



April 15, 2013

City Council Committee Report

TO: Mayor and Council

FR: Karen Brown

RE: December 27th, 2013

Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves closing the following City offices on December 27th, 2013:

- City Hall, including the Provincial Offences Offices
- Second Floor Operations offices, limited specifically to staff located in the shared space between the Property & Planning and Operations & Infrastructure departments, and not including Stores, Cemetery or regular operations staff, such as Roads and Water & Sewer
- Discovery Centre; and further

That notice be provided in advance of this closure for the information of the public.

Background:

In 2013, December 27th falls on a Friday. This means that various office locations would be open for only one day between Christmas statutory holidays and the following weekend. In the past, when this scenario has happened, a request was submitted to Council to close City Hall for this one day.

A key advantage of this type of closure to the City would be having a maximum number of employees use up 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 in the various office locations. 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 seventeen years, the City has closed over the Christmas period six 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 six times during this period, this situation has actually occurred seven 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.

In addition to City Hall, the City has closed down the second floor Operations Buildings offices for this same time period in recent years. As well, some discussion has occurred with regards to the Discovery Centre for 2013. While the Discovery Centre is a seven day operations, the current Tourism Development Officer has confirmed that there is no activity at the Discovery Centre on this day. As such, it is recommended that the Discovery Centre also be included in the December 27th closure.

To be consistent, Council approval is sought for all closures for December 27th.

Budget:

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

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

The Union, and the applicable staff members would be advised of Council's decision in this matter. The closures would be advertised to the public.