

Report to Council

Report Title:	Change to Council Composition and Election of Deputy Mayor Position		
Prepared By:	Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)		
Department:	Clerk's		
Date:	December 17, 2025		
Report Number:	CLK2025-19	File Number:	C11CL, C07
Attachments:	Draft proposed Notice of Motion, By-Law 2002-60		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number CLK2025-19 – Changes to Council Composition and Election of Deputy Mayor Position, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk) for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

On Thursday, December 11, 2025, Councillor Travale provided the attached proposed Notice of Motion changing how the Deputy Mayor position is elected. Currently, the position is elected through an entirely separate race on the ballot (“Option A – Separate Race”). The proposed Notice of Motion would have the Deputy Mayor position elected from the candidates running in the Councillor race with the candidate receiving the highest number of votes (“Option B – Most Votes”).

The current structure, where the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Councillor positions are all separate races on the ballot was established in 2002 when the former ward system was abolished. By-Law 2002-60 was enacted after two public information meetings about the proposed changes.

The Deputy Mayor position must fulfill all the regular duties of members of council and will assume the duties of Head of Council in the absence of the Mayor. The duties of Members of Council are outlined in Section 224 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*:

- Represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- To develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality;
- To determine which services the municipality provides;
- To ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;

- To ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;
- To maintain the financial integrity of the municipality;
- And to carryout the duties of council under this or any other Act.

According to Section 217 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, municipal councils can change their composition via by-law. However, in order for the by-law to be effective for the 2026 election, it would need to be passed by December 31, 2025.

The municipal solicitor has confirmed that while it is not entirely certain whether the proposed change from Option A – Separate Race to Option B – Most Votes is a change to the composition of Council, he recommended that any proposed by-law be adopted prior to December 31, 2025 as the potential outcome (a potential controverted election) would be costly and create great uncertainty.

Generally speaking, a change of this kind would involve public consultation, potentially in the form of public meetings or surveys, and it would require a Notice of Motion presented first at a regular meeting to comply with the Procedural By-law, but given the December 31, 2025 deadline, this report and the by-law have been brought forward for Council’s consideration.

Analysis:

There are several considerations relating to the options described above.

Option A – Separate Race

- Democratic legitimacy as the Deputy Mayor would have a direct mandate from voters, giving the role stronger perceived authority and accountability.
- Voter choice and transparency – ensures that someone with broad public support is in a key leadership position rather than potentially narrow margins.
- If the Mayor and Councillor seats were acclaimed, an entire election would be required for the position.
- May result in a loss of a candidate that would have successfully earned a seat as a Member of Council.

Option B – Highest Votes

- Simpler and potentially less costly as not an additional ballot position.
- Reflects broad voter support indirectly but may be decided by a potentially narrow margin.
- A candidate may be elected with higher votes because they are new and have not yet had to make unpopular decisions, but may not have the leadership experience to act as Chairperson, model strong governance, etc.
- A candidate could be elected to the position without ever intending to hold the responsibility or additional time commitment.
- Experienced candidates that may have been forced to run against one another will be able to retain Council seats.

Ultimately, staff are of the opinion that changes of this kind should involve consultation with the public. Staff could begin this consultation for implementation of a revised by-law for the 2030 election.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

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| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | Yes |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

There are no budgetary impacts associated with this report, although there are costs associated with the election overall.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer