



SO YOU THINK YOU
WANT TO BE A
COUNCILLOR

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT RUNNING FOR MUNICIPAL
OFFICE IN JASPER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	
About the Municipality of Jasper	PAGE 2
Thinking of Running for Council?	PAGE 2
DECIDING TO RUN	
Making an Informed Decision	PAGE 3
Eligibility	PAGE 3
Time Commitment	PAGE 4
OFFICES FOR ELECTION	
Office of the Mayor	PAGE 5
Office of a Councillor	PAGE 6
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ELECTED OFFICE	
Role of Town Council	PAGE 7
Duties and Powers	PAGE 7
Bylaws and Policies	PAGE 8
Being in the Public Eye	PAGE 8
Other Options	PAGE 8
Boards and Committees	PAGE 9
LIABILITIES AND DISQUALIFICATIONS OF COUNCILLORS	
Pecuniary Interest	PAGE 10
Civil Liability	PAGE 10
Disqualification	PAGE 10
IMPORTANT DATES AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULES	
Election Dates	PAGE 11
Post-Election Schedule	PAGE 12
Council Calendar	PAGE 13
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Municipal Election 2017	PAGE 14
Information regarding Municipal Associations	PAGE 14
Reference Documents	PAGE 14
NEXT STEPS – THE NOMINATION PROCESS	PAGE 14

Making an informed decision

Of all levels of government, municipal government is the nearest to the needs and expectations of local citizens. Local council members therefore have the opportunity to significantly influence the future of our community. This can make a council member's job both rewarding and demanding.

Before casting your hat into the ring, it is important to figure out whether or not you have adequate time to devote to the position, and to make sure the job will meet your expectations.

Why should I run?

For governments to be representative of, and responsive to, the needs of their constituents, their make-up should reflect the demographics of the constituency. As an elected official, you will:

- Bring the perspectives of your demographic to the decision-making table;
- Influence changes that benefit your community and ensure its sustainability;
- Put forward new ideas for debate and possible implementation and change;
- Make a positive difference in the quality of life in your community;
- Provide a voice for your community with other levels of government; and
- Be part of a team that makes decisions that affect all aspects of community life.

Do I have the skills & knowledge?

It is not crucial to have an education or experience in a government setting to run as a candidate.

You likely have skills, knowledge and abilities that are transferable to the elected official's role. You may want to undertake a self-assessment of your skills prior to running for elected office. Think about your volunteer experience, community involvement, work experience, membership in different organizations, and family life.

Eligibility

Sections 21 to 23 of the Local Authorities Election Act cover the eligibility requirements for municipal candidates and list conditions for disqualification

TO BECOME A CANDIDATE, YOU MUST:

- Be at least 18 years of age on nomination day;
- Be a Canadian citizen; and
- Have been a resident of Jasper for six consecutive months preceding nomination day

YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO RUN IF YOU:

- Are an employee of the Municipality of Jasper (unless you are granted a leave of absence prior to nomination day);
- Are an auditor of the Municipality of Jasper;
- Are more than \$50 in arrears on your property taxes, or you are more than 90 days in default of any debt to the Municipality of Jasper in excess of \$500. (If you are not sure about this, please call 780-852-3356 to find out if you have any amounts owing); or
- Have been convicted of an offence under the Local Authorities Election Act, the Elections Act, or the Canada Elections Act within the last 10 years.

Time Commitment

The Mayor and Councillors serve four-year terms. The 2017 council will be sworn in within a week of the general election and serve until October 2021.

What are the commitments?

1. Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings of Council

The Jasper Municipal Council meets every Tuesday of each month, except on the fifth Tuesday of the month if there is one.

2. Special meetings of council

Additional council meetings are scheduled from time to time, and for budget deliberations in November and December.

3. Board and committee meetings

The Mayor and individual Councillors are each appointed to represent Council on an average of three internal and external committees, boards or agencies. Meeting times vary, and can be bi-weekly, monthly, or less frequent depending on the situation.

4. Conferences and Training

The Municipality of Jasper is part of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Both associations hold annual conferences and conventions that provide networking and learning opportunities. Many Council members regularly attend the AUMA convention, a three-day event held in October or November, and the FCM conference, also a three-day event, in June. Each councillor may also be required or invited to attend various training opportunities including Media Training, Elected Officials Training, and more.

5. Other travel

Travel for other duties is not common, however in the past council members have had opportunities to visit other resort communities to promote inter-municipal ties and to learn about successful initiatives. The Mayor has, on occasion, been required to travel to Edmonton and to Ottawa to meet with government officials on behalf of the Municipality of Jasper.

6. Social and other events

These events can range from attending local fundraisers, to giving welcome speeches at conferences, to representing the Municipality at industry-related social functions, among a host of other things. Time commitments in this area are usually heavier for the Mayor, and will also depend on the interest and availability of various Council members.

7. Background work

The various Council meetings you will be attending each come with an Agenda Package, a package of reports and correspondence intended to help you prepare for the decisions required at the meeting. You will need to have time to thoroughly read the information before attending meetings. You will also want to have some time to meet occasionally with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who is Council's only employee, and who is charged with the task of implementing Council's policies and programs.

8. Your life

You may find that it takes ten times as long to go to the post office as it used to. Council members are very visible in this small town and usually find that they are never "off duty." Residents will often take the opportunity to present their views or ask questions, whether in the vegetable aisle of the grocery store or in the stands at your child's hockey game.

Be sure to take into consideration the time you need for your personal life and your work, volunteer, and educational priorities.

Office of the Mayor

The term of office for Mayor is 4 years.

Duties of the Mayor

The Mayor is the Chief Elected Official (CEO) of the Municipality and has specific duties that include the duties of a Councillor in addition to those of a CEO as defined in the Municipal Government Act.

In general, a Councillor:

- Considers and promotes the welfare and interests of the Municipality of Jasper;
- Abides by the Municipal Government Act;
- Makes themselves available to interact with the public. This can include emails, phone calls, voicemail and face to face interaction both in public and at home;
- Participates in Regular and Committee of the Whole Council meetings;
- Brings the views of residents forward during Council meetings;
- Is required to vote on bylaws, municipal policies, requests for decisions, the municipal budget and other motions made at Council meetings;
- Directs questions and concerns regarding the Municipality's administration to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO);
- Stays informed on relevant local issues and local legislation; and
- Attends and participates in community events and functions.

Remuneration & benefits

The Municipality of Jasper's compensation and benefits policy can be found [here](#). Please note that this policy will be updated prior to the election.

The Mayor is also expected to:

- Chair regular Council meetings;
- Attend meetings, public functions, ceremonies and other events, which may occur during evening hours and on weekends;
- Liaise with elected officials from other municipalities and other levels of government regarding municipal issues;
- Communicate Council policy to the media and the public; and
- Work closely with the CAO to monitor and respond to the organization's outcomes.

Time commitment

The position of Mayor is considered to be a part-time commitment. Typically, the Mayor can expect to commit 20-25 hours per week to performing their duties (this varies according to the time of year, emerging issues, meetings etc.). The Mayor's time is spent working closely with Council, the Municipality's administration and community representatives to help develop plans, policies and strategies important to the Municipality's business. As a regular member of Council, the Mayor is expected to prepare for and attend two regular Council meetings and two Committee of the Whole meetings per month. In addition, the Mayor sits on a variety of boards and committees both internal and external.

The Mayor may also be required to represent the Municipality at meetings, ceremonies and other events. Frequent evening hours and weekend work may be required. The Mayor is also the chief spokesperson for the Municipality in discussions with elected officials in other municipalities, the provincial government, the federal government, and members of the media. Often this involves initiating and building important relationships with decision-makers outside the community.

Office of a Councillor

The term of office for Councillors is four (4) years.

Number of Councillors

Six (6) positions are available for the office of Councillor.

Duties of Councillor:

- Considers and promotes the welfare and interests of the Municipality of Jasper;
- Abides by the Municipal Government Act;
- Available to interact with the public. This can include emails, phone calls, voicemail and face to face interaction both in public and at home;
- Participates in Regular and Committee of the Whole Council meetings;
- Brings the views of residents forward during Council meetings;
- Votes on bylaws, municipal policies, requests for decisions, the municipal budget and other motions made at Council meetings;
- Directs questions and concerns regarding the Municipality's administration to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO);
- Stays informed on relevant local issues and local legislation; and
- Attends and participates in community events and functions.

Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor serves as the back-up to the Mayor (e.g. chairing Council meetings, attending other meetings and functions that the Mayor is unable to attend). The current Council has opted to rotate the position of Deputy Mayor on an eight-month rotational basis. It is up to each newly elected Council to decide if they wish to continue this method of determining who serves as the Deputy Mayor.

Acting Mayor

The Acting Mayor serves as the back-up to the Deputy Mayor (e.g. chairing Council meetings, attending other meetings and functions that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are unable to attend). The current Council has opted to rotate the position of Deputy Mayor on an eight-month rotational basis.

Time commitment

The position of Councillor is considered to be part-time commitment. Typically, Councillors can expect to commit 15-20 hours per week in performing their duties (this varies according to the time of year, emerging issues, meetings etc.). As a member of Council, Councillors are expected to attend Regular and Committee of the Whole council meetings (4 per month – 2 each); in addition, Councillors sit on a variety of boards and committees (on average between 2-4 per month), plus other meetings as needed.

A Councillor may also spend considerable time preparing for meetings, liaising with municipal administration, doing research, meeting with the public, attending public events, and attending a variety of meetings.

Role of Town Council

To get a taste of what it would be like to sit on Council, come to a Council meeting or two.

Regular meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 1:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, located in the lower level of the Jasper Library and Cultural Centre.

Committee of the Whole meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the same location. You can read agenda packages and minutes for Council meetings at www.jasper-alberta.com. In fact, the official Municipality of Jasper website is a great place to learn about all the programs and services offered by the Municipality.

The Municipality's CAO, Mark Fercho, is also a resource and would be happy to answer any questions you might have about municipal operations. You can contact him directly: 780-852-6501 or mfercho@town.jasper.ab.ca.

What are Council's powers & duties?

All powers of municipal governments are delegated from higher levels of government. In Jasper, Council's legislative authority comes primarily from an agreement with the Department of Canadian Heritage, giving it authority over all municipal matters with the exception of land use planning, development, and environmental matters. Governance is shared between the Municipality of Jasper and the Parks Canada Agency.

There are several provincial acts that also apply to municipalities, however the Municipal Government Act (the MGA) is the reference for municipal government in Alberta. It can be viewed online: [Queen's Printer website](#).

In a nutshell, the MGA authorizes Council to develop and evaluate the programs and policies of the Municipality, and to make sure the powers, duties and functions of the municipality are carried out. Council is required by the MGA to employ a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The CAO is responsible for implementing the programs and policies of the Municipality; and is the administrative leader of the organization, the person to whom all other employees of the Municipality ultimately report.

What are the individual powers of the Mayor or a Council member?

Your individual influence on the future of Jasper will depend on your ability to persuade other members of Council to adopt your point of view. All decisions of Council are made through a majority vote of those present at a public Council meeting; each member of Council, including the Mayor, represents one vote. So, at a typical meeting, at least four of the seven Council members present must vote in favour of a decision for it to pass.

Individual Councillors do not have the opportunity to commit the Municipality to expenditures, nor can they personally direct the activities of municipal employees. Any promise you make during your campaign involving these things can only be carried out if you convince a majority of Council that it is a good idea.

If you are running because you feel strongly about one particular issue facing the town, it is a good idea to become familiar with the legislation and history surrounding that issue.

Recommended resources include past Council minutes and agenda packages, Municipality of Jasper bylaws, and the Municipal Government Act of Alberta. A lot of the information you may need can be found at www.jasper-alberta.com.

How does Council set policy?

Council develops and evaluates the programs and policies of the Municipality in a number of ways. One way is through approval of the annual operating and capital budgets. Through budget approval, Council decides which programs and projects will be supported by municipal revenue. Council also sets public policy through bylaws, which are local laws.

Council sets annual strategic priorities both for themselves and for administrative staff. These priorities focus administration's work and help Council allocate funding in the budget process. They also provide the community with information about Council's progress. Current strategies can be viewed at www.jasper-alberta.com.

Bylaws

The "by" in bylaw is an old Norse word that means "town." A bylaw is simply a town, or local, law. Bylaws can't be created out of thin air. Canadian municipalities don't have constitutional status of their own, so they can only pass laws authorized by other levels of government. Statutes like the Municipal Government Act and the Traffic Safety Act delegate authority for local bylaws. The "whereas" clause you see at the beginning of bylaws usually explains where the authority for the bylaw is coming from.

Some bylaws are mandatory while some bylaws are required only if a municipality wants to carry out a certain type of activity. A town doesn't have to require business licensing, for example, but if they do, they need a bylaw. Bylaws can also customize provincial statutes to allow for local enforcement or reduced fines in areas like traffic safety.

The Municipality of Jasper bylaws can be reviewed [here](#).

Policies

Council policies are a specific type of document that set discretionary duties and/or standards of performance for the Municipality. Policies address recurring issues and provide guidelines setting out the level and manner in which the Municipality will perform duties imposed upon itself or those imposed on the Municipality by legislation.

Council policies can be reviewed [here](#).

Being in the public eye

As a Council member, you should be prepared for some level of public speaking. You will need to be comfortable speaking at Council, Committee of the Whole, and board meetings, most of which are open to the public. You may also be required to give interviews to the media.

The Mayor is often asked to give welcome speeches at conferences and make presentations at various events. As a Councillor, you may be asked to speak publicly in your capacity as Deputy or Acting Mayor.

In your role as a Council member, you will find yourself talking to a lot of people you may not necessarily know, from local residents to Councillors from other municipalities and government officials.

Other options

If you decide that a term on Council is not right for you, but you still want to participate in municipal government, consider applying to be a public member on one of the Municipality's boards or committees.

For more information about these opportunities, click [here](#).

Boards and Committees

The Mayor and Councillors are appointed on an annual basis to various committees. These appointments are made at the annual Organizational Meeting of Council held in October of each year.

The following list of committees gives a general idea of the number of committees that Council members currently participate in.

Coun. 1	Coun. 2	Coun. 3	Coun. 4	Coun. 5	Coun. 6	Mayor	Committees & Board
X					X		Evergreens Foundation
		X					Community Futures West Yellowhead
				X			Trans-Canada Highway
	X						West Yellowhead waste Mgmt
		X			X		Library Board
			X			X	Culture & Rec
	X						Community & Family Service
				X			Greenspace
			X				Communities in Bloom
X					X		Museum & Archives
			X				Community Team
	X						Housing Corp.
		X					Env. Stewardship
			X				Hospitality
				X		X	Twinned Communities
					X		Jasper Partnership
X							Traffic Advisory
	X					X	Human Res.

Pecuniary interest

As an elected official of the Municipality, you are held to a high standard relative to protecting the best interests of the Municipality and operating in an open and transparent manner.

As an elected official, you have a duty to disclose interests you may have that cross paths with your municipal role that could monetarily impact you and your family.

This is called **pecuniary interest**.

A Councillor will have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the matter could monetarily affect the Councillor, the Councillor's family or the Councillor's employer.

What to do?

In such a situation, the Councillor must disclose the general nature of the interest, abstain from voting on and discussing the issue, and leave the Council Chambers until the matter before Council is concluded.

Civil liability

A Councillor can be held civilly liable should they:

- Make an expenditure not authorized in the budget or approved by Council;
- Vote to spend money borrowed or from a grant on something else; or
- Vote in favor of loan, borrowing or guarantee which exceeds debt limit.

A councillor can be held liable for defamation.

Disqualification

A Councillor can be disqualified from sitting as a member of Council for the following:

- Was not eligible to be nominated under the Local Authorities Election Act;
- Ceases to be eligible under the Local Authorities Election Act;
- Failed to file a disclosure statement as required under the Local Authorities Election Act;
- Is absent from all regular Council meetings held during any period of eight (8) consecutive weeks;
- Is convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for five (5) or more years;
- The Councillor does not vote on a matter before Council (unless required or permitted to abstain);
- Does not declare a pecuniary interest and leave the Council Chambers on a matter having a pecuniary interest;
- Uses unpublished information for their own benefit;
- Becomes an employee of the municipality; or
- Is found to be civilly liable.

Election Related Dates

Application for Registration of Notice of Intent to become a Candidate:

Now until Nomination Day (prior to 10 a.m.)

Nomination Day: September 18, 2017, between 10:00am and 12:00 noon

Election Day: October 16, 2017

Date Special Ballots must be received by

Municipality: October 16, 2017 by 8 p.m.

Tentative Council Calendars

If you are elected, you will take office at the Regular Meeting of Council Tuesday, November 7, 2017 beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The following section (pages 12 & 13) includes calendars depicting council events that are tentatively scheduled for October, November and December 2017.

Additional events will likely be scheduled.

Draft Schedule – Post Election

The first six weeks in office are very busy, requiring a significant amount of time and dedication. These meetings are important to attend as newly elected members of Council for a successful start to your new term of office.

Other upcoming orientation sessions will include:

- Robert’s Rules of Order and Council’s Procedure Bylaw;
- A session with past Councillors to teach each Council committee’s purpose, the role of a Councillor, and travel requirements;
- Strategic planning session; two parts: one with only Council, then one with Council and staff; and
- Emergency Coordination Centre training for elected officials.

DRAFT Schedule: Meetings and Commitments for Newly Elected Council 2017		
Date	Description	Time
Monday, Oct. 23	Introduction Dinner, Orientation Manuals provided	5:30pm to 7:30pm
Tuesday, Oct. 24	Council Chambers Orientation, Governance Training Part 1	1:00pm to 8:30pm
Wednesday, Oct. 25	Governance Training Part 2 & Department Introductions	8:30am to 5:30pm
Thursday, Oct. 26	Visit worksites, Field Orientation to Municipal Operations	9:00am to 4:00pm
Friday, Oct. 27	New Council Dinner	5:30pm to 7:00pm
Friday, Oct. 27	Swearing In Ceremony, Photos and Reception	7:00pm
Monday, Oct. 30	Inaugural Meeting of Council, Organizational Meeting	1:30pm to 5:30pm
Saturday, Nov. 4 and Sunday, Nov. 5 in Lacombe	Municipalities 101: The Essentials of Municipal Governance part of the Elected Officials Education Program, organized by AUMA and AAMDC, funded by Municipal Affairs	Two full days, weekend course
Tuesday, Nov. 7	Regular Council Meeting, Pre-Budget Training	1:30pm to 5:30pm
Tuesday, Nov. 14	Committee of the Whole, MoJ Budget Orientation	9:30am to noon
Monday, Nov. 20 departure for Calgary	AUMA Conference in Calgary November 21 to 24 th Preconference sessions on strategic plans, budget, governance	
Tuesday, Nov. 28	Committee of the Whole and Budget Meeting Preparation	9:30am
Tuesday, Nov. 28	Evening Budget Meeting Presentations	7:00pm
Wednesday, Nov. 29	Evening Budget Meeting Presentations	7:00pm
Tuesday, Dec. 5	Regular Council Meeting, Strategic Plan Discussion	1:30pm



Municipality of Jasper 2017 Council Meeting Calendar-July 18 Revision

Regular Meetings are scheduled for 1:30 p.m. and
Committee-of-the-Whole Meetings are scheduled for 9:30 a.m.
at the Jasper Library & Cultural Centre, downstairs, 500 Robson Street, Jasper, AB.

Regular Meeting Statutory Holiday Committee of the Whole Special Meeting Dates

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH									
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
29	30	31					26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31				
APRIL							MAY							JUNE									
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6							FCM			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		5	6	7	8	9	10			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30				
30																							
JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER									
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
						1			1	2	3	4	5							1	2		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
30	31																						
OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER									
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4							1	2		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
15	ED	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	AUMA				25					17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
														31									

- 30 October 30: Inaugural Meeting of Council and Organizational Meeting, 1:30pm
- 28 November 28: CotW meeting at 9:30am, Budget Meeting Presentations at 7pm
- 29 November 29: Budget Meeting Presentations at 7pm
- FCM Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference: June 1-4, 2017 (Ottawa)
- Election Day Municipal Election October 16, 2017
- Oct 23 to 27 New Council Orientation Week: October 23 to 27. Swearing in Ceremony on October 27 at 7pm
- Nov 4 and 5 Municipalities 101: The Essentials of Municipal Governance, Elected Officials Education (Lacombe)
- AUMA Alberta Urban Municipalities Association Convention: November 21-24, 2017 (Calgary)

Please click any of the hyperlinks below for additional resources.

2017 Municipal Election

[The Municipality of Jasper's website](#)

[Running for municipal office in Alberta](#)

[Local Authorities Election Act](#)

[Local Authorities Election Act - Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Pecuniary interest for municipal councillors](#)

[Roles and responsibilities of officials in local government](#)

Information regarding municipal associations

[Alberta Urban Municipalities Association](#)

[Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#)

Council governance

[Procedure Bylaw](#)

[Council remuneration & benefits policy](#)

[Council meeting agendas & minutes](#)

Reference & Core documents

[Asset management](#)

[Bylaw directory](#)

[Current budget](#)

[Strategic priorities](#)

[Jasper Community Sustainability Plan](#)

[Vision & mission statements](#)

Next Steps

Still interested?

Pick-up a Prospective Candidate Package, including official nomination forms, from the administration office (303 Pyramid Lake Road) during regular business hours.

For more information or a Perspective Candidates package, please contact:

Joyce Petura
Returning Officer

780-852-1591

jpetura@town.jasper.ab.ca