

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MISSISSIPPI MILLS

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 23, 2022
TO: Committee of the Whole
FROM: Jeanne Harfield, Clerk
SUBJECT: Amendment to Flag Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Committee of the Whole recommend that Council approve identifying the flagpole in front of the John Levi Community Centre as the Municipality's Community Flagpole;

AND THAT Committee of the Whole recommend that Council adopt the Response Protocol for Death Announcements;

AND THAT Committee of the Whole recommend that Council approve the proposed amendments to the Flag Policy to incorporate a section regarding the Community Flagpole and amendments to be consistent with the Response Protocol for Death Announcements.

BACKGROUND:

Over the past few years there have been a number of requests from outside organizations to fly flags which currently the municipality does not have the ability to do under the existing Flag Policy. Additionally, the municipality does not have a Death Protocol policy that would clearly set standards of practice for honouring the passing of specific individuals.

DISCUSSION:

The current flag policy was reviewed in the fall of 2018 and does not include provisions for flying community flags. Additionally, there is some confusion with regards to the half-masting of flags for the passing of certain members of the community.

In relation to the community flagpole there are a number of options available for consideration. The first would be to install a new flagpole at a specific location and designate it as a community flagpole. A location would need to be selected for a

community flag pole, possible locations for a community flagpole will be addressed later in this report. A second option would be to designate an existing flagpole as a community flagpole and allow for the flying of outside organizations' flags. Both of the first two options would require the development of approval protocols and application process that would be included in the flag policy. The last option would be to forego the community flagpole and invest funds for a new lighting system to light up the Almonte Old Town Hall with specific colours or images.

Staff is also recommending that the municipality adopt a Response Protocol for Death Announcements with the intent to provide clear direction for staff, members of Council and the public on when and the duration of flags to be half-masted, what statements will be made, and who the flags will be lowered for. The draft policy is attached for consideration. Amendments to the existing flag policy will need to be made in order to be consistent with the proposed Response Protocol for Death Announcements. The main change is that flags will be lowered for 4 calendar days and if the last or first day falls outside of normal working hours then the flag will be raised or lowered on the next normal working day. This is to limit the amount of overtime hours used for lowering and raising flags.

OPTIONS:

Community Flagpole options:

Option 1 – New flagpole installed

Location options for a community flag as identified by staff include: Municipal Office – 3131 Old Perth Road. The quoted cost to purchase a flagpole and have it installed is: \$6,824.00.

Option 2 – Identify an existing flagpole as the community flagpole (Recommended Option)

The flagpole located in front of the John Levi Community Centre could be identified as the community flagpole. This means that when an organization applies to the municipality to fly their flag it would be raised on that specific flagpole. When there is no organization flag to fly, the Canadian flag would be flown on that flagpole. This is consistent with other municipalities' policies on community flagpoles. Additionally, when the flags need to be half-masted, the outside organization flag would be replaced with the Canadian flag.

Response Protocol for Death Announcements Options

Option 1 – Adopt the Response Protocol for Death Announcements and amend the existing Flag Policy. (Recommended Option)

Option 2 – Maintain the existing Flag Policy as is and do not adopt the proposed Response Protocol for Death Announcements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The recommended options do not have any financial implications. However, should Council opt to purchase and install a new the costs would be approximately \$6,824.00 and. This cost is not budgeted as part of the 2022 budget.

SUMMARY:

As a result of requests from outside organizations to fly flags staff have brought forward a report recommending that Council amend the existing flag policy to allow for outside organizations' flags to be flown on municipal property. Staff is recommending that the flag in front of the John Levi Community Centre be designated as the municipality's community flagpole. Staff have also drafted proposed amendments to the flag policy and an application form and process for organizations to request their flags be flown.

Staff have also recommended that a Response Protocol for Death Announcements be approved to provide clarity and consistency when honoring municipally significant individuals who have passed away. This would also require changes to the existing Flag Policy to be consistent with the new Protocol.

Respectfully submitted by,

Reviewed by:

Jeanne Harfield,
Clerk

Ken Kelly,
CAO

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Revised Flag Policy
2. Draft Community Flag Application
3. Draft Municipal Response Protocol for Death Announcements