



Report to County Council

From: Katherine Thompson, Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk

Date: May 31, 2024

Subject: Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy

Recommendation(s):

THAT the report titled “Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy” from the Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk dated May 31, 2024 be received and filed; and,

THAT Council replace the Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy (1.3) with the revised Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy (1.3).

Introduction:

In 2019, County Council approved the Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy (1.3) to govern the half-masting of flags at County facilities and the raising of flags on the community flagpole in front of the Elgin County Heritage Centre. After nearly five (5) years, this policy has undergone a review and staff are recommending that it be replaced with a revised policy that also includes procedures and processes for proclamations and lighting the County of Elgin Administration Building.

Background and Discussion:

The Administrative Services Department is currently undertaking a review of existing policies for accuracy, clarity, and functionality. The current Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy (1.3) is referenced frequently by Administrative Services staff. There are several areas of the policy that require clarity and increased detail. Additionally, the increase in requests for proclamations and the ability to light the County Administration Building with colourful LED technology has presented the opportunity to make the policy more robust.

Much of the content of the original policy has transferred to the revised policy and changes/new additions are indicated below:

The Policy Applies to all County Facilities

Flag protocols, particularly those relating to half-masting, refer to flags at all County facilities. This is now made clear in the policy.

Approval Authority

The existing policy is somewhat unclear as to whether the Warden has sole discretion to approve flag raisings or if this needs to be done by Council as a whole.

The revised policy recommends that the Warden remain the authority for approving half-masting as this is often a time sensitive activity.

The revised policy places authority for approving flag raising requests on Council as a whole. Organizations and groups are required to provide their requests four (4) weeks in advance of the proposed raising/proclamation which gives ample opportunity to take requests to Council.

Procedures and Processes for Proclamation Requests

The County of Elgin has been receiving a larger volume of requests for proclamations in recent months. There currently is no policy that governs the issuing of proclamations. Because proclamations are often (but not always) accompanied by a request for a flag raising, staff thought it appropriate that these two types of requests be covered in the same policy.

Lighting of the Elgin County Administration Building

Renovations to the County of Elgin Administration building façade, as part of the elevator installation project, included the installation of new LED lighting technology. This technology now gives the County of Elgin the ability to light the front of the building in various colours to mark various occasions. As part of the revised policy, organizations or groups who have been approved for a flag raising and or a proclamation may also request the building be lit up in conjunction with their cause as well.

Standardized Application Form

The Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy now includes a standardized application form that organizations or groups wishing to request flag raisings, proclamations, and lighting must fill out to be considered. This will provide a standardized format for staff and Council to review when considering approvals.

Flag raisings and proclamations for Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Pride Week in Elgin County, and Child Cancer Awareness Month have already been approved by Council for 2024 and will not be required to fill out a new request this year.

Both the existing policy (Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy (1.3) and the proposed policy (Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy (1.3) are attached to this report as Appendix A and B.

Financial Implications:

None.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. <input type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. <input type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

None.

Communication Requirements:

If approved by Council, the Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy (1.3) will be circulated to those groups who have requested flag raisings and proclamations in the past. The policy will also be posted on the County of Elgin website.

Conclusion:

The revised Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy (1.3) will provide enhanced clarity and direction regarding the procedures and processes associated with half-masting and raising of flags, issuing proclamations, and lighting the County of Elgin Administration Building.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Katherine Thompson
Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk