.

|                                                                                                                                |                    |                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Returning Officer (RO) must be appointed by Council.                                                                           | March 15, 2024     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Polling districts must be divided into divisions and reported to Council and must be available for public inspection.          | March 31, 2024     |                                     |
| Council must direct the RO to conduct enumeration or use recent elections list as the basis for the preliminary electors list. | April 15, 2024     |                                     |
| No special election is required to be held unless council or the Minister determine otherwise.                                 | April 19, 2024     |                                     |
| The RO must prepare a preliminary list of electors for each polling division.                                                  | July 31, 2024      |                                     |
| Last day to establish procedures and forms for the conduct of voting in accordance with the by-law.                            | August 20, 2024    |                                     |
| Nomination Day                                                                                                                 | September 10, 2024 |                                     |
| Ordinary Polling Day                                                                                                           | October 19, 2024   |                                     |

### ***Polling Staff***

In an attempt to offer voters an opportunity to vote by paper on advance poll days (Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024) and ordinary poll day (Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024), or by phone or internet each day from the opening of (Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>) to the close of polls at 7 pm on election day (Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024).

Electors who choose a paper ballot would then proceed to a traditional deputy returning officer and poll clerk.

Each district will need a poll clerk and deputy returning officer and the same team can be used for all three days.

It is being proposed that District 7 have two teams, both pairs working election day and one of the two advance poll days. An explanation of the reasoning will follow in the Polling District Divisions section.

|            |                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| District 1 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 2 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 3 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 4 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 5 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 6 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team)    |
| District 7 | 2 Poll Clerks and 2 Deputy Returning Officers (2 Teams) |

|             |                                                      |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| District 8  | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team) |
| District 9  | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team) |
| District 10 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team) |
| District 11 | 1 Poll Clerk and 1 Deputy Returning Officer (1 Team) |

Ballot boxes would be sealed and securely stored at the end of each voting day. Should a ballot box become close to being full, it would be sealed and a new one started. A ballot counting team would then be brought in for the second ballot box if required.

### ***Polling District Locations***

It is anticipated many eligible electoral voters may/will utilize alternative voting options to cast their ballots; however, we also recognize that some voters will want to continue the practice of casting a ballot at their polling station.

By offering different locations on each of the polling days, this geographically large district should be conveniently covered for its voters and maintains the ability for each voter to go to the location or date that best suits them.

Only 14 Advance Poll locations will be required as Districts 2 and 3 will share one (1) Advanced Poll location (Brooklyn Civic Centre), Districts 7 and 9 will share one (1) Advanced Poll location (Falmouth Community Hall) and Districts 10 and 11 will share both Advanced Poll locations (Windsor Community Centre).

Only 9 Ordinary Poll locations will be required as Districts 2 and 3 will share their Ordinary Poll location (Brooklyn Civic Centre), Districts 7 and 9 will share their Ordinary Poll (Falmouth Community Hall) and Districts 10 and 11 will share their Ordinary Poll (Windsor Community Centre).

### **District 1**

|                                                                                          |                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bramber New Horizons Hall, 6943 Hwy 215, Bramber                                         | Advance Poll Location |
| Centre Burlington Hall 3554 Hwy # 215, West Hants                                        | Advance Poll Location |
| Summerville and District Volunteer Fire Department, 59 Summerville Wharf Rd, Summerville | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 2**

District 2 presented some unique challenges as to suitable locations that were also central and convenient for voters. Brooklyn Civic Centre was selected for one advance poll and election day because despite being slightly outside the district, it was geographically central to it and

convenient for the largest number of voters. It is also a location historically used in both federal and provincial elections for electors in many of these areas.

|                                                           |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Avondale Community Hall, 50 Avondale Cross Road, Avondale | Advance Poll Location |
| Brooklyn Civic Centre, 995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn              | Advance Poll Location |
| Brooklyn Civic Centre, 995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn              | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 3**

Using Sweets Corner as one of the advance polls should making voting more convenient for voters in the western end of the district.

|                                              |                       |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sweets Corner Community Hall, 6351 Hwy 14    | Advance Poll Location |
| Brooklyn Civic Centre, 995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn | Advance Poll Location |
| Brooklyn Civic Centre, 995 Hwy 215, Brooklyn | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 4**

Ardoise and Ellershouse are both good options for polls. Ellershouse was selected for election day because it already has wifi.

|                                                                     |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ardoise Community Recreation Centre, 3 Ardoise School Road, Ardoise | Advance Poll Location |
| Ellershouse Community Hall, 429 Ellershouse Road                    | Advance Poll Location |
| Ellershouse Community Hall, 429 Ellershouse Road                    | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 5**

Looking at the population distribution and what is available in the district as locations, Three Mile Plains Hall seems the best option for all three days.

|                                                                 |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Three Mile Plains Community Hall, 4474 Hwy 1, Three Mile Plains | Advance Poll Location |
| Three Mile Plains Community Hall, 4474 Hwy 1, Three Mile Plains | Advance Poll Location |
| Three Mile Plains Community Hall, 4474 Hwy 1, Three Mile Plains | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 6**

Glad Tidings Church is geographically central to the district and has wifi. The firehall in Garlands Crossing has been used in the past as a location but with the population growth in that immediate area we have been finding it small during both the past provincial and federal elections.

|                                                       |                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Glad Tidings Worship Centre, 5398 Chester Rd, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Glad Tidings Worship Centre, 5398 Chester Rd, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Glad Tidings Worship Centre, 5398 Chester Rd, Windsor | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### District 7

Since the District is divided into A and B, electors requiring paper ballots will need to vote at the polling district that their name is on the list for. Since there is a bridge and part of District 5 separating them, we are not anticipating this to be a problem. Although the Falmouth Hall is in District 9, it is historically where these voters are used to going.

|                                                                                                                               |                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Southwest Hants Fire Society Hall, 1884 Hwy 14, Vaughan                                                                       | Advance Poll Location (A) |
| Falmouth Community Hall, 147                                                                                                  | Advance Poll Location (B) |
| Southwest Hants Fire Society Hall (A), 1884 Hwy 14, Vaughan <b>and</b><br>Falmouth Community Hall (B), 147 Falmouth Back Road | Ordinary Poll Day         |

#### A. will consist of:

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Leminster        | 82         |
| Panuke Lake      | 0          |
| Upper Vaughan    | 151        |
| Vaughan          | 394        |
| Wile Settlement  | 55         |
| Total population | <b>682</b> |

#### B. will consist of:

|                                                |            |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| The portion of Falmouth assigned to district 7 | 229        |
| Upper Falmouth                                 | 456        |
| Total population                               | <b>685</b> |

### District 8

The new Baptist Church Hall is centrally located, accessible and has wifi. Using Ground Search and rescue in Mount Denson for an advance poll should be convenient for those residents.

|                                                            |                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| West Hants Ground Search and Rescue, 821 Hwy 1, Mt. Denson | Advance Poll Location |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|

|                                                     |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Hantsport Baptist Church, 6 Willow St.<br>Hantsport | Advance Poll Location |
| Hantsport Baptist Church, 6 Willow St.<br>Hantsport | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 9**

|                                                    |                       |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Falmouth Community Hall, 147<br>Falmouth Back Road | Advance Poll Location |
| Falmouth Community Hall, 147<br>Falmouth Back Road | Advance Poll Location |
| Falmouth Community Hall, 147<br>Falmouth Back Road | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 10**

Windsor Community Centre is central and where voters in the district are used to going.

|                                                                 |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **District 11**

Windsor Community Centre is central and where voters in the district are used to going.

|                                                                 |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Advance Poll Location |
| Windsor War Memorial Community<br>Centre, 78 Thomas St, Windsor | Ordinary Poll Day     |

### **Mobile Poll**

Traditional paper ballots would be used for mobile polls in the 2024 Municipal and CSAP election.

### **List of Electors from Elections Nova Scotia**

The registry of electors maintained by Elections Nova Scotia will be used for the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Election. This registry is continuously updated using sources such as Registry of Motor Vehicle, death records and the latest Provincial and/or Federal elections. This registry of electors may not be 100% accurate; however, if used as the preliminary list of electors; the Returning Officers will conduct revisions to the list to increase accuracy. Revisions include identifying and

removing duplicates, organizing the list in an understandable format, and making corrections to, or adding new electors. To use the Elections Nova Scotia registry of electors, an Information Sharing Agreement must be signed between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Regional Municipality. This Agreement was signed January 31, 2024 in anticipation of the 2024 Municipal and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) elections.

### **Notices**

The MEA states that public notices regarding an election must be given by publishing them in a newspaper circulating in the area. For the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Elections this will be done by publishing information in the Valley Journal Advertiser. In addition, the MEA states that additional notices shall be given, “if directed by council,” for notice of the preliminary list of electors, as well as “in any manner approved by council” for notice of poll.

It is proposed that additional notices/advertisements be prepared by also placing them on the West Hants Regional Municipality website and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

### **Amended List of Electors**

The amended list of electors must be prepared in time to give to candidates when their nomination papers are filed. With Saturday, October 19, 2024 set as the date for the 2024 Municipal and CSAP elections, nominations deadline would be Tuesday, September 10, 2024. The use of alternative voting allows the list to be accessed by candidates electronically in a live format, so the date is not as significant. However, Monday, August 26th is recommended to ensure the one hard-copy of the amended list is prepared for candidates. This will ensure all candidates have the same information at the same time. Following candidates receiving the list, updates can still be made online and once IntelliVote provides candidates with the training to access it, candidates will be able to view information in real-time.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Once approved by Council, the Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer will proceed with the administration of the 2024 Municipal and CSAP election in accordance with the Municipal Election Act. This will include obtaining the preliminary list of electors from Elections Nova Scotia for which a 4-year agreement has already been executed and coordinating and securing locations for polling stations.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The 2024 Municipal Election is a legislatively required action. An election budget is being prepared and will be presented to Council at a future meeting. The costs associated with the 2024 Municipal and CSAP election are included in the upcoming 2024-25 Operating Budget and will be presented for consideration during budget deliberations.

## ALTERNATIVES

- Council could direct that the second advance poll date be Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This is not the recommendation of the Returning Officer or staff.
- Council may choose to alter or not support any of the above-mentioned recommendations; however, this is not recommended by staff.

## ATTACHMENTS

None

## CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

The report addresses the mandatory requirements of the election. Deadlines are noted and sites and dates associated with advanced polls and ordinary poll dates are provided for Council's consideration. In addition to the multitude of in-person sites and opportunities for residents to vote by paper ballot, residents will have the open opportunity to vote by phone or electronic device from home or while "on the go" starting at the date of the advanced pools and through to the ordinary poll date / election day.

The options provided in this report are very accommodating to residents and their ability to vote in the fall election.

I support the recommendations.

Report Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Debi Fitzpatrick, Returning Officer and Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Report Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Name and Title)

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer