

Town of Bowden - Special Council Meeting
AGENDA

A Special Council Meeting of the Town of Bowden
to be held in Council Chambers, at 2101 – 20 Avenue, Bowden,
on **Wednesday 9 October 2024**, at **7:00pm**.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**
October 2, 2024, Special Council Meeting.

4. **REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS**
4.a Proposal to decrease the number of Councillors from 6 to 4.

5. **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**



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**Town of Bowden – Special Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 2 October 2024
at Town of Bowden Council Chambers.**

MINUTES (unapproved)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Robb Stuart called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

PRESENT	Mayor	Robb Stuart	(Chair)
	Councillor	Sandy Gamble	
	Councillor	Paul Webb	
	Councillor	Deb Coombes	
	Councillor	Randy Brown	
	Councillor	Marie Flowers	
ABSENT	Councillor	Wayne Milaney	

2. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion 2.a

Moved by Councillor Paul Webb that Council adopts the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. CLOSED SESSION OF COUNCIL (“in camera”)

Agenda item 3.a Personnel Matter CAO Review

Section 197(4) of the MGA applies: Exception to disclose under Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSA2000, Chapter F-25 (as amended over time) on the basis of: Section 27 “is deemed to be privileged information”.

Motion 3.a.

Moved by Councillor Randy Brown at 7:01pm that Council moves to an “in-camera” session.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Motion 3.b.

Moved by Councillor Paul Webb at 7:40pm that Council return to an “open meeting” of Council.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

There was no motion made with regard to Agenda item 3.a

4. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion 4.a

Moved by Councillor Paul Webb at 7:40pm to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes signed by:

**Mayor
Robb Stuart**

Special Council Meeting: October 9, 2024.	Agenda Item: 4.a
Prepared by: Arno Glover	Approved by: n/a
Report Type: RFD	Attachment(s):

Content:**4.a Reduction in Number of Councillors****(i) Proposal**

A proposal is submitted to Town Council to discuss a reduction in the number of Councillors.

The proposal is to reduce the number of elected Councillors from 6 to 4.

The position of chief elected official (Mayor) would remain thereby providing in total an odd number of elected officials (5 in total).

(ii) Legislative Requirements

Section 143(1) of the MGA states:

The council of a city or town consists of 7 councillors unless the council passes a bylaw specifying an odd number of 3 or more.

Section 151 of the MGA states:

151(1) A bylaw under section 143, 148 or 150 must be passed by December 31 of the year before the general election at which it is to take effect.

(2) If a bylaw is passed in the same year a general election is held, it takes effect at the 2nd general election after the date on which it is passed.

(3) A bylaw passed under section 143, 148 or 150 must be advertised.

(4) A bylaw proposed to be made under section 143, 148 or 150 must not be given third reading until after the 60-day period provided by section 231(4) has expired.

Section 231 of the MGA states:

231(1)

Except for a bylaw under section 22, a resolution under Part 15.1 or a bylaw or resolution under Part 17, after a proposed bylaw or resolution that is required to be advertised under this or another enactment has been advertised, the electors may submit a petition for a vote of the electors to determine whether the proposed bylaw or resolution should be passed.

231 (4)

A petition under this section for a vote of the electors on a proposed bylaw or resolution required to be advertised by another Part of this Act or another enactment is not sufficient unless it is filed with the chief administrative officer within 60 days after the last date on which the proposed bylaw is advertised.

(iii) Rationale (examples for & against)

Arguments for this proposal may include:

- there is a cost saving from reducing the number of Councillors (a variable estimate of between \$25,000 to \$30,000 per annum),
- cost savings could be divided between 5 Councillors thereby making recruitment to run for office more attractive to a wider candidate base (in terms of compensation),
- running for Council is becoming less attractive due to an increase in hostility to Councillors possibly leading to a lack of interest in public office.

Arguments against this proposal may include:

- maintaining a 7-person Council provides for 7 opinions and 7 perspectives,
- reducing the number of Councillors could allow a strong minority to dominate meetings and thereby make balanced decisions harder to achieve,
- a quorum of 3 elected officials does not adequately represent the entire municipality.

(iv) Other Information

- a) a \$30,000 saving represents a 3% increase in municipal tax revenues.
- b) in the 2017 municipal election the 6 Councillors who ran for office were all acclaimed.
- c) in the 2021 municipal election 13 candidates ran for the office of Councillor.
 - the highest number of votes cast for an elected official was 247 approximately 20% of the electorate.
 - the lowest number of votes cast for an elected official was 167 approximately 13% of the electorate.
 - the 7th placed candidate received 156 of the votes cast.
 - the 13th placed candidate received 36 of the votes cast.
- d) in Town zones east, west and south (*source Alberta Munis*) 29 out of the 114 Towns have a total of 5 elected officials.

- e) the chart opposite provides data on the towns either side of Bowden in terms of population size and the corresponding numbers of Councillors.
In addition, the Towns of Rimbey and Three Hills are also shown.
(*data source Alberta Municipal Affairs*).

Town	Population	Councillors
Bashaw	830	5
Castor	929	7
Coronation	940	5
Trochu	1058	7
Bentley	1078	5
Viking	1083	5
Eckville	1125	7
Bassano	1206	5
Irrican	1216	5
Vauxhall	1222	7
Bowden	1240	7
Bruderheim	1308	7
Mayerthorpe	1320	7
Legal	1345	5
2 Hills	1352	5
Bon Accord	1529	5
Lamont	1774	7
Valleyview	1863	7
Millet	1945	7
Vulcan	1917	7
Rimbey	2568	5
Three Hills	3436	5

(v) Timescales

The following timescales are relevant if a decision is made to proceed with the proposal.

- a. **Wednesday 9th October 2024**
Resolution by Council.
- b. **Thursday 10th October to Wednesday 23rd October**
Advertisement of the proposal for a period of 2 weeks in accordance with Town of Bowden Advertising Bylaw 06 / 2024.
- c. **Monday 21st October 2024**
Statement (advertisement) to residents of the proposal to be made during Council Open House.
- d. **Monday 28th October 2024**
Council gives first reading to a Number of Councillors Bylaw
- e. **Tuesday 29th October 2024**
Start of 60-day petition period per section 231 of MGA
- f. **Friday 27th December 2024**
End of 60-day petition period per section 231 of MGA
- g. **Monday 30th December 2024**
Special Council Meeting to give second and third reading to Number of Councillors Bylaw

(vi) Decision

Council is requested to consider the submitted proposal, debate the matter in hand and by resolution decide either for or against the proposal.

Motion:

Motion by Councillor _____