



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☐	Decision Request ☒	Councillor Activity ☐
--------------------------------------	---	--	--

To: Mayor Zebian and Members of West Hants Regional Municipal Council

Submitted by: _____
Kari Fougere, Acting Director of Planning & Development

Date: 2025-07-22

Subject: Request for Special Council Meeting

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

NA

DECISION REQUEST

Should Council wish to proceed the following motion would be in order:

...that Council directs staff to schedule a Special Council Meeting after the regular Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting on September 11th for a Public Hearing and Second Reading regarding File #25-18 Development Agreement for Bear Lake Windfarm and First Reading for File #25-07, File #25-11 and File #25-12 Irving Lands Development Agreement and Rezoning.

...that Council direct staff to proceed with advertising the Public Hearing for File #25-07, File #25-11 and File #25-12 Irving Lands Development Agreement and Rezoning prior to Council First Reading in order to meet public participation advertising requirements.

BACKGROUND

Property ☒	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
--	--	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---

File #25-18 Development Agreement for Bear Lake Windfarm was received in April 2025, after previous applications for the same development had been withdrawn. This file was presented to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee on July 10th, 2025 and received a positive recommendation. The file is before Council on July 22nd, 2025 for First Reading. The next available regular Council meeting is September 23rd, 2025.

File #25-07, #25-11 and #25-12 consist of a multi-part development agreement and rezoning application that was first presented at a Public Information Meeting on March 5th, 2025. The development agreement portion of the application required extensive work on the stormwater management system from both the applicant and municipal staff. The file is projected to be presented to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee on September 11th, 2025. The next available regular Council meeting is September 23rd, 2025, which would host the First Reading of the application.

DISCUSSION

Bear Lake Windfarm Development Agreement:

The applicants for the Bear Lake Windfarm Development Agreement request that Council consider a Special Council Meeting to hold the Public Hearing and Second Reading for their application to expedite the decision making timeline.

Staff see value in hosting the Public Hearing on a separate night from a regular Council meeting given that previous public engagement on this application included a large number of participants from the public, which have resulted in longer than average meeting times.

A Special Council meeting for a Public Hearing could be scheduled anytime in September.

J.D. Irving Land Planning Application:

Additionally, the applicants of this file are requesting consideration for a Special Council Meeting to hold the First Reading immediately after it is presented at the regular scheduled PAC/HAC meeting to expedite the approval timeline. This scheduling would allow for the Public Hearing and Second Reading to be hosted during the regularly scheduled Council meeting on September 23rd.

In order to satisfy advertising requirements as per the Public Participation Program Policy RCOP-006.00 (PPPP) the Public Hearing will have to be advertised prior to both consideration from PAC/HAC and Council First Reading. Both the PPPP and the MGA do not explicitly disallow Public Hearings to be advertised prior to Council First Reading, however it is not standard practice for WHRM to schedule a Public Hearing without direction from Council.

If either file is not given First Reading and the Public Hearing is not then scheduled, staff would then cancel the advertised Public Hearing.

NEXT STEPS

Should Council have interest in holding a Special Council for either of the files listed in this report, they could be scheduled at the same meeting which could occur after the regular scheduled PAC/HAC meeting.

If Council wishes to follow the regular meeting schedule, these files will be added to the regular schedule meetings and agendas and Public Hearings will be scheduled as appropriate.

Based on direction of Council, staff will schedule the Public Hearing, Second and First readings as appropriate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications in association with the filing of this report.

ALTERNATIVES

In response to the report, the Council may:

- Decide to schedule the Public Hearing, Second Reading and First Reading at the next available regular Council meeting; or
- provide alternative direction such as proposing alternative dates.

ATTACHMENTS

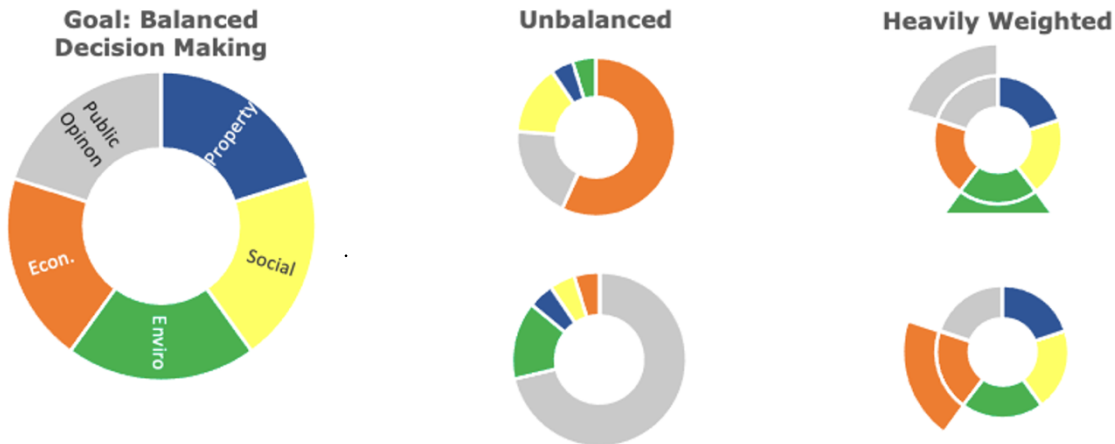
N/A

Chief Administrative Officer Comments

The rationale for the Special Meeting of Council is explained in the report and supported by staff. Pending Council's review and approval of the Special Meeting this would allow for the dedicated time a Public Hearing might require for the application due to the ongoing public interest in the application and would allow the JD Irving application to proceed more expediently. The JD Irving development agreement relates to the second phase or the second 50,000 sq.ft. building next to the proposed new Kent Store Building on Wentworth Road. The projects are deemed to be separate as it relates to planning approvals, as the Kent Store Building was approved by site plan approval, but connected from a practical perspective as it relates to the earthworks and other site components to be carried out on the site (stormwater plan, access and egress, lot sloping, etc..).

I support the recommendation.

Council has been provided with a reference taken from the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy , Appendix C “Decision Making by Council and Committee of the Whole” as a reminder of the principles highlighted for good decision making.



Report Prepared by: _____

Kari Fougere, Acting Director of Planning and Development

Report Prepared by: _____

Alex Dunphy, Senior Planner

Review Approved by:  _____

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer