

Date:	12/02/2021
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Meeting Date:	February 22, 2021
Action:	null
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Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From:	Becky Jamieson
Position:	Municipal Clerk
Title / Subject:	Vacancy of the Office of the Mayor (Head of Council)
Date of Report:	February 12, 2021
Date of Meeting:	February 22, 2021
Report No:	2021-CO-06

1.0 Strategic Goal/Priority

To ensure the continued good governance of the Corporation of the Township of Brock.

2.0 Issue / Origin

On February 1, 2021, Council declared the Office of the Mayor vacant, as a result of the passing of Mayor Debbie Bath-Hadden. Council has 60 days after declaring a seat vacant to either appoint an individual to fill the vacancy or pass a by-law declaring a by-election.

3.0 Background

The purpose of this report is to outline the options available to fill the vacancy in the Office of the Mayor (Head of Council), as a result of the passing of Mayor Debbie Bath-Hadden.

As per the *Municipal Act* (the "Act"), the following rules apply to filling vacancies:

Filling vacancies

263 (1) If a vacancy occurs in the office of a member of council, the municipality shall, subject to this section,

(a) fill the vacancy by appointing a person who has consented to accept the office if appointed; or

(b) require a by-election to be held to fill the vacancy in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996.* 2001, c. 25, s. 263 (1).

Dual vacancies

(2) If the offices of a person who is a member of council of both a local municipality and its upper-tier municipality become vacant, the local municipality and not the upper-tier municipality shall fill the vacancy in accordance with subsection (1). 2001, c. 25, s. 263 (2).

Rules applying to filling vacancies

(5) The following rules apply to filling vacancies:

1. Within 60 days after the day a declaration of vacancy is made with respect to the vacancy under section 262, the municipality shall,

i. appoint a person to fill the vacancy under subsection (1) or (4), or

ii. pass a by-law requiring a by-election be held to fill the vacancy under subsection (1).

2. Despite paragraph 1, if a court declares an office to be vacant, the council shall act under subsection (1) or (4) within 60 days after the day the court makes its declaration.

3. Despite subsections (1) to (4), if a vacancy occurs within 90 days before voting day of a regular election, the municipality is not required to fill the vacancy. 2001, c. 25, s. 263 (5).

Council declared the office of the Mayor vacant on February 1, 2021. Pursuant to Section 263(5)3 of the Act, should an office become vacant within 90 days before voting day in a municipal election, the municipality is not required to fill the vacancy. As the next municipal elections are not scheduled until 2022, the office must be filled.

Council must decide whether to appoint a "qualified elector" as Mayor or hold a by-election by enacting a by-law within sixty (60) days of declaring the seat vacant, which means no later than April 1, 2021.

A "qualified elector" is an individual who is:

- A Canadian citizen;
- 18 years or older;
- A resident, owner or tenant of land in the Township of Brock, or the spouse of an owner or tenant of land; and
- Not prohibited by law from holding office.

The term of office for a person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy is the remainder of the current term of Council. The current term of Council ends on November 14, 2022.

As per the Act, the role of the Head of Council is as follows:

Role of head of council

225 It is the role of the head of council,

(a) to act as chief executive officer of the municipality;

(b) to preside over council meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;

(c) to provide leadership to the council;

(c.1) without limiting clause (c), to provide information and recommendations to the council with respect to the role of council described in clauses 224 (d) and (d.1);

(d) to represent the municipality at official functions; and

(e) to carry out the duties of the head of council under this or any other Act. 2001, c. 25, s. 225; 2006, c. 32, Sched. A, s. 100.

Head of council as chief executive officer

226.1 As chief executive officer of a municipality, the head of council shall,

(a) uphold and promote the purposes of the municipality;

(b) promote public involvement in the municipality's activities;

(c) act as the representative of the municipality both within and outside the municipality, and promote the municipality locally, nationally and internationally; and

(d) participate in and foster activities that enhance the economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality and its residents. 2006, c. 32, Sched. A, s. 101.

The Mayor also sits as ex-officio member on all boards and committees of the Township.

The Mayor will also automatically sit as a Regional Councillor on the Region of Durham Council that may bring other potential related appointments.

4.0 Analysis

Options for Filling the Vacancy in the Office of the Mayor

As noted above, Section 263 of the Act provides Council with two options for filling the vacancy:

- Appoint a qualified person; or
- Hold a by-election

Option 1 – Appointment through an Open Call for Qualified Applicants

An appointment by an open call for qualified persons would allow any member of the public to submit an application to the Township to be considered for appointment.

Overview of Process

Should Council choose to fill the vacancy using an open call, applications would be accepted between 8:30 a.m. on March 1, 2021 and 12:00 p.m. on March 22, 2021. Information would be made available on the Township's website and promoted through the Township's social media accounts and local media. The Clerk's Department would also host a virtual open house on March 17, 2021 between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. to explain the process, outline expectations of the position of Mayor and to answer questions.

During the application period, each applicant would be required to make an appointment with the Clerk's Department during regular office hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) to submit the following information:

- A completed application for appointment form;
- Identification confirming the applicant's residency within the Township of Brock, or their status as an owner or tenant of land in the Township of Brock; or the spouse of an owner or tenant of land in the Township of Brock; and
- A letter, no longer than two (2) letter-sized page, identifying why the individual feels they are qualified and the best candidate to fill the vacancy.

At the end of the application period (12:00 p.m. on March 22, 2021), the Clerk would review the applications received and verify eligibility of each applicant.

The list of certified applicants and their written submissions would be included on the agenda of a Special Council meeting scheduled for March 31, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. At the meeting, each applicant would have the opportunity to provide a five-minute delegation, followed by questions from members of Council. Members of the public would also be permitted to make delegations to Council concerning any of the applicants being considered.

To assist Council and to ensure compliance with the principles of the Municipal Elections Act, the Clerk would develop more detailed procedures to manage the selection process.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 1

Advantages	Disadvantages
Ensures every interested and qualified individual is provided the opportunity to be considered by Council.	Does not consider the results of the last election.
Allows applicants the opportunity to address Council.	Does not consider the experience and skills of existing members of Council.
Provides members of the public an opportunity to provide input into the selection of the individual who will represent them on Council and Regional Council.	Incorporates components of a formal recruitment process including an application, presentation and questions and answers.
Provides an opportunity to identify and select an individual possessing a skillset that may not currently be represented on Council.	A labour-intensive process that will consume significant staff resources during the month of March.
Minimal costs associated with this process.	May provide an advantage to the appointee if that person contests the Mayoralty in 2022.

Option 2 – Appointment of an Existing Member of Council

Council may choose to appoint a current member of Council to the vacancy.

Overview of Process

Should Council choose to fill the vacancy by appointing a current member of Council as Mayor, the Clerk would be delegated to develop procedures that ensure a fair process to all members of Council who may have an interest in the appointment. Draft procedures have been developed and included as Attachment No. 1

This option would be employed at the March 22 Regular Council meeting.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 2

Advantages	Disadvantages
Ensures that the Mayor's and Regional	Will result in a subsequent Council vacancy
Councillor's positions are filled by a	which will require additional direction from
serving elected representative.	Council
Provides a representative who is familiar	May provide an advantage to a current
with current Township and Regional	member of Council who may contest the
issues.	Mayoralty in 2022.
Minimal costs associated with the process.	
Minimal staff time associated with this	
process.	

Option 3 – Appointment of a 2018 Municipal Election Township of Brock Candidate

Another option available to Council is the appointment of an individual who ran as a candidate in the 2018 Municipal Election. This process was used in the Township of Brock in 2011 when the office of the Mayor became vacant after the Mayor resigned. Council chose to appoint the runner-up from the 2010 Election.

Overview of Process

Should Council choose to fill the vacancy by appointing a candidate from the 2018 Municipal Election, Council will need to identify the appropriate candidate. The 2018 Township of Brock Certified Municipal Election Results are contained in Attachment No. 2. The identification of the candidate is required to provide the Clerk enough opportunity to confirm the eligibility of the candidate for appointment and their willingness to be appointed prior to the formal selection and appointment of the individual to the Office of the Mayor. It is strongly recommended that Council identify more than one candidate in the event that the initial candidate is no longer qualified to hold office or will not consent to the appointment. It is further recommended that only those candidates who ran for the Office of the Mayor and/or Regional Councillor be considered given that they were Township wide-elections.

Should Council wish to proceed with this option, Council would identify the individuals at the February 22 meeting. The Clerk will than confirm the candidate's eligibility and request they provide a two-page written submission as to why the individual feels they are qualified and the best candidate to fill the vacancy. Council may wish to select a preferred candidate at the February, 22, 2021 meeting and a second choice that should only be considered if the preferred candidate does not meet qualifications or want the position, than the second choice would be reached out to. The preferred candidate would be asked to write a written submission to be included on the agenda for the Regular Council meeting scheduled for March 22, 2021. At this meeting, Council would pass a resolution to appoint the individual to the Office of the Mayor.

Alternatively, Council may wish to select two (2) or three (3) candidate(s) at the February 22 meeting. The Clerk will than confirm the candidate's eligibility, and request they provide a two-page written submission as to why the individual feels they are qualified and the best candidate to fill the vacancy. The list of certified candidates and their written submission would be included on the agenda for the Regular Council meeting scheduled for March 22, 2021

At the meeting, each candidate would have the opportunity to provide a five-minute delegation, followed by questions from members of Council. Following all delegations, Council would than vote on the preferred candidate.

To assist Council and to ensure compliance with the principles of the Municipal Elections Act, the Clerk would develop more detailed procedures to manage the selection process.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 3

Advantages	Disadvantages
Candidate participated in the last municipal election.	Does not consider the experience and skills of existing members of Council.
Minimal staff time associated with this option.	May provide an advantage to the appointee if that person contests the Mayoralty in 2022.
Minimal costs associated with this option.	Candidate may no longer meet the qualifications and/or have an interest in being appointed.

Option 4 – By-Election

The final option available to Council is to pass a by-law requiring a by-election to be held to fill the Office of the Mayor. As noted earlier, after declaring a seat vacant, a by-law to call a by-election must be passed within 60 days of declaring the seat vacant (deadline to pass the by-law would be April 1, 2021).

Overview of Process

Under Section 65 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, if Council determines that a by-election is to be held, the Clerk is responsible for setting the date of nomination day, which is to be a day not less than thirty (30) and not more than sixty (60) days after enacting the by-law authorizing a by-election. Voting day shall be forty-five (45) days after nomination day.

The following table outlines the likely dates related to a by-election:

By-Election Related Event	Date
By-Law requiring a By-Election	Monday, March 22, 2021
Nomination Period	Commences March 23, 2021 and ends at 2:00 p.m. on May 4, 2021
Nomination Day	Tuesday, May 4, 2021
Election Day	Friday June 18, 2021
Mayor-Elect Takes Oath of Office	Monday, June 21, 2021

This timetable assumes a vote by mail election format.

Method of the By-Election

Section 42 of the Municipal Election Act states that the Council of a local municipality may pass by-laws authorizing the use of vote-counting equipment or alternative voting methods that do not require electors to attend a voting place in order to vote. Given the current world pandemic, a "traditional" election would not be feasible, and an alternate method would be required.

Council may wish to use the "Vote by Mail" election format with or without the use of automatic tabulators. The use of tabulators would be consistent with the general elections held in 2006, 2010, and 2018 and without the use of automatic tabulators would be consistent with the general elections in 2000, 2003, and 2014.

The municipality's overall experience with "Vote by Mail" has been very positive especially because of the convenience for voters. The advantages of the mail-in ballot include the avoidance of polling stations and related accessibility issues as well as reduced staffing resources to operate polling stations and to prepare and count ballots. Voter turnout has been much higher than traditional methods of election, with the voter turnout being 46.7% for the 2018 Municipal Election. In addition, a "Vote By Mail" method would be much safer during the pandemic.

In the 2014 and 2018 election, ballot return stations at a central location in Sunderland and Beaverton were held the week prior to Election day and on Election Day to allow those electors who wished to drop off their ballots in person rather than mailing them. Should a "Vote by Mail" method be selected for this by-election, ballot return stations would not be feasible due to logistics and safety concerns related to the pandemic.

The use of automatic vote tabulators has an advantage in that it permits the timely determination of the results on election day and reads all of the ballots in a consistent manner without human intervention.

The estimated cost to conduct a vote by mail by-election with centralized tabulators would be approximately \$40,000 - \$50,000 based on a voter turn-out of 50%. This would include costs for additional external staff, vote by mail kits, postage, advertising, and miscellaneous printing. If vote tabulators were not used, the cost would be similar as additional staff would be required.

Internet and telephone voting have been used successful in many municipalities. While the implementation of internet or telephone voting poses several benefits including a convenient method of voting for many electors, it would be a significant change for the Township and could present many challenges including lack of broadband, development of new processes and policies, and a more enhanced communication plan to inform electors how to vote.

Should Council wish to hold a by-election, a "Vote by Mail" method would be the recommended option for the following reasons:

- The community is familiar with the "vote-in-ballot" method;
- Strong voter turnout has resulted from "Vote by Mail" method; and
- It can be safely conducted during the pandemic.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Option 4

Advantages	Disadvantages
Ensures a democratic process is employed for all electors.	Significant cost to the taxpayers, which has not been included in the proposed 2021 Budget.
	Longer process thereby leaving the Mayor's seat vacant longer.
	A labour-intensive process that will consume significant staff resources for the next five months.
	Could result in a subsequent Council vacancy which will require additional direction from Council.

Considerations

The advantage of appointing someone through Option 1, 2, or 3 includes lower costs than conducting a by-election; the process can be completed very quickly thereby avoiding a prolonged period of time without a permanent Mayor and is less labour intensive, thereby allowing staff to focus on regular operations.

The advantage of a by-election is that it will ensure that a democratic process is employed for all electors within the Township of Brock.

The current term of Council is more than halfway through its term of Council with the next regular election scheduled for October 24, 2022. If an individual is appointed, through Option 1, 2 or 3, the vacancy would be filled by April 1, 2021 at which time the appointee would have approximately 19 months in office. If a by-election is held, the individual elected would take office at the end of June and would have approximately 16 months in office.

If Option 2 or 4 results in the selection of an existing member of Council, Council would then have to decide how to fill the subsequent vacancy, again either by appointment or by by-election.

Area Municipalities

The Clerk consulted the seven (7) area municipalities to determine their processes and policies for filling Council vacancies. This report is consistent with the area municipalities.

The below chart is a snapshot of vacancies that have occurred in area municipalities and whether they were filled by Appointment of through a By-Election:

Municipality	Year	Position	Filled By
Brock	May 2011	Mayor	Appointment
Brock	June 2016	Councillor	By-Election
Uxbridge	2018	Mayor	Appointment
Uxbridge	2015	Councillor	By-Election
Whitby	2016	Councillor	By-Election
Oshawa	2017	Councillor	By-Election
Oshawa	2018	Councillor	Appointment
Pickering	2016	Councillor	By-Election

5.0 Related Policies / Procedures

None

6.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

Option 1, 2 & 3 would have minimal financial implications and any associated costs would be absorbed within the Clerk's general operating budget. Option 4 is estimated to cost \$40,000 - \$50,000. Should Council proceed with Option 4, it is recommended that the proposed 2021 Operating Budget be revised to include \$50,000 for a by-election (the \$30,000 identified for transfer to the Election Reserve can be shifted and an additional \$20,000 can be transferred from the Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund. If this were to occur, additional funds will need to be set aside in the 2022 budget to cover the costs of the 2022 election.

7.0 Communications

Once Council has decided on how they which to fill the vacancy, this will be communicated through the Township's communication channels, including but not limited to the Township's website, social media, and the local newspapers. Should Option 4 be selected, a full communication plan will be developed.

8.0 Conclusion

Council declared the office of the Mayor vacant on February 1, 2021 as a result of the passing of Mayor Debbie Bath-Hadden. Council must decide whether to appoint a "qualified elector" as Mayor or hold a by-election by enacting a by-law within sixty (60) days of declaring the seat vacant, which means no later than April 1, 2021.

The report provides four (4) options for Council's consideration. Option 1 is an appointment through an open call for application. Option 2 is an appointment of an existing member of Council. Option 3 is an appointment of a candidate who ran in the 2018 Municipal Election. Option 4 is to hold a By-Election to fill the vacancy. While each option has its own advantages and disadvantages, Council needs to select the preferred option at the February 22 meeting to ensure adequate time to implement the option before the April 1, 2021 deadline.

9.0 Recommendation

THAT Council directs staff to implement the following motion:

Proposed Recommendation – Option 1

That the Office of the Mayor vacancy be filled by an open call for nominations from qualified individuals;

That the Clerk provide notice to the public of the method selected by Council, the application period, individual qualifications, and other relevant considerations necessary for interested members of the community to be considered for appointment;

That the Clerk be delegated authority to prepare and approve meeting procedures to support the selection of a certified candidate by Council consistent with the principles of the Municipal Elections Act; and.

That the selection and appointment of a candidate take place at a Special Council Meeting to occur on March 31, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

OR

Proposed Recommendation – Option 2

That the Office of the Mayor vacancy be filled by appointing a current member of Council;

That the Clerk provide notice to the public of the method selected by Council;

That the Clerk be delegated authority to prepare and approve meeting procedures to support the selection and appointment of a member of Council to the Office of the Mayor;

That the selection and appointment of a Mayor take place at the Regular Council Meeting scheduled to occur on March 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.; and

That the Clerk bring forward a report forward to the March 22, 2021 Council meeting as to how the subsequent vacancy arising from the appointment of Mayor from an existing member of Council will be resolved.

Proposed Recommendation – Option 3

That the Office of the Mayor vacancy be filled by appointing a candidate from the 2018 Municipal Election;

That the Clerk provide notice to the public of the method selected by Council and undertake the actions necessary to confirm the interest and eligibility of <<Insert Name(s)>> for appointment;

That the Clerk be delegated authority to prepare and approve meeting procedures to support the selection and appointment of a candidate in the 2018 municipal election to the Office of the Mayor; and

That should <<Insert Name(s)>> be certified by the Clerk as qualified to hold office, the selection and appointment take place at the Regular Council Meeting scheduled to occur on March 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

OR

Proposed Recommendation – Option 4

That the Office of the Mayor vacancy be filled by holding a by-election;

That the Clerk provide notice to the public of the method selected by Council;

That the Clerk be authorized to bring forward the necessary by-law to hold a by-election to fill the vacancy of the Mayor and to authorize the use of "Vote by Mail" and vote tabulators as the preferred voting method for the by-election to be held on June 18, 2021; and

That the by-laws be brought forward to the March 22 Council meeting.

Title	Name	Signature	Date
Municipal Clerk	Becky Jamieson	Becky Jamieson	February 12, 2021
Chief Administrative Officer	Dean A. Hustwick	10) deus huicel	February 12, 2021

Attachment No. 1

Process for Appointing a Current member of Council (Option 2)

- A. For the purpose of selecting a Chair, the Presiding Officer shall be the Township Clerk;
- B. The Presiding Officer shall call for nominations;
- C. Each nomination shall be regularly moved and seconded;
- D. Each person nominated would be asked whether they would be willing to stand for appointment;
- E. When there are no further nominations, the Presiding Officer shall call for a motion declaring nominations closed;
- F. After nominations have been closed, each mover and seconder of a nomination and each nominee shall, prior to the vote being taken, be permitted to speak for not more than five (5) minutes;
- G. When more than one nominee stands for appointment, a vote shall be taken;
- H. To be appointed, a nominee shall obtain a vote of the majority of the Members present and voting (i.e. if all 6 members were present, 4 votes would be required);
- I. The vote shall be a recorded vote of all Members present and voting, the order of which will be decided by random draw by the Clerk. The Member shall name the nominee they are voting for when called upon.
- J. If there are only two nominees who elect to stand:
 - i. The nominee who receives the majority required to be appointed, shall be declared appointed;
 - ii. If there is an equality of votes, a ten-minute recess shall be held followed by a second vote. If on the second vote there is still an equality of votes or a nominee does not receive the majority required to be appointed, a further ten-minute recess shall be held followed by a third vote. If on the third vote there is still an equality of votes or a nominee does not receive the majority required to be appointed, the Clerk shall conduct a lot of the nominees and the nominee who is drawn, shall be declared the successful candidate for the position.

- K. If there are more than two nominees who elect to stand:
 - i. The nominee who receives the majority required to be appointed, shall be declared appointed;
 - ii. If no nominee receives the majority required to be appointed, the name of the nominee receiving the least number of votes shall be dropped and Council shall proceed with the next vote;
 - iii. If two or more nominees are tied with the least number of votes, the Clerk shall conduct a lot of the tied nominees until there is one name not drawn and the nominee who is not drawn, shall be dropped and Council shall proceed with the next vote;
 - iv. Voting shall continue until either a nominee receives the majority required to be appointed or it becomes apparent by reason of an equality of votes or any other reason that no nominee can be appointed, in which event the procedure in clause J (ii) shall apply.

Explanation of Voting Process/Results

The following charts provide an explanation of how the results would be interpreted as a result of the recorded votes called by the Clerk.

	Candidate A	Candidate B
Councillor A	X	
Councillor B		Х
Councillor C	X	
Councillor D		Х
Councillor E	X	
Councillor F	X	

Example 1:

In this case, Candidate A would be declared to have the majority vote required to fill the vacant Mayor's seat as they would have received 4 of the 6 votes.

Example 2:

	Candidate A	Candidate B	Candidate C
Councillor A			Х
Councillor B		Х	
Councillor C	X		
Councillor D		Х	
Councillor E	X		
Councillor F		Х	

In this case, Candidate C would be eliminated as they would have received only 1 vote. Further voting would take place between Candidates A and B as neither had the majority votes (4).

Example 3:

	Candidate A	Candidate B	Candidate C	Candidate D
Councillor A			Х	
Councillor B				Х
Councillor C	Х			
Councillor D		Х		
Councillor E		Х		
Councillor F	Х			

In this case, the Clerk would conduct a draw with the nominees with the least votes (Candidate C & D) as per K (iii) and the nominee who is not drawn would be eliminated and the next vote would occur.



Certificate of Election Results

Corporation of the Township of Brock

I hereby certify that during the municipal held on Monday, October 22, 2018 for the offices listed below, the certified candidates received the votes that follow their respective names:

Name of Candidate	Office	Votes
Debbie BATH-HADDEN	Mayor	2,273
John GRANT	Mayor	2,147
Judi FORBES	Regional Councillor	968
Dorothy SANDERSON	Regional Councillor	274
Ted SMITH	Regional Councillor	1,851
Jay YEREMA-WEAFER	Regional Councillor	1,245
Michael JUBB	Ward 1 Councillor	542
Gord LODWICK	Ward 1 Councillor	327
Claire DOBLE	Ward 2 Councillor	436
Wayne DUNNETT	Ward 2 Councillor	54
Cyndi SCHAFFER	Ward 2 Councillor	245
Bill BASZTYK	Ward 3 Councillor	225
Walter SCHUMMER	Ward 3 Councillor	670
Walter SononiniEls		010
Ralph MALEUS	Ward 4 Councillor	244
Cria PETTINGILL	Ward 4 Councillor	373
Chris SHIER	Ward 4 Councillor	255
Lynn CAMPBELL	Ward 5 Councillor	532
Tony LAUNDRIE	Ward 5 Councillor	396
Allan SIMPSON	Ward 5 Councillor	129
25 GC 1-12-1025-000		
Declined Ballots		0
Rejected Ballots		44

Dated at the Township of Brock this 23rd day of October, 2018

Original Signed by "Thomas G. Gettinby" Municipal Clerk or designate