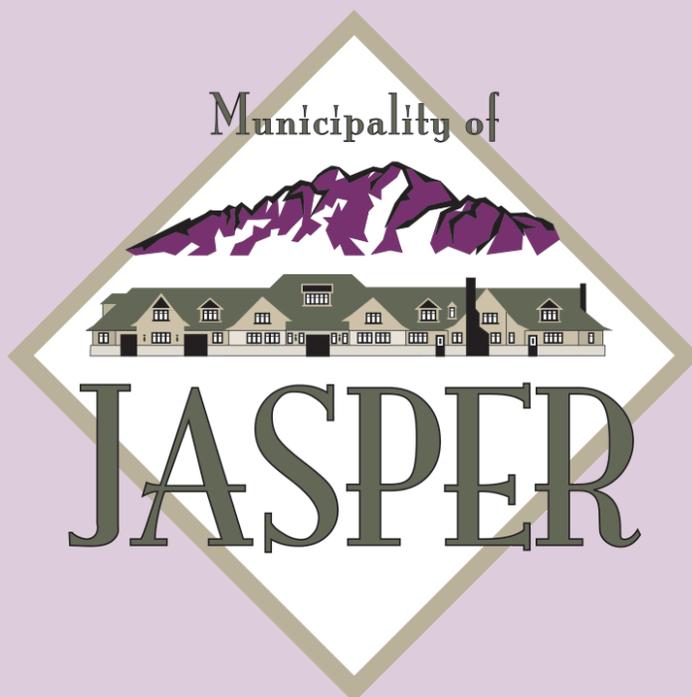


# CANDIDATES' HANDBOOK

2021 MUNICIPAL ELECTION



Municipality of Jasper  
Last updated: December 2020

# 02

## ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITY OF JASPER

The Municipality of Jasper is particularly unique due to its location. It is one of only two municipalities in Canada to be located within a national park. The Municipality of Jasper is categorized as a specialized municipality because governance is shared between the Municipality of Jasper and the Parks Canada Agency.

The Specialized Municipality of Jasper was incorporated through the Province of Alberta on July 20, 2001. The Municipality operates under an agreement for local governance, giving it authority over all municipal matters with the exception of land use, planning and development, and environmental matters. The Municipality of Jasper assumed responsibility for specific jurisdictional matters from the Parks Canada Agency on April 1, 2002.

## THINKING ABOUT RUNNING FOR COUNCIL?

Before putting your name forward, it's important to figure out whether or not you have the time for the position, and to make sure the job will meet your expectations.

There are no special qualifications or experience required to be a Council member, however visionary thinking, strong communication skills (speaking and listening), conflict resolution skills, an ability to be persuasive and accept opposing views are great attributes. You likely already have skills, knowledge and abilities that are transferable to the elected official's role. Think about your volunteer experience, community involvement, work experience, membership in different organizations and the roles you play in your family life.

# 03

## EXPECTATIONS

Of all levels of government, municipal government is the nearest to the needs and expectations of local citizens. This can make a councillor's job both rewarding and demanding.

As an elected official you can expect to:

- 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.

## TIME COMMITMENT

The Mayor and Councillors serve four-year terms. The 2021 Council will be sworn in within a week of the general election and serve until October 2025.

# 04

## MEETING COMMITMENTS

### REGULAR AND COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

Jasper Municipal Council meets every Tuesday of each month, except on the fifth Tuesday, which only happens a few times a year.

### SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of Council may be called throughout the year when Council needs to address an item before its regularly scheduled meeting.

### BUDGET MEETINGS

Two evening meetings are typically held in November, allowing Council to discuss and ask questions on the upcoming budget prior to making any decisions. Council may choose to set more budget meetings.

### BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS

Representatives from the Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada as well as Mayor and Council meet three to four times per year to discuss and advance topics of mutual interest.

# 05

## OTHER COMMITMENTS

### 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 (a three-day event in June). Councillors may also be required or invited to attend various training opportunities including media training, elected officials training and more.

### TRAVEL

Travel for other duties is not common, however in the past, councillors 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.

### SOCIALS AND OTHER EVENTS

You may be asked to attend local fundraisers, give welcome speeches at conferences and represent the Municipality at industry-related social functions and more. Time commitments in this area are usually heavier for the Mayor, and will also depend on the interest and availability of various Council members.

# 06

## OTHER COMMITMENTS (CONT'D)

### BACKGROUND WORK

Every Council meeting has an agenda. The agenda package typically includes reports and correspondence that are intended to help you prepare for the decisions and discussions 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.

### YOUR LIFE

Council members are very visible in our small community and usually find that they are never "off duty." Residents will often take the opportunity to present their views or ask questions when they run into you in public.

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

# 07

## OFFICE OF A COUNCILLOR

The term of office for Councillors is four years. Six positions are available for the office of Councillor.

### DUTIES OF A COUNCILLOR

- Consider and promote the welfare and interests of the Municipality;
- Abide by the Municipal Government Act;
- Available to interact with the public. This can include emails, phone calls, voicemail and face-to-face interactions;
- Participate in Regular and Committee of the Whole Council meetings;
- Bring the views of residents forward during Council meetings;
- Vote on bylaws, municipal policies, requests for decisions, the municipal budget and other motions made at Council meetings;
- Direct questions and concerns regarding the Municipality's administration to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO);
- Stay informed on relevant local issues and local legislation; and
- Attend and participate in community events and functions.

# 08

## DEPUTY AND ALTERNATE DEPUTY MAYOR

Every councillor takes a turn acting as the Deputy Mayor and the Alternate 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). Currently, the Deputy Mayor also chairs all Committee of the Whole meetings. The Alternate Deputy Mayor serves as the back-up to the Deputy Mayor.

The current Council has opted to rotate the position of Deputy Mayor and Alternate Deputy Mayor on a two-month basis. It is up to the newly elected Council to decide if they wish to continue this rotation.

## COUNCILLORS TIME COMMITMENT

The position of councillor is considered to be a part-time commitment. Typically, councillors can expect to commit 10-12 hours per week performing their duties (this varies according to the time of year, emerging issues, meetings, etc.). Councillors are expected to attend Regular Council meetings (two per month) and Committee of the Whole meetings (two per month). Councillors can also expect to attend one or two board or committee meetings per month. Other special meetings may be called as required.

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

# 09

## COUNCILLORS REMUNERATION

Remuneration for councillors is outlined in the Council Member Remuneration and Benefits Policy's administrative procedures. This policy is typically updated by the outgoing Council at the end of a term, to set the remuneration for the incoming Council. Information on the benefit plan, computer allowance and childcare expenses is also included in this document.

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

The term of office for Mayor is four 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.

The Mayor is 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;
- Act as the Municipality's spokesperson– this includes interviews with the media; and
- Work closely with the CAO to monitor and respond to the organization's outcomes.

# 10

## MAYOR'S 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 Regular Council meetings and Committee of the Whole meetings.

The Mayor also sits on a variety of boards and committees. 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.

## MAYOR'S REMUNERATION

Remuneration for the Mayor is also outlined in the Council Member Remuneration and Benefits Policy's administrative procedures. The benefit plan, computer allowance and childcare expenses are the same for all members of Council.

# 11

## COUNCIL POWERS & RESPONSIBILITIES

All powers of municipal governments are delegated from higher levels of government. Jasper's Council has authority over all municipal matters with the exception of environmental matters, and land use, planning and development. The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is the key reference for municipal governments in Alberta. The MGA authorizes Council to:

- Develop and evaluate programs, policies and service levels;
- Set annual operating and capital budgets, including setting an annual tax requisition;
- Set annual utility fees;
- Pass bylaws for municipal purposes; and
- Create boards and committees of Council.

The MGA can be found online through the [Queen's Printer website](#). You can also purchase hard copies of the Act online.

### 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 Regular Council meeting. Each member of Council, including the Mayor, represents one vote. At a typical meeting, provided all seven Council members are present, at least four of the seven Council members must vote in favour of a decision for it to pass. A tie vote is considered a defeated vote.

# 12

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

## COUNCIL AND MUNICIPAL STAFF

Council is required by the MGA to employ a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The CAO is Council's one and only employee.

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 to. Any direction to municipal staff must come from the CAO not Council or individual Council members.

As of January 1, 2021, Jasper's CAO is Bill Given. Mr. Given was hired by the current Council in late 2020.

[Municipal organizational chart](#)

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT MEETINGS

The best way to get a feel for Council meetings is to watch them. All Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings are open to the public. As of December 2020 (publication of this guide), meetings are being live-streamed through Zoom. Meetings are also archived on the [Municipality of Jasper YouTube channel](#).

[Council highlights](#) are published on the municipal website following each Regular meeting. Council highlights summarize decisions and issues from Regular Council meetings.

# 13

## REGULAR MEETINGS & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

Councillors are expected to attend Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings. Both Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings are attended by all Council members.

Committee of the Whole meetings are intended to be a less formal forum for discussing concerns. The primary outcome from Committee of the Whole meetings is for Council to feel they have enough information or have had enough conversation around an issue to be able to make a recommendation to Council for action.

All Committee of the Whole and other Committee recommendations are forwarded to Council at its Regular Council meetings at which time Council decides whether or not it will adopt the recommendations.

Decisions can only be made at Regular meetings.

Both Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings require quorum of Council; quorum is a majority of councillors.

[2021 Council meeting calendar](#)

## IN CAMERA MEETINGS

Only councillors and other persons specified by Council may attend an in camera meeting; the public cannot observe these meetings. Items discussed in camera must be an exception to disclosure as outlined in the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

In Camera meetings typically take place near the end of Regular or Committee of the Whole meeting.

# 14

## SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of Council may be called throughout the year when Council needs to address an item before its regularly scheduled meeting. Special meetings of Council shall be called as required in accordance with the MGA.

## ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

Every year at the end of October, Council holds an organizational meeting to set meeting schedules, the deputy and alternate deputy mayor schedule, Council's board and committees structure, and appoint councillors to committees and boards. This will be the first meeting you attend following the election.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS

The Municipality of Jasper and the Parks Canada Agency in Jasper National Park are committed to a positive, mutually beneficial relationship based on shared goals and interests. To this end, representatives from the two organizations as well as Mayor and Council meet three to four times per year to discuss and advance topics of mutual interest.

Information updates are published on the municipal website following each intergovernmental meeting.

# 15

## COMMON ITEMS ON COUNCIL REGULAR & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDAS

All Regular and Committee of the Whole agendas are available on the municipal website. Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings will be your most common commitment. Here are some agenda items you can expect to see frequently:

### MINUTES

The meeting minutes are the official record of Council's Regular and Committee of the Whole meetings. Minutes are approved by Council and archived on the municipal website.

### REQUESTS FOR DECISION

In keeping with principles of openness and accountability, Council typically gives a two-week notice of all its decisions, providing residents enough time to weigh in with concerns or comments. Notice of a decision and all decisions can only be given or made at Regular meetings. Council may decide to waive notice of decision – this is typically done to accommodate short timelines. Request for decisions can be discussed, but not voted on, at Committee of the Whole meetings.

### REQUESTS FOR DIRECTION

Sometimes municipal staff will submit a request for direction to ensure Council and Administration are both clear on outcomes and directives, or for matters that don't necessarily require a Council motion.

# 16

## INFORMATION REPORTS

Sometimes municipal staff will present an information report to update Council on a particular matter.

## BYLAWS

Some bylaws are mandatory while some bylaws are required only if a municipality wants to carry out a certain type of activity. Bylaws can also customize provincial statutes to allow for local enforcement or reduced fines in areas like traffic safety.

All bylaws must receive three readings by Council; Council votes on all three readings. All of the Municipality of Jasper's bylaws must receive certification from Parks Canada before being passed. The certification process is put in place to ensure the Municipality is not impacting the environment or encroaching on land use, planning and development matters. Bylaws are enforced by municipal bylaw officers.

For reference and information, the first page of the municipal bylaw summary is included in every Regular agenda. All of the Municipality of Jasper's current bylaws can be reviewed on the municipal website.

## POLICIES

Policies are Council statements that determine the conduct of the Municipality and its departments regarding the services they provide. Policies are approved by Council and implemented by municipal staff. All policies are accompanied by administrative procedures, which are approved by the CAO. All current policies can be found on the municipal website.

# 17

## OTHER DUTIES

### BOARDS & COMMITTEES

The Mayor and councillors are appointed on an annual basis to various committees (both internal and external). These appointments are made at the annual Organizational Meeting of Council held in October of each year.

The Mayor and individual councillors are each appointed to an average of three or four committees, boards or agencies. Meeting times vary, and can be bi-weekly, monthly, or less frequent depending on the organization.

[Council's current boards and committees' structure](#)

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & PLANNING

Managing our vibrant and dynamic community involves balancing a broad range of competing priorities, all of which are important. The role of strategic planning is to elevate selected objectives to a higher priority to better advance the long-term vision of the [Sustainability Plan](#), while maintaining focus on essential core areas of responsibility.

Each Council sets its priorities for the term. The current Council's strategic priorities are available on the municipal website.

[Strategic Priorities](#)

# 18

## LIABILITIES & DISQUALIFICATION OF COUNCILLORS

### PECUNIARY INTEREST

Pecuniary interest is when a municipal matter could monetarily affect a councillor, a councillor's family or a councillor's employer. 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 if they:

- Make an expenditure not authorized in the budget or approved by Council;
- Vote to spend borrowed money or grant money on something other than the funding's original intent; or
- Vote in favour of a loan, borrowing or guarantee which exceeds the municipal debt limit.

A councillor can also be held liable for defamation. Councillors should not make defamatory statements, whether inside or outside of Council meetings. You need to be diligent to avoid putting the Municipality or yourself at risk of committing an offence or being found liable for civil damages.

# 19

## 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, without an approved leave of absence, from all regular Council meetings held during any period of eight consecutive weeks;
- Is convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for five or more years;
- Does not vote on a matter before Council (unless required or permitted to abstain);
- Does not declare a pecuniary interest and does not 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.

# 20

## 2021 ELECTION : BECOME A CANDIDATE

If you are interested in becoming a candidate in the upcoming municipal election, you must first determine whether you are eligible, and become familiar with the mandated nomination forms.

### ELIGIBILITY

Sections 21, 22 and 23 of the Local Authorities Election Act cover the eligibility requirements for municipal candidates and lists conditions for disqualification.

To become a candidate, you must:

- Be at least 18 years of age on nomination day (Sept. 20, 2021);
- 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 Alberta Elections Act or the Canada Elections Act within the last 10 years.

# 21

## NOMINATION FORMS

All candidates must complete the following forms, which can be downloaded from the [Government of Alberta website](#):

- **Form 4:**
  - Form 4 must be signed by a Commissioner of Oaths or Notary Public for Alberta, or the Returning Officer or delegate (available in person, by appointment only).
- **Form 5:**
  - If applicable, Form 5 should include campaign banking information. Do not use personal banking information.

## SUBMIT NOMINATION FORMS

Nomination forms must be filed with Jasper's Returning Officer between **January 4, 2021 and September 20, 2021, at noon**. Nomination forms can be filed by mail for the time being. More information will become available as the pandemic restrictions change, and in-person filing is possible.

Nominations forms should be mailed to:

Returning Officer  
PO Box 520  
Jasper, Alta.  
T0E 1E0

## CAMPAIGN FINANCES

All candidates should check the Local Authorities Election Act for complete details on campaign finances. Some highlights include:

- A person can contribute \$5,000 per candidate during the election year (January 1 to December 31). A person can contribute to as many candidates as they like;

# 22

- Candidates can self-fund up to \$10,000 per year; and
- At the end of a campaign, candidates may retain any surplus amount under \$1,000. Any amount over \$1,000 must be donated to a registered charity. Local jurisdictions will no longer hold campaign surpluses.

## DURING YOUR CAMPAIGN

### ELECTION SIGNS

Homeowners may choose to erect a sign on their own property. Signs are not permitted beside municipal roads or on municipal medians.

### OFFICIAL AGENTS

Candidates may appoint an official agent when they submit their nomination papers. Candidates are not required to appoint an official agent. The duties of an official agent are those assigned by the candidate. An official agent must be an elector as outlined in section 27 of the Local Authorities Elections Act.

### SCRUTINEERS

Scrutineers may be appointed by candidates to observe during the Advance Vote and on Election Day. Scrutineers must be 18 years of age or over. A person convicted of an offence under the Local Authorities Election Act, the Elections Act, or the Canada Elections Act in the past 10 years cannot be a scrutineer.

Scrutineers may observe the election process except for voters marking their ballots. Scrutineers may attend more than one voting station, but cannot vouch for a person to validate their identity and address.

# 23

## ELECTION DAY FOR CANDIDATES

Election Day is Monday, October 18, 2021. Election Day voting hours are 8 am to 8 pm. Unofficial results will be published as they become available after the close of voting stations on Election Day.

## AFTER ELECTION DAY

If you have been elected, congratulations! You can expect to be formally sworn in within the first week of the election. During the first few weeks of the term, newly elected officials can expect numerous meetings and training opportunities, which will likely include:

### Meetings

- Swearing in ceremony
- Inaugural and Organizational Meeting
- Budget meeting presentations

### Training

- Orientation manuals
- Council Chambers orientation
- Governance training
- Field orientation to municipal operations
- Municipalities 101: The Essentials of Municipal Governance
- Budget training
- Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) convention

Municipal staff is expecting to have a training schedule finalized by late spring or early summer of 2021.

If you have more questions about the 2021 Municipal Election; please email [info@town.jasper.ab.ca](mailto:info@town.jasper.ab.ca)

# 24

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Municipality of Jasper resources are available online.**

- [Bylaw Directory](#)
- [Procedure Bylaw](#)
- [Policy Manual](#)
- [Council Remuneration and Benefits Policy](#)
- [Council meeting agendas and minutes](#)
- [Council meeting recordings](#)
- [Council's Strategic Priorities](#)
- [Current budget](#)
- [Asset Management Plan](#)
- [Jasper Community Sustainability Plan](#)
- [Municipality of Jasper Vision and Mission statements](#)

**Provincial resources are also available online.**

- [Roles and responsibilities of municipal officials](#)
- [Pecuniary interest for municipal councillors](#)
- [What every councillor needs to know!](#)
- [Local Authorities Election Act \(LAEA\)](#)
- [Local Authorities Election Act fact sheets and Q&A](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [I want to become a candidate \(for Government of Canada employees\)](#)