

**Subject: 2016 Ward 2 By-Election****APPROVALS:**

David Leflar, Director  
Kevin Scoble, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**Administrative Recommendation:**

THAT a by-election be held in Ward 2 of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo on Monday, February 8, 2016.

**Summary:**

Councillor H. J. (John) Chadi passed away on Sunday, November 15, 2015. Because there are more than 18 months remaining in his term, Section 162 of the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a by-election be held in Ward 2. Section 165 of the *MGA* specifies that Election Day is 90 days after November 15, 2015 which would be Saturday February 13, 2016, unless Council sets an earlier date. Section 25 of the *Local Authorities Election Act* specifies that Nomination Day must be exactly four weeks prior to Election Day.

It is advisable to ensure that both Election Day and Nomination Day occur outside the holiday period when many people are away. There is no time to hold a by-election before the holiday season so that leaves a fairly narrow window on the calendar. Administration is accordingly recommending that Council establish Monday, February 8, 2016 as Election Day, which would make Monday January 11, 2016 Nomination Day.

**Background:**

Councillor John Chadi passed away on Sunday, November 15, 2015, leaving a vacancy for a Ward 2 Councillor. Since there is more than 18 months before the next general election in October 2017, the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a by-election be held 90 days from the date of the vacancy (Sections 162 and 165) unless Council sets an earlier date by resolution. The by-election must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Authorities Election Act*, which provides that Nomination Day is exactly 4 weeks prior to Election Day.

Administration is proposing a by-election date of Monday, February 8, 2016, as this will ensure that there is no overlap with the holiday season when many electors will be out of town. If Monday, February 8 is approved as By-Election Day, nominations would be held on Monday, January 11, 2016 from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

The Election Bylaw, passed in 2013, established the procedures regarding nominations, voting subdivision, advance voting, voting hours, automated voting procedures and institutional and incapacitated elector voting to be used in conducting any local jurisdiction election. Candidates and voters appreciate a consistent approach to electoral events that provides convenient and easy access to voting.

**Budget/Financial Implications:**

Administration is currently working on determining the budget required to maintain the same level of service as in previous by-elections.

**Rationale for Recommendation:**

The *Municipal Government Act* requires that a by-election be held within 90 days of the vacancy occurring, and the proposed date of Monday, February 8, 2016 falls within this time frame while also ensuring that Nomination Day, which must be four weeks prior to Election Day, also occurs after the holiday period.

**Strategic Plan Linkage:**

Pillar 1 – Building Responsible Government