



THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF WEST NIPISSING
LA CORPORATION DE LA MUNICIPALITÉ DE NIPISSING OUEST

BY-LAW 2023/47

**BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW 2022-27
TO ADOPT THE COUNCIL VACANCY APPOINTMENT POLICY**

WHEREAS pursuant to section 263 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001 c. 25, when the seat of a member of council becomes vacant during the term of office, Council may fill a vacancy by appointing a person who has consented to accept the office if appointed, or requiring that a By-election be held to fill a vacancy in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, S.O., 1996, c 32.

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of West Nipissing adopted a policy on June 15, 2022 to govern the process for Council to appoint a person to fill a seat of a member of council that had been declared vacant.

AND WHEREAS Council for the Corporation wishes to amend the said policy

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of West Nipissing enacts as follows:

1. That Council hereby approves the amended "Council Vacancy Appointment Policy" attached as Schedule "A" to this Bylaw.
2. That Schedule "A" hereto shall replace Schedule "A" to By-Law 2022-57.

ENACTED AND PASSED JUNE 6, 2023 AS WITNESSED BY THE SEAL OF THE CORPORATION AND THE HANDS OF ITS PROPER OFFICERS.

KATHLEEN THORNE ROCHON
MAYOR

MELANIE DUCHARME
CLERK

AMENDED COUNCIL VACANCY APPOINTMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for an accountable and transparent process for filling any vacancy, including the Mayor or Councillor for any Ward, that occurs.

2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This policy shall apply to any vacancy which occurs during the term of Council.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In accordance with the Municipal Act, S.O., 2001, c.25, (the "Act") when a seat of a member of Council becomes vacant, the remaining Council is required to declare the seat vacant and to determine whether the seat will be filled by holding a By-Election or by Appointment. A vacancy occurs on the death or resignation of a member or if a member becomes disqualified from holding office during the term.

3.2 Following the consideration of a report to Council on May 2, 2023, Council chose to conduct the selection for the filling of a vacancy of a member of Council through Appointment of Applicants, in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

3.3 In order to ensure an accountable and transparent process for filling any vacancy, Council has directed that a policy be adopted to provide a clear understanding of the decision-making process when a vacancy occurs.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

The Municipality of West Nipissing is committed to an open, accountable and transparent government. Council, when exercising its responsibility under the Act to fill a vacancy shall observe the following principles:

4.1 Council will, at the meeting immediately following becoming aware of a vacancy, declare the seat vacant in accordance with Section 262(1) of the Act and shall adopt a resolution to fill the vacancy by appointment, the process for which is detailed in paragraph (8) eight hereof.

4.2 Within 60 days following the declaration of the vacant seat, council shall, pursuant to Section 263(5)(ii) of the Act, adopt a By-Law to appoint an eligible candidate, selected through the process herein, to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the council term.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 In this policy the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them:

5.2 "Appointment" means the appointment of a qualified individual who is a Candidate as defined herein, by majority vote of Council, to fill a vacancy on Council for the remainder of the current Council term.

5.3 "Candidate" means an individual who has submitted a written request to be considered for appointment to fill a vacancy in the office of Councillor as of the date of this policy being enacted, having met the eligibility requirements of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

5.4 "Lot" means a method of determination the name of each Candidate shall be placed on five (5) equal size pieces of paper of the same colour and folded in half. Such five folded pieces of paper for each Candidate that is subject to section 1.7.6 shall be placed in an opaque container whereupon the Clerk or the Clerk's designate will draw one piece of paper. The name of the Candidate on the piece of paper drawn by the Clerk or Clerk's designate shall be the selected Candidate as contemplated in section 1.7.7.

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

6.1 Immediately following the declaration of vacancy and resolution detailed in Section 4.1, the Clerk shall post a Council Vacancy Notice (Appendix A) on the municipality's website (www.westnipissing.ca) and in a local newspaper having a circulation sufficient to meet the timelines stipulated in the Notice for a minimum of two (2) consecutive weeks following Council's decision to fill a vacancy by appointment.

The notice shall indicate Council's intention to appoint an individual to fill a vacancy and shall outline the nomination process.

- 6.2. Interested persons will be required to complete a Consent of Nominee form and a Declaration of Qualification (obtained from the Municipal Clerk), provide personal identification showing their name and qualifying address within the Municipality of West Nipissing, and may be required to provide a written response to specific questions as may be determined by Council. Interested persons will also be required to provide written endorsement of his or her nomination by at least twenty-five (25) electors who are eligible to vote in the Municipality;
- 6.3 Applicants are referred to hereinafter as Candidates.
- 6.4 Candidate(s) may submit, to the Clerk, a personal statement of qualification for consideration of Council. Personal statements shall be typewritten on 8 ½" X 11" paper not exceeding two pages in length and will include the Candidate name and address. Statements that do not comply shall not be included in the Council meeting agenda or provided to Council by the Clerk. Candidates will be advised of the deadline for submission of a personal statement.
- 6.5 Once submitted, the forms will be made available to the public in the same way as a nomination form for a Candidate in a municipal election or by-election and may be included on a Council agenda published on the municipal website;
- 6.6. A deadline will be established for filing the Consent of Nominee and Declaration of Qualification, as determined by Council in consultation with the Clerk;
- 6.7 Individuals who have submitted the necessary forms may appear before Council at a date and time so determined by the Council, and the Clerk will advise all applicants of the established date and time;
- 6.8 The Clerk will create a list of all Candidates and publicly post said list on the Municipality's website and at the Municipal Office. This list will be updated as applications are received, once deemed complete by the Clerk;
- 6.9. Notwithstanding the requirement of the Municipality's Procedural By-law, the agenda for the meeting shall be set by the Clerk to allow for the orderly proceeding of selecting a Candidate and the agenda shall include the following:
 - a. A certified list of all Candidates listed in alphabetical order, by last name;
 - b. Any personal statement of qualification for consideration of Council;
- 6.10 Copies of all application documents will be included with the agenda package for the Appointment Meeting and will be made available as part of the public agenda posted on the Municipality's website. The Agenda shall be published to Members of Council and to the public in the same manner as a Regular or Special Council agenda.

7. FILLING A VACANCY FOR THE POSITION OF MAYOR

- 7.1 Any member of Council wishing to be considered for the appointment to a vacancy for the Mayor's position, may do so. He or she shall advise the Clerk, in writing, and shall file the necessary documentation outlined in paragraph 6.2 and 6.4, above, within the stipulated timelines set out in the Council Vacancy Notice.
- 7.2 Any member of Council seeking appointment to the position of Mayor shall declare a pecuniary interest.
- 7.3 A vote to fill a vacancy of Mayor by appointment shall occur at an open Council Meeting in accordance with section 8 of this By-Law;
- 7.4 Should the council member be successful; the then vacant seat of the Councillor shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

8. PROCEDURE AT APPOINTMENT MEETING OF COUNCIL

- 8.1 At the Appointment Meeting which may be at a Regular or Special Meeting of Council, the Presiding Officer shall make a brief statement to outline the purpose of the meeting and the order of proceedings;

8.2 The Clerk will provide a list of Candidates who have completed the Consent of Nominee and Declaration of Qualification, and the Chair will call for a motion to consider the Candidates to fill the vacancy, as follows:

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following individuals who have signified in writing that they are legally qualified to hold office and consented to accept the office if they are appointed to fill the vacancy, be considered for appointment to fill such vacancy”

8.3 Candidates will be sequestered in an adjacent room until it is their time to answer questions posed by Council. Once a Candidate has answered the questions, they will return to a separate room until all Candidate interviews are complete.

8.4 At the Appointment Meeting, each Candidate will be afforded an opportunity to address Council, in the language of his or her choice, for a period not to exceed ten (10) minutes. The order of speaking will be alphabetical by last name.

8.5 Each member of Council will be allowed no more than one question to each Candidate and responses from Candidates shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) minutes per question;

8.6 Upon hearing all Candidate submissions, Council will proceed to vote, by way of a public ballot vote, similar to the Ranked Voting process, in rounds of voting as follows;

- a. Candidate names will be displayed on the Council Chamber viewing screen and shall be displayed in alphabetical order, by last name for use in a public tally of votes;
- b. Each of the pieces of paper to be used as either ballots, or to be used by the Clerk to draw names in accordance with Section 7(m) (i)(ii) will be equal in size and type;
- c. Only the Clerk or Clerk’s designate may handle the papers, ballots and Container referenced in this procedure, save and except the Members being permitted to mark their ballots;
- d. Ballots will be provided to Members of Council in the form of a voting card on which to indicate their choice of Candidate in writing; and all voting cards shall be of identical size, paper quality, and colour and shall be pre-printed with the Member’s name and a place to be initialed by the Member;
- e. The first-round ballots may contain the name of each Candidate, in alphabetical order by surname and have a box immediately preceding the surname in which the Member of Council may mark an “X” beside the name of the Candidate of their preference;
- f. All subsequent ballots shall be in the form described in (d) above however will not contain any Candidate names in a pre-printed format;
- g. The Clerk will ask Members of Council to vote by clearly printing the name of their preferred Candidate on the ballot, initialing the ballot for authentication purposes, folding the ballot and returning it directly to the Clerk;
- h. Any Round One ballot marked with more than one “X”, or any subsequent round ballot that is not legibly printed, or any ballot that does not contain the authentication initials of the Member of Council shall be considered a spoiled ballot and shall not be included in the tally;
- i. The Clerk will read aloud the Member’s name and selected Candidate and announce the tallies of all votes, while maintaining the tally on the viewing screen;
- j. If the Candidate receiving the greatest number of votes cast does not receive more than one-half the votes of all voting Members of Council, the Candidate or Candidates who received the fewest number of votes shall be excluded from consideration;
- k. The vote will be taken again by the Clerk and, if necessary, more than once, excluding in each successive vote the Candidate or Candidates who receive the fewest number of votes;
- l. The process shall be repeated until the Candidate receiving the greatest number of votes has also received more than one-half of the votes of the voting Members of Council;
- m. In the event the votes cast are equal for all Candidates:
 - i. If there are three or more Candidates remaining, the Clerk shall by lot select one such Candidate to be excluded from subsequent voting;
 - ii. If only two Candidates remain, the tie shall be broken and vacancy shall be filled by the Candidate selected by lot, as conducted by the Clerk, wherein the first name drawn shall be declared the successful Candidate;

- 8.7 Upon conclusion of the voting, the Clerk will declare to be elected the Candidate receiving the votes of more than one-half of the number of voting Members, or as provided in 19(m)(ii);
- 8.8 A by-law confirming the appointment shall be enacted by Council to appoint the successful Candidate to the office for the remainder of the term and the Clerk will administer the Oath of Office to the successful Candidate;
- 8.9 The Minutes of the Appointment Meeting shall include a full disclosure of all voting results, including the name of each Member of Council and their selected Candidate in any and all voting rounds.



Appendix A

PUBLIC NOTICE

MUNICIPALITY OF WEST NIPISSING

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL VACANCY

TAKE NOTICE THAT a vacancy exists on the Municipality of West Nipissing Council for one (1) Council Position for _____ [state position ie) Mayor or Councillor for Ward ____]. Council has determined that it wishes to fill this vacancy through **SELECTION BY NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENT** in accordance with the Municipality of West Nipissing Council Vacancy Policy.

The term of this position is from the date of Council appointment for the balance of the Council term until [date of election, 2026.

An applicant for municipal office must be a qualified municipal elector as set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Qualified electors must be:

- 18 years of age or older;
- a Canadian citizen;
- a resident of the Municipality of West Nipissing, or an owner or tenant of land in the Municipality or the spouse of such an owner or tenant; and
- not prohibited from voting under any other Act or disqualified from running for or holding municipal office.

Applicants must complete and submit a Council Vacancy Application package in person to the Clerk, which shall include:

- a Consent of Nominee form and a Declaration of Qualification (obtained from the Municipal Clerk),
- personal identification showing their name and qualifying address within the Municipality of West Nipissing, and
- written endorsement of his or her nomination by at least twenty-five (25) electors who are eligible to vote in the Municipality;

Nominations will be accepted by the Clerk at the Municipal Office during regular business hours until [date and time]. (electronic packages shall not be accepted. Original signatures are required.)

Applicants must also submit to the Clerk a personal statement of qualification for consideration of Council. Personal statements will be typewritten in a 12-point font on letter size (8 ½" x 11") paper, shall not exceed two (2) pages in length, and will include the Applicant's name and address. Statements that do not meet these requirements shall not be included in any Council meeting agenda or provided to Council by the Clerk.

Certified registered Applicants will be afforded the opportunity to address Council for a period of not more than ten (10) minutes and then will be asked questions by Council in an open Special Council Meeting to be held on [date and time] pm in accordance with the policy for that Special Council Meeting.

The Council Vacancy Policy and application package are available on the Municipality's website at www.westnipissing.ca or at the Municipal Office, 225 Holditch Street, Sturgeon Falls, ON P2B 1T1.

For further information or to complete a Council Vacancy Application package, please contact:

Melanie Ducharme, Municipal Clerk
225 Holditch Street,
Sturgeon Falls, ON P2B 1T1
mducharme@westnipissing.ca

The Municipality of West Nipissing is committed to providing a barrier free workplace. If accommodation is required during the selection or interview process, it will be available upon advance request. This posting is available in an accessible format upon request.