



Date 14 April 2012

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

Fr: Karen Brown

Re: City Hall – Christmas Eve and New Years Eve

Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves closing City Hall, including the Provincial Offences office, on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve in 2012.

Background:

In 2012, Christmas Eve and New Years Eve both fall on a Monday. Under the City's current contracts, staff members receive a half day stat for both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve. This means that City Hall staff would receive a two day weekend, come in for four (4) hours then get an additional 2 ½ to 1 ½ days off (Christmas and New Years respectively). In the past, when this scenario has happened, a request was submitted to Council to close City Hall for both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve rather than to have staff come in for these four hour periods.

A key advantage of this type of closure to the City would be having a maximum number of employees use up approximately one vacation day during a time where there is generally minimal activity at best in City Hall. To accommodate the closure, the City would request Kenora Hydro to ensure that no due dates for billing purposes fall on these dates. Over the Christmas period, and into the first week in January, the City typically has very minimal activity. When City Hall is open during this period, however, the City is required to ensure sufficient cover off staffing for all services.

Over the past sixteen years, the City has closed over the Christmas period five times, under the following circumstances:

- when Christmas Eve and New Years Eve fell on a Monday;
- when December 27th fell on a Friday;
- when January 2nd fell on a Friday.

This was done to avoid keeping City Hall open for either a four hour period between the weekend and the Christmas / New Year statutory holidays, or a one day period between the holiday dates and the weekend.

This type of situation does not happen every year due to the annual shift in calendar days and depends on what day Christmas and New Years occur. It should be noted that, while City Hall has closed five times during this period, this situation has actually occurred six times over the same period. In 2007, Christmas Eve and New Years Eve fell on a on a Monday. For 2007, it was determined that City Hall would remain open for these dates.

This issue has not been discussed with the City Hall staff. In the past, staff support has been fully behind closing City Hall for the one day or equivalent as discussed above. It is expected that this support would continue for this one day period. As in the past, any staff who indicate that they wish to work this day would be assigned specific work and given access to City Hall.

Budget:

There is no funding required for this. City Hall Staff will each be responsible for saving vacation / lieu time, taking the day without pay or making up their time for purposes of taking these eight (8) hours off.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Staff members would be advised of Council's decision in this matter. The closure of City Hall would be advertised to the public.

Cc: Sharen McDowall
Kenora Hydro