

## Request for Decision

Title	2017 Election- Bylaws and Agreements
Proposed Motion	<p data-bbox="527 525 747 556"><u>#1 Special Ballots</u></p> <ol data-bbox="576 556 1469 1039" style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That Council give three readings to Bylaw 1392/17, Municipal Election Vote by Special Ballot Repeal.</li><li>2. That Council authorize for the provision of special ballots during the 2017 municipal election and provide for an elector to apply by any one or more of the following methods:<ol data-bbox="673 745 893 934" style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) in writing;</li><li>b) by telephone;</li><li>c) by fax;</li><li>d) in person;</li><li>e) by email.</li></ol></li><li>3. That Council authorize that the special ballots provided to electors must be returned to the Returning Officer at Sturgeon County Centre by 4:30 p.m. on Election Day.</li></ol> <p data-bbox="527 1081 1242 1113"><u>#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions</u></p> <ol data-bbox="576 1113 1469 1669" style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. That Council enter into an agreement with Sturgeon Public School Division No. 24 to conduct the 2017 school board elections for residents of Sturgeon Public School Division No. 24 who reside in the municipal boundaries of Sturgeon County.</li><li>5. That Council enter into an agreement with Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 734 to conduct the school board elections for residents of Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic 2017 Separate School District No. 734 who reside in the municipal boundaries of Sturgeon County.</li><li>6. That Council enter into an agreement with Elk Island Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 41 to conduct the 2017 school board elections for residents of Elk Island Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 41 who reside in the municipal boundaries of Sturgeon County.</li></ol> <p data-bbox="527 1690 836 1722"><u>#3 Ballots Printed in Lots</u></p> <ol data-bbox="576 1722 1453 1795" style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. That Council give three readings to Bylaw 1391/17, Printing Ballots in Lots.</li></ol>

<p>Administrative Recommendation</p>	<p><u>#1 Special Ballots</u> Administration recommends that Council repeal Bylaw 1063/05, as a resolution is sufficient as per the <i>Local Authorities Election Act</i> (LAEA).</p> <p><u>#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions</u> Administration recommends that agreements be entered into, to enable the Returning Officer to conduct the 2017 elections for the respective school boards.</p> <p><u>#3 Ballots Printed in Lots</u> Administration recommends Bylaw 1391/17 Printing Ballots in Lots to allow for rotation of names on ballots.</p>
<p>Previous Council Direction</p>	<p><u>#1 Special Ballots</u> March 13, 2007 – Motion 101/07 That County Council authorize the use of special ballots for the 2007 Municipal Election and the application for special ballots may be made by any one of the following methods:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) in writing;</li> <li>(b) by telephone</li> <li>(c) by telecopier;</li> <li>(d) in person;</li> <li>(e) by e-mail.</li> </ul> And further the electors of Sturgeon County may apply to the Returning Officer for a special ballot at any time between the four weeks prior to the nomination day and the closing of voting stations on election day.</p> <p>June 28, 2005 – Motion 343/05 Council passed Bylaw 1063/05 Municipal Election Vote by Special Ballot.</p> <p><u>#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions</u> No previous Council direction related to entering into agreements with the respective school boards.</p> <p><u>#3 Ballots Printed in Lots</u> June 28, 2005 – Motion 347/05 Council passed Bylaw 1064/05 Rescind Bylaw 1033 Municipal Election – Ballots in Lots.</p> <p>July 6, 2004 – Motion 387/04 Council passed Bylaw 1033/04 Municipal Election – Ballots in Lots.</p>
<p>Report</p>	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <p><u>#1 Special Ballots</u> The LAEA legislates the option of providing voting by special ballot and Council’s role in this decision.</p> <p>Given Sturgeon County’s demographics have changed over the years due to a number of different factors such as changes in employment, certain electors are unable to attend a voting station on election day.</p>

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As such, special ballots allow more eligible electors to cast their vote by removing barriers to do so. Although, in order for electors to request a Special Ballot, they will need to complete an application with the following information:

- First and last name of the elector;
- Municipal address of the residence of the elector;
- School elector status, if the elector is voting for a school board trustee;
- Mailing address to which the special ballot is to be sent;
- Contact telephone number;
- Contact e-mail address, if the elector is unavailable by telephone; and
- Reason why a special ballot is requested.

In the 2013 General Municipal Election, there were 23 electors who accessed this method of voting.

Upon review of the previous Special Ballot Bylaw, Administration noted that the bylaw did not establish a specific date and time prior to the closing of the voting station for the return of special ballots. As such, setting a time for the return of special ballots ensures that electors understand their responsibility; as well, it allows time for the Returning Officer to account for the ballots. Given this, Administration recommends implementing a deadline of 4:30 p.m. the day of the general municipal election as the cutoff for receiving special ballots.

Finally, Bylaw 1063/05 Municipal Election Vote By special ballot is no longer required and may be done by resolution as per the LAEA.

### #2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

Sturgeon County will require approximately 65 election workers to conduct an effective and efficient election process. For the school boards to conduct their own elections it would involve each school board recruiting enough workers, arguably from the same pool of workers. This is impractical and inefficient.

As a result, each of the school boards have requested that Sturgeon County's Returning Officer conduct their respective elections. The school boards will compensate Sturgeon County on a proportional basis for providing election services. In each case, however, the school board is still required to appoint their own respective Returning Officer and conduct the School Trustee nomination process.

In past elections, school boards have seen several acclamations, resulting in no need for a full election. Therefore, there may not be elections in all wards, but until Nomination Day there is no certainty.

### #3 Ballots Printed in Lots

Printing ballots in lots allows the printer to rotate the names alphabetically of each candidate so that each candidate has an opportunity to be the first one listed on the ballot, rather than being in alphabetical order, which is

seen by some to less likely influence voters who know less about the candidates. Based on this approach, Administration recommends Council consider printing ballots in lots.

External Communication

#1 Special Ballots

Voting by special ballot will be communicated to the electors through the website, County Connections, news media, social media, and other methods as the election proceeds.

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

Ongoing communication with the respective school board Administration's as the agreements are developed and ratified. Following Nomination Day, the parties involved will prepare for those school wards that will be holding elections.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

Printing ballots in lots will be referenced in information for candidates.

Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices:

#1 Special Ballots

Section 77.1, 77.2 and 77.3 of *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000 c.L-21

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

Section 3(1) of *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000 c.L-21

An elected authority may by resolution enter into an agreement for the conduct of an election with one or more elected authorities of local jurisdictions that do not have contiguous boundaries but do have areas in common.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

Section 43(1) *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000 c.L-21

Implication of  
Administrative  
Recommendation

Strategic Alignment:

**Strong Local Governance and Regional Leadership**

#1 Special Ballots

By ensuring the electors are provided opportunities to cast their vote promotes fairness and equity.

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

By providing election services to the school boards demonstrates a strong collaborative approach.

Organizational:

#1 Special Ballots

This is a proactive decision that will enable electors with another option on how they can vote. This decision can be accommodated within the current capacity of the election office.

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

A template school elections agreement has been developed for this scenario, including setting out the responsibilities of each party, thereby ensuring a smooth transition for the election.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

There is little impact organizationally; a print shop is used to print the ballots. Electors mark their ballots for one candidate; election workers are then counting only one mark, regardless of name order.

Financial:

#1 Special Ballots

The financial impact is included in the election budget. Albert Municipal Affairs provides the necessary forms and instructions to electors on voting by special ballot. The only costs involved would be for copying and mailing the special ballot package.

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

The financial impact is mitigated by the schools contributing proportional costs. Costs will be outlined in the agreements but cannot be finalized until it is determined how many school wards will be holding elections which will be identified after Nomination Day.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

Slight cost increase in the setup of the printing of ballots in lots, as compared to printed in alphabetical order.

Alternatives Considered

#1 Special Ballots

To not offer special ballots was rejected as it was anticipated that Sturgeon County Council wants to provide flexibility and to encourage electors to vote by providing them with this alternative method of voting.

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

Sturgeon County could choose not to enter into agreements with the school boards. Sturgeon County Council values collaboration and this is enhanced by entering into these agreements.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

The alternative to print the ballots alphabetically as per section 43(2) of the LAEA.

Implications of Alternatives

Strategic Alignment:

#1 Special Ballots,

To not offer the option of special ballots does not demonstrate Sturgeon County values.

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#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

To not provide election services for the school boards does not exhibit collaboration, which is inconsistent with the values and goals of the County.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

There is no implication.

Organizational:

There are no vast organizational implications of any of the proposed recommendations set out within the Request for Decision.

Financial:

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

When performing the school elections, there is shared cost on rental of facilities, election workers and materials. This benefits the County in the overall cost of conducting an election. If the County does not enter into agreements, then the entire cost of the election will solely be the responsibility of the County.

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

There is a slight cost saving if the ballots were printing alphabetically rather than in lots.

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Follow up Action #1 Special Ballots

1. Communicate to Deputy Returning Officer and staff the special ballot process (June 2017).
2. Returning Officer will advertise the method for applying for special ballots.
3. Special ballots will be available for mail-out during the week following Nomination Day (September 2017).

#2 Election Services Agreements with School Jurisdictions

1. Deputy Returning Officer to meet with each school board administrator to finalize agreements.
2. Deputy Returning Officer to meet with each school board to determine details of the election (September 19, 2017).

#3 Ballots Printed in Lots

1. Printing of ballots in lots will be referenced in Information for Candidates (June 2017).

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Attachment(s)	1. Bylaw 1392/17 Municipal Election Vote by Special Ballot 2. Bylaw 1063/05 Municipal Election Vote by Special Ballot 3. Bylaw 1391/17 Printing Ballots in Lots
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Report Reviewed  
by:



Christine Beveridge, Senior Legislative Officer, Legislative Services



Stephane Labonne, A/County Commissioner - CAO

## Strategic Alignment Checklist

Vision: *Sturgeon County: a diverse, active community that pioneers opportunities and promotes initiative while embracing rural lifestyles.*

Mission: *Provide quality, cost effective services and infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of the Sturgeon County community, while improving competitiveness and sustainability.*

Focus Areas	Not consistent	N/A	Consistent
<b>Strong Local Governance and Regional Leadership</b>			
<i>We promote consistent and accountable leadership through collaborative and transparent processes (Strategic Plan, pg. 27 MDP)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consistent with neighborhood role (see MDP), master plans, policies</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Considers fiscal stability and sustainability</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Has a positive impact on regional and sub-regional cooperation</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Respect the Natural Environment</b>			
<i>We acknowledge the importance of a healthy environment and will minimize and monitor our impact on ecosystems (Strategic Plan, pg. 27 MDP)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Compliance with Provincial and Federal regulations and/or legislation</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure effective environmental risk management</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Community Identity &amp; Spirit</b>			
<i>We will build upon our strengths, where together we will create an inclusive, caring community (Strategic Plan, (Strategic Plan, pg. 27 MDP)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Promotes and/or enhances residents' identification with Sturgeon County</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Enhances service provision through community partnerships</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supports Sturgeon County's cultural history</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Planned Growth and Prosperity</b>			
<i>We encourage varied and integrated enterprises that enhance our strong economic base, while balancing the needs of the community and natural environment. (Strategic Plan, pg. 27 MDP)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Does the proposal align with the Integrated Regional Growth Strategy (map/policies) pg. 26 MDP</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Considers cumulative costs and long-term funding implications</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Targets growth around current or planned infrastructure</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Maintain and Enhance Strong Communities</b>			
<i>We are committed to a safe, secure community, where our residents are respected and provided with access to opportunities. (Strategic Plan, pg. 27 MDP)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Positive impact on residents' quality of life</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supports and promotes volunteer efforts</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provides programs and services that are accessible to all residents</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Operational Excellence</b>			
<i>We have the organizational capability to deliver consistent and defined levels of service to all stakeholders in a professional, efficient, and cost effective manner</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Staff have the knowledge, skills and capability to perform their jobs</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Streamlines operational processes and policies</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Promotes engagement and professional interaction with stakeholders</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Considers a cost-structure which allows Sturgeon County to remain competitive within a regional, national and global context</i></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>