



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

December 16, 2020

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Receive report on data collected to evaluate the 6-month pilot program of 2 Council meetings per month and provide direction to staff

RECOMMENDATION

Receive report and direct staff as appropriate.

DISCUSSION

During its May 15, 2020, Budget Workshop, the Council discussed the concept of holding two regular Council meetings per month. Public comment was received, and the item was discussed briefly at meetings on June 17th, July 1st, and September 2nd.

At a special meeting on October 28th, after more discussion and public comment, the Council reached consensus to pilot a program to schedule one special meeting per month in addition to the regular meeting for a period of six months and to evaluate the results in month 7. The Council's primary objective for holding two meetings per month was to get to agenda items earlier in the evening to maximize both Council and public participation. Another objective was to shorten the duration of each meeting.

On November 4, 2020, the Council scheduled the 6 special meetings on the third Wednesday of the month beginning with November 18, 2020 and ending with May 21, 2021, except for January 2021 (for logistical considerations due to the winter furlough).

Staff was asked to bring back suggested measures to evaluate how well the pilot program met the Council's objectives. We normally collect data on meetings to share with the Council at its annual retreat. This year we included the data collected on meetings as an attachment to the staff report regarding two meetings. Staff has expanded the amount of data we collect for both regular and special Council meetings to better assist the Council in its evaluation of the two meetings per month.

It is difficult to state at this time what are the key measures of success since it depends on the objectives to be met. For example, if the goal is to end meetings earlier, the meeting adjournment time would provide a key data point to evaluate that goal. However, if the Council finds it is continuing matters to other meetings which results in meetings ending sooner, then perhaps that is not a good measure. Staff believes a combination of all the data below will allow the Council to measure or evaluate the effectiveness of the two meetings per month structure.

Specifically, we are collecting the following data, as well as totals and averages for each data set:

- a) Start and end time of each meeting
- b) Meeting Length
- c) Number of Open Time speakers and total time
- d) Time spent on Meeting preliminaries (Land Acknowledgment, Protocols, Announcements)
- e) Number of Agenda Items and amount of time spent on each matter
 - i. Number of Consent items
 - ii. Number of Public Hearing Items
 - iii. Number of Regular items for discussion
 - iv. Number of items pulled from consent and time spent discussing
 - v. Number of items discussed and continued to another meeting
 - vi. Number of items not discussed and continued to another meeting
- f) Number of public comments and amount of time spent on public comments
 - i. on Consent
 - ii. on Public Hearing
 - iii. on Regular Agenda
- g) Approximate amount of staff time to prepare and produce the special meeting agenda
- h) Approximate amount of staff time to prepare staff reports for items discussed and continued to another meeting

To the extent possible, we will also provide the same data, as available, for same time period from the prior two years (November 2018- May 2019 and for November 2019- May 2020) for comparison.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.