



REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Council Chambers, Irricana Centennial Centre, 222 2 Street

Date: October 5, 2026 **Time:** 7:00PM

A. ATTENDANCE

B. CALL TO ORDER

C. AGENDA

D. PRESENTATIONS

E. MINUTES

Item E1: Minutes from September 21, 2026 Regular Meeting

F. CORRESPONDENCE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

H. OLD BUSINESS

I. NEW BUSINESS

Item I1: October 19 Council Meetings (Provincial Referendum Conflict)

Item I2: Municipal By-Election – Election Planning

J. COMMUNICATION / INFORMATION

K. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

L. CLOSED SESSION

Item L1: Development Incentive Policy – Background and Current Matter,
Closed per Section 29(1) of the Access to Information Act

Item L2: Community Futures Wild Rose - Update, Closed per Section 29(1) of
the Access to Information Act

M. ADJOURN

Item E1

Minutes from September 21, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Council Chambers, Irricana Centennial Centre, 222 2 Street

Date: September 21, 2026 Time: 7:00PM

A. ATTENDANCE

Deputy Mayor: Julie Sim (Absent with Notice)
Councillors: Nathaniel Fleming, Megan Hoefnagels, Dawna Polson
CAO: Doug Hafichuk
Staff: Patty Malthouse

B. CALL TO ORDER

The Chief Administrative Officer called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

(i) The Chief Administrative Officer noted that the office of Mayor is vacant following the resignation of Mayor Colleen MacLeod and that the Deputy Mayor was absent with notice due to a long-planned personal matter.

(ii) Quorum was established with the following members of Council present:

Councillor Fleming
Councillor Hoefnagels
Councillor Polson

(iii) Appointment of Presiding Officer

Chief Administrative Officer called for nominations for the position of Presiding Officer:

Councillor Hoefnagels nominated Councillor Fleming
Councillor Fleming declined the nomination

Councillor Fleming nominated Councillor Polson
Councillor Polson accepted the nomination

Following the nominations, Councillor Polson was selected as Presiding Officer. The Chief Administrative Officer relinquished the Chair to Councillor Polson, who assumed the Chair and continued the meeting.

C. AGENDA

- (i) Item C1: Adopt Agenda
110:26 Moved by Councillor Hoefnagels to adopt the Agenda, as presented.
CARRIED

D. PRESENTATIONS

- (i) None

E. MINUTES

- (i) Item E1: Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council for September 8, 2026

111:26 Moved by Councillor Fleming to accept the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of Council for September 8, 2026, as presented.
CARRIED

F. CORRESPONDENCE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- (i) None

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- (i) None

H. OLD BUSINESS

- (i) None

I. NEW BUSINESS

- (i) Item I1: Appointment of Mayor

Presiding Officer Councillor Polson called for nominations for the Office of Mayor.

Councillor Hoefnagels nominated Councillor Sim. Councillor Sim accepted the nomination in absentia.

No further nominations were received.

Councillor Sim was declared appointed as Mayor of the Town of Irricana.

As Councillor Sim previously held the Office of Deputy Mayor, her appointment as Mayor resulted in a vacancy in that office.

Presiding Officer Councillor Polson subsequently called for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Hoefnagels nominated Councillor Polson. Councillor Polson accepted the nomination.

No further nominations were received.

Councillor Polson was declared appointed as Deputy Mayor of the Town of Irricana, effective September 21, 2026.

(ii) Item I2: Local By-Election – Legislative Overview

112:26 Moved by Councillor Fleming that Council receive Administration's report for information.
CARRIED

(iii) Item I3: Chief Administrative Officer Monthly Report

113:26 Moved by Councillor Fleming that the Chief Administrative Officer Report be received for information.
CARRIED

J. COMMUNICATION / INFORMATION

(i) None

K. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

(i) Item K1: Roundtable Discussion

Councillor Hoefnagels

- 1) Irricanarama: Councillor Hoefnagels shared that she participated as a judge for the Irricanarama Car Cruise & Car Show Awards, noting that it was a positive first experience in this role.
- 2) Library: Councillor Hoefnagels also reported that the Library recently hosted its first *Ladies Night* event, with additional events planned over the next six months.

Councillor Fleming

- 1) Bi-Election: Councillor Fleming expressed his interest in the upcoming municipal by-election and his hope that a candidate meet-and-greet would be organized.

Councillor Polson

- 1) Irricanarama: Councillor Polson commented positively on the recent car show, highlighting the Kids Zone and petting zoo as enjoyable additions to the event.

L. CLOSED SESSION

- (i) None

M. ADJOURN

- (i) Adjournment

114:26 Moved by Councillor Fleming to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 pm.
CARRIED

Julie Sim
Mayor

Doug Hafichuk
Chief Administrative Officer

To: Mayor and Council

From: Chief Administrative Officer

Date: October 5, 2026

Purpose: Request for Decision

Subject: October 19 Council Meetings (Provincial Referendum Conflict)

Summary:

Administration recommends rescheduling the Regular Meeting of Council and annual Organizational Meeting currently scheduled for Monday, October 19, 2026, to Tuesday, October 20, 2026, to avoid a date conflict with the 2026 Alberta Provincial Referendum.

Background and Discussion:

The Council Procedural Bylaw (Bylaw 008:2022) establishes that Regular Meetings of Council are ordinarily held on the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. The Bylaw also provides Council with the discretion to adopt an alternate meeting schedule by resolution and requires Council to hold an annual Organizational Meeting in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.

Consistent with established practice, Council adopted its 2026 Council and Committee Meeting Schedule at the December 1, 2025 Regular Meeting. The approved schedule established Monday, October 19, 2026, as the second Regular Meeting of Council for October. The annual Organizational Meeting of Council was also scheduled for the same evening, in keeping with local procedural norms.

2026 Alberta Provincial Referendum

Following adoption of the Town's 2026 meeting schedule, the Province established Monday, October 19, 2026, as the date of the 2026 Alberta Provincial Referendum. Elections Alberta identifies October 19 as Referendum Election Day, with voting available from 9:00am to 8:00pm.

Following adoption of the Town's 2026 meeting schedule, the Province established Monday, October 19, 2026, as the date of the 2026 Alberta Provincial Referendum. Voting in Irricana will take place at the Irricana Lions Community Hall, separate from the Town Office where Council meetings are held.

While there is therefore no physical conflict between the two activities, holding Council meetings on the same evening creates an unnecessary conflict in time and availability for elected officials, Town staff, and members of the public who may wish to participate in both processes.

Administration recommends moving the meetings by one day to avoid requiring individuals to choose between the provincial referendum and municipal Council proceedings. Rescheduling to October 20 supports participation in both democratic processes with minimal impact on the Town's established meeting schedule.

Both meetings would remain scheduled for 7:00pm, with the Regular Meeting of Council commencing following the conclusion of the annual Organizational Meeting, as is customary.

Financial Implication(s):

There are no material financial implications associated with the proposed change.

Recommendation:

That the October 19, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council and annual Organizational Meeting be rescheduled to October 20, 2026.

Recommendation Motion(s):

Option #1:

Motion #1: **THAT** Council reschedule the October 19, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council and annual Organizational Meeting to Tuesday, October 20, 2026.

Option #2:

As determined by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

“Doug Hafichuk”

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

Council Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Chief Administrative Officer
Date: October 5, 2026
Purpose: Request for Decision
Subject: Municipal By-Election – Election Planning

Summary:

At its September 21, 2026 Regular Meeting, Council received a legislative overview of the municipal by-election required following the September 14 Council vacancy. That report outlined the applicable legislative requirements and anticipated process, with Administration committing to return with a recommended election timeline, administrative arrangements and financial implications.

Following further review and preliminary planning, Administration recommends establishing Monday, December 14, 2026, as Election Day, with an advance vote on Monday, December 7, 2026.

The proposed schedule provides sufficient time for election preparation, candidate nominations, statutory notices and voting arrangements, while allowing the by-election to conclude before the Christmas and New Year period.

Background and Discussion:

The September 21, 2026 Council report (Item 12) established the legislative framework governing the by-election, and explored the responsibilities of Council and the Returning Officer, nomination requirements, voting arrangements and the statutory timeline.

As previously reported, the Municipal Government Act (MGA) establishes January 12, 2027, as the default Election Day, being 120 days following the September 14 vacancy, unless Council establishes an earlier date.

The Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA) provides that the nomination period begins the day following Council's resolution establishing Election Day, with Nomination Day occurring four weeks before Election Day.

Administration has since considered the practical time required to prepare for the election, provide prospective candidates with a reasonable opportunity to participate, and accommodate the Town's existing administrative commitments, including development of the 2027 municipal budget.

Proposed Election Schedule

The recommended timeline is based on the following sequence:

Date	Activity
October 5, 2026	Council establishes Election Day
October 6-19, 2026	Administration updates election materials, confirms legislative requirements and prepares candidate information package.
October 20, 2026	Council appoints an external Returning Officer; candidate packages targeted for availability.
October 20, 2026 – November 16, 2026	Approximately four weeks for prospective candidates to consider seeking office and prepare nominations using completed materials.
November 16, 2026	Nomination Day
November 17, 2026 – December 6, 2026	Final ballot preparation, public information, election-worker arrangements and campaigning.
December 7, 2026	Advance Vote
December 8 – 13, 2026	Final election preparations, campaigning.
December 14, 2026	Election Day

The initial two-week preparation period would allow Administration to refresh the election materials developed for the 2025 General Municipal Election, confirm current legislative requirements, and prepare candidate information and forms.

As outlined in the September 21 report, the CAO serves as Returning Officer by default until Council makes an alternative appointment. Accordingly, preliminary preparations and statutory election activities can proceed without waiting for the formal appointment of an external Returning Officer.

With candidate packages targeted for availability by October 20, prospective candidates would have approximately four weeks before Nomination Day to review the requirements, consider the responsibilities of office, gather the necessary signatures and complete their submissions.

Following Nomination Day, the remaining four weeks would accommodate final ballot preparation, public notification, election-worker arrangements and campaigning. The

nomination and campaign processes would begin earlier in accordance with the LAEA and would not be limited to these planning periods.

Consideration of Alternative Dates

Council has flexibility to establish an earlier Election Day, provided the applicable legislative requirements are satisfied.

An earlier election on November 30, 2026, could potentially be accommodated through an accelerated preparation schedule, with Nomination Day occurring on November 2. However, this would leave approximately two weeks between the anticipated availability of updated candidate materials and the close of nominations. While achievable, the compressed schedule would provide less flexibility for election preparation, prospective candidates and Administration's concurrent budget development activities.

Conversely, Council could establish January 11, 2027, as Election Day, approaching the statutory deadline of January 12. This would provide additional administrative flexibility and more time for prospective candidates to prepare and submit nominations. However, with Nomination Day falling on December 14, the subsequent four-week period would extend through Christmas and New Year's, while also prolonging the Council vacancy by approximately one month.

Ultimately, Administration considers December 14, 2026, to provide an appropriate balance. It allows for orderly election preparation, provides reasonable opportunities for candidate and elector participation, accommodates the Town's concurrent budget development and operational activities, while restoring Council's full membership before year-end.

Election Administration

The September 21 report identified the appointment of an experienced external Returning Officer as Administration's preferred approach, providing dedicated election capacity while limiting the additional demands on existing Town staff.

Administration has since held preliminary discussions with prospective election officials to confirm their interest and availability. These discussions have been positive, with final arrangements being worked through in anticipation of bringing forward candidates for Council's consideration as Returning Officer and Substitute Returning Officer.

Administration anticipates bringing forward the formal appointment of the Returning Officer and Substitute Returning Officer at the October 20 Council meeting, subject

to confirmation of the applicable appointment requirements under the LAEA. In the interim, the CAO will continue the necessary preparatory work.

The Town's Permanent Electors Register, established for the 2025 General Municipal Election, will also be reviewed and updated as required. Existing election materials, signage and administrative procedures will be reused or adapted where appropriate.

The Town enters this process with a relatively strong state of readiness, benefiting from the preparations and organizational improvements undertaken during the 2025 General Municipal Election. This includes established election materials and procedures, experience recruiting and training election workers, and improved internal records and document handling. Collectively, these measures provide an established foundation from which to organize the by-election, reducing the amount of preparatory work that would otherwise be required.

Voting Arrangements

Administration recommends providing one advance voting opportunity on December 7, 2026, in addition to Election Day voting on December 14.

The Irricana Lions Community Hall is proposed as the voting location for both dates. Potential election dates have been tentatively secured with the facility, pending Council's selection of Election Day and confirmation of the associated arrangements.

An advance vote would provide electors with an additional opportunity to participate, including those who may be unavailable on Election Day, without the additional staffing and administrative requirements associated with multiple advance voting days.

As outlined in the September 21 report, Council may also consider authorizing special ballots (commonly referred to as mail-in ballots) for eligible electors who are unable to vote in person. The Town has not traditionally provided this service.

Special ballots require additional administrative arrangements, including the preparation and distribution of voting packages, sufficient time for electors to receive and complete their ballots, and the return and processing of those ballots before the applicable deadline. Given the proposed election timeline and anticipated limited demand, Administration considers these requirements disproportionate to the likely benefit, particularly where an advance voting opportunity is already proposed.

Accordingly, Administration does not recommend offering special ballots for this by-election. Should Council wish to pursue this option, Administration would strongly encourage consideration of the January 11, 2027 Election Day, as the additional

preparation and delivery time would provide a more practical basis for administering special ballots.

If only one eligible candidate remains following the nomination and withdrawal periods, the Returning Officer would declare that candidate elected by acclamation, and voting would not be required.

The Returning Officer will oversee the remaining statutory notices, election-worker arrangements, voting procedures, provincial reporting and post-election requirements.

Financial Implication(s):

Administration estimates the direct cost of conducting the by-election at approximately \$8,000, based on actual expenditures associated with the Town's 2025 General Municipal Election.

The 2025 election incurred approximately \$7,900 in direct costs, including \$4,400 in election staffing, \$2,500 in signage, and \$1,000 in printing and consumable materials. While some materials purchased in 2025 may be available for reuse, Administration recommends retaining the previous election's total cost as a conservative planning estimate. This estimate does not include existing Town staff time associated with election preparation and administration.

Actual expenditures will depend on the final staffing and voting arrangements and whether the election proceeds to a vote or is resolved by acclamation.

As the by-election was not anticipated during preparation of the 2026 municipal budget, Administration recommends that Council authorize an expenditure of up to \$8,000 to support the necessary election arrangements. The expenditure would be accommodated within the Town's 2026 operating budget, subject to any necessary budget adjustments.

Recommendation:

Administration recommends establishing December 14, 2026, as Election Day, with one advance voting opportunity on December 7, 2026, and appointing an external Returning Officer and Substitute Returning Officer to oversee the election.

The proposed schedule follows the legislative and administrative framework presented to Council on September 21 and provides a reasonable balance between timely completion of the by-election, candidate and elector participation, and the Town's administrative capacity. The appointment of experienced election officials

would provide dedicated administrative capacity and support the orderly conduct of the election.

It is recommended that Council approve the proposed election dates and the use of an external Returning Officer and Substitute Returning Officer, with Administration to finalize the necessary arrangements and bring forward the proposed appointments in accordance with the LAEA.

Recommendation Motion(s):

Option #1:

- Motion #1: **THAT** Council establish Monday, December 14, 2026, as Election Day for the municipal by-election to fill on vacant Councillor-at-large position.
- Motion #2: **THAT** Council authorize an advance vote for the municipal by-election, to be held on Monday, December 7, 2026.
- Motion #3: **THAT** Council endorse the appointment of an external Returning Officer and a Substitute Returning Officer for the municipal by-election, and direct Administration to bring forward the necessary appointment resolutions in accordance with the Local Authorities Election Act.
- Motion #4: **THAT** Council authorize an expenditure of up to \$8,000 for the administration and conduct of the municipal by-election, to be funded from the Town's 2026 operating budget.

Option #2:

As determined by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

“Doug Hafichuk”

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A