

Memo



Date: May 5, 2010
File: 0100-00
To: City Manager
From: Director, Corporate Services
Subject: Council Reporting Best Practices

Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the report on Council Reporting Best Practices from the Director of Corporate Services dated May 5, 2010.

Purpose:

To advise Council of report format changes and provide Council an overview of the Council Report preparation process.

Background:

Over the past several months, staff have been reviewing the existing practices and policies relating to Council presentations and the preparation of Council Reports. The scope of the project included; timing of report preparation, timing of agendas, report content and presentation protocols.

The result of the investigation and discussions resulted in some changes to the report format and the creation of a Council Report best practice guide. A new section has been added to the report template as a result. The Purpose section will identify why the matter has been brought before Council and what preempted the recommendations (i.e. previous Council direction, a particular event or legislative requirement).

A series of workshops were held with staff to overview the changes and to reinforce some of the best practices relating to Council Report preparation and presentation. The attached *Council Report Preparation Guide* is an available tool to assist staff during preparation of reports. Starting May 1, 2010, Staff are encouraged to use the new Council Report memorandum template for all non-planning reports.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Internal Circulation:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

A handwritten signature in the bottom right corner of the page.

External Agency/Public Comments:
Community & Media Relations Comments:
Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:



R. Mayne, Director, Corporate Services

Approved for inclusion:



P. Macklem, General Manager Corporate Sustainability

cc: City Clerk

Preparation of consistent and well articulated Council reports are critical to the effective operations of Council and the overall management of the City.

Timely preparation of reports provides opportunity for internal circulation and clear and concise recommendations provide staff with appropriate direction.

The recommendation, content and format of the report provides a historical record and allows Council to make decisions based on complete and accurate information.

Office of the City Clerk
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4
TEL 250 469-8645
FAX 250 862-3315
clerks@kelowna.ca
kelowna.ca

Report Timing and Signatures

Internal Circulations

Internal circulations shall occur during the drafting of the report. Sufficient time should be provided for staff to read, research items where necessary and respond.

GM / Director Review

Each Director will provide their staff with a timeline for submission. Allowance for more time should be considered where the report is complex or is cross functional in nature. More complex reports should be received by the respective GM **on the Friday** prior to the Wednesday submission deadline.

Each GM should work with their Directors to determine which reports will be prepared by staff members other than the Director, and further direction on what reports should be reviewed and signed off by the GM.

Submission to Office of the City Clerk

Signed hard copies and an electronic version of the report as well as an electronic version of any presentation material (PowerPoint) are due in the Office of the City Clerk by **Wednesday noon** for the following Council Meeting.

Key Messages

During the preparation of each report the author should prepare three to five key speaking points so that messaging to the media and Council is considered in advance of the Council presentation. These key points will allow the intended message to be delivered and reinforced to the media or others.

Report Contents

The following are the general areas of consideration when preparing a staff report to Council. Not every area will necessarily be applicable to every report. However, every area should at least be considered when preparing the report to determine whether it should be dealt with or not. In some cases the person preparing the report will be able to make a determination on all or most of the areas. However, many reports will require, or simply just benefit from, input from other staff or outside parties. The best place to start is to consult with other departments early in the process.

Please use the standard Council report format provided, including font type, font size, formatting and content.

Recommendation – Exactly what action is being sought as a result of the recommendation? If Council passes a resolution worded as you have drafted will that resolution authorize all aspects of the action/inaction that you are attempting to have authorized? Have you included any unnecessary recommendations that will tie Council/staff in the future to some action/inaction? Every resolution needs to be able to stand alone in the minutes, without leaving a reader wondering what was meant (it is OK to refer to details more fully explained in the report, but make sure the resolution also refers to the report date and author so it is clear which report is being discussed).

Recommendation should start with:

THAT COUNCIL...

AND THAT COUNCIL... (for multiple recommendations)

AND THAT COUNCIL...

AND FURTHER THAT COUNCIL... (the final recommendation)

Purpose – This section identifies why you're before Council and what preempted the recommendations (i.e. previous Council direction, a particular event or legislative requirement).

Background/Body of Report – The facts.

Internal Circulation To – Internal circulation should be considered early on in the report preparation process. Where appropriate, include what that input was or how it has been taken into account and the individual position titles. Every department that provided input should be cc'd at the bottom of the report.

Legal/Statutory Authority – This is similar to the "Legislative Authority" section that is found at the bottom of our standard Council policy format. Where is Council getting its legal authority to adopt the recommendation? Does Council have the legal authority to act in the manner in which you are recommending? Consider legislation, regulations, bylaws, guidelines and case law. If you are not sure, check with the Office of the City Clerk. Where necessary, seek legal advice through the Office of the City Clerk.

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements – Does there need to be some sort of elector assent? Alternative Approval Process? Special approvals? Special procedures? Have they been obtained, or do they still need to be obtained? If you are not sure, check with the Office of the City Clerk.

Existing Policy – How does the recommendation support the Corporate Strategic Plan? Does it comply with other existing Council/City policy including formal policies, bylaws, previous resolutions of Council, or even past practice? If so, what updates/ amendments to existing policy, bylaws, etc. are required and are they being dealt with?

Financial/Budgetary Considerations Has the recommended action been approved in the current budget? Does it need a corresponding budgetary amendment? Are there other financial

Presentation Protocol

Staff should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when appearing before Council. This applies to both closed or in-camera morning meetings, and public afternoon, evening meetings or public hearings. While morning meetings are more informal than afternoon or evening meetings, proper protocol should always followed.

1. Always address the Mayor as "Your Worship" or "Mayor..." followed by the individual's surname.
2. In the Mayor's absence, the Deputy Mayor should be addressed as "Your Worship".
3. Refer to Councillors using their last name as in "Councillor NAME". Do not refer to members of Council by their first name, even if you are in a morning meeting or if they refer to you by your first name. Address all comments to the chair, i.e. 'Your Worship, in response to Councillor's _____ questions, I can say ...'
4. Address other members of staff by their position title or by Mr./Ms. NAME –staff should not refer to each other by their first names.

5. The Mayor will let you know when or if to speak – as the presiding member in control of the meeting, the Mayor determines who speaks and in what order.
6. Do not get into a debate with members of Council or the public– that is not our role as staff.
7. When scheduled to make a presentation to Council wait in the Council Chambers anteroom. If you are scheduled later on the agenda listen to the meeting on your computer (InSites, Staff Resources, Council Audio) to learn of Council's progress through the agenda. Please ensure you are in the anteroom well in advance of your agenda item.
8. Enter Council Chambers when your item is to be discussed and take a seat at the staff table. Do not interrupt the preceding presentation. (You may choose to enter Council Chambers with a staff member who precedes you on the agenda to minimize disruption.)
9. Staff in the Clerk's Office will ensure all microphones are working. Two portable microphones are available beside the projection equipment at the podium.

considerations such as ongoing maintenance/operational cost or life cycle cost?

Personnel Implications – This will generally only apply to reports being presented in-camera, but may include changes to staff resource requirements.

External Agency/Public Comments List any comments from required/ relevant external bodies (other agencies, the Province, neighbours, other stakeholders). Has there been/ should there be any formal/informal consultation with these other groups? Even where public consultation is not strictly required, Council will often want to hear that stakeholders have been given an opportunity to comment on what's being proposed.

Community & Media Relations

Considerations - In many cases, the regular Council agenda package publication and the subsequent media coverage will be sufficient. However, when the recommendation impacts the residents of Kelowna on a broad scale and has the potential of attracting significant media attention, advice in advance from the Community & Media Relations will assist in a communications plan. The report should outline the level of communications planned such as open houses, publications, or external promotions.

Alternate Recommendation -

Is there an appropriate/necessary alternate recommendation? Are there implications to the alternate recommendations that are different from those of the primary recommendation (eg. any different effect on budget, legal requirements, etc.)? All of the considerations listed in this guide should also be considered for the alternate recommendation and any differences should be noted.

Signatures - Reports shall be signed by the Manager responsible or the Director. GMs will initial all reports prepared by the Director, otherwise the Director will initial. Where the report is prepared by someone other than the signatory, a notation below the subject line should be added (Report Prepared by:....).

Presentation Pointers

1. If you are using the projection equipment, practice before your presentation. A key to Council Chambers is available in the City Clerk's Office and instructions for the equipment can be found on the staff table podium. See below for special tips on using the equipment.
2. When introduced stand up and move to the podium. Preface your presentation with remarks such as "Good afternoon Your Worship and City Council."
3. Do not read your entire report. You should know your material well enough to be able to paraphrase. Make cue cards or put your important points on post-it notes in large text. (They can be affixed to the overheads and removed as needed.)
4. Presentations should be concise and provide only the information required for Council to make an informed decision. In most cases presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes. Stick to the most important messages. You may answer any questions that arise.
5. Include visual tools if your presentation is longer than three minutes; e.g. overheads or power point slides. Keep them simple, don't overload the slides with information.
6. Charts need to be simple and easily understood. Add a highlight if necessary to get the important information across (ie. "5% jump"). Charts that have been used in a document are likely too detailed for a slide or an overhead. Consider using a graph instead or the slide can be a simple "20% growth in two years." Slides are there to reinforce your words not to repeat them.
7. Presentation material (PowerPoint) is due in the Office of the City Clerk by Wednesday noon for the following Council Meeting.



Projection Tips

1. The projection system in Council Chambers is very sophisticated, there is no need to prepare special overhead transparencies. The equipment will project plain copy paper as well as 3D objects.
2. Remember your presentation is being televised. Pay particular attention to font sizes to ensure the information is legible on TV. Fonts of 32pt or larger are best.
3. Limit the number of points per page to a maximum of three. Maps should also be limited in scope and detail.
4. Make sure you are familiar with how to move back and forth between laptop presentations and overheads. See instructions on the podium.
5. Standard PowerPoint templates are available and should be used for all staff presentations.
6. Use the City's colour palette for charts. Use solid fill, not stripes.
8. The bright primary colours of the City's colour palette work well on TV. Don't combine dark backgrounds with dark lettering.
9. Use of effects should match the tone of the presentation. Keep it simple for serious presentations. Those less serious have more latitude.

Refer to the City's Visual Standards Guide and corporate templates.

Memo



Date: Mar 23, 2010

File: 12345

To: City Manager

From: Name, Title

Subject: TBD

Report Prepared by: [delete if report is prepared by signatory]

Recommendation:

Purpose: [describe why you are before Council and what preempted the recommendation, i.e. previous Council direction, legislative requirement, event...]

Background:

[NOTE: any categories that are "N/A" should be moved to the end of the body of the report where indicated - see below]

Internal Circulation:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Community & Media Relations Considerations:

Alternate Recommendation:

Considerations not applicable to this report:

[move any of the above-headings that are N/A in any particular case here and list them so that the reader is aware they were considered, but are not applicable]

Submitted by: