TO: Chair and Members  
Audit and Administration Committee  
WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE

COMMITTEE DATE: May 19, 2010

SUBJECT/REPORT NO:  
Advance Poll Dates and Times (CL10002) (City Wide)  

SUBMITTED BY:  
Rose Caterini  
City Clerk  
Corporate Services, City Clerk's Division  

PREPARED BY:  
Tony Fallis x2753

SIGNATURE:

RECOMMENDATION

That the by-law, attached hereto as Appendix “A”, be enacted in order to establish advance poll voting dates and times in the City of Hamilton for the 2010 Municipal Election.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Clerk has the authority to establish the number and location of polling places. This includes the holding of at least one advance poll and the establishment of institutional polls. A duly executed by-law is required to establish the dates and times for these polling places.

Alternatives for Consideration – see page 3.
FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial: N/A

Staffing: Election staff are hired and paid through the election budget to staff advance polls.

Legal: Requirement of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 that at least one advance poll must be held.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

Advance Polls and Special Advance Poll

Section 43 (1) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, requires that a by-law be enacted indicating times and dates for advance polls. Special advance polls have been provided in previous elections and are now based upon certain criteria in terms of number of votes and voter turn out. The attached by-law establishes the following times and dates for these advance polls (AP) and special advance poll (SAP):

1. AP - Thursday, October 7, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
2. AP - Saturday, October 9, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
3. SAP - Tuesday, October 12, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
4. AP - Wednesday, October 13, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
5. AP - Thursday, October 14, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
6. AP - Saturday, October 16, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Advance poll and special advance poll locations are currently under review. Upon completion of this review a complete list of advance poll and special advance poll locations will be provided to City Council.

Institutional Polls

The Municipal Elections Act, 1996, requires that a voting place shall be provided on the premises of an institution in which, on nomination day, 20 or more beds are occupied by person who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm and a retirement home in which, on nomination day, 50 or more beds are occupied.

Voting for institutional locations throughout the city will take place on Voting Day (October 25th) at reduced voting hours to be determined at a later date. A subsequent by-law will be presented to Committee once confirmation of the times have been assigned.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Municipal Elections Act, 1996

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Election Staff

Municipal Elections Legislation

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

For the 2010 Municipal Election we have increased the number of advance poll dates to five, which is an increase of two over 2006. Voter turnout in previous elections indicates that the addition of advance poll dates may be of benefit towards increasing voter turnout.

Our review of other municipalities has shown that a similar approach is being implemented in an attempt to increase voter turnout.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

An alternative would be to either add or remove recommended advance poll dates.

Adding dates will provide additional opportunity for voters to visit the polls.

There are a number of concerns however when considering additional days, as follows:

(1) Each advance poll day costs approximately $20,000 to run.

(2) The city hires approximately 1,600 staff for election purposes. Adding additional days puts pressure on finding additional qualified staff.

(3) With the election now being held two weeks earlier than in previous elections there is a compressed time frame for training staff, proofing and printing of
ballots, managing the Preliminary List of Electors, etc, and completing all legislative requirements.

Removing dates is not recommended because it reduces the elector's opportunity to vote.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN  (Linkage to Desired End Results)


APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix “A” - By-law to provide for advance voting for the 2010 Municipal Election
Bill No.

CITY OF HAMILTON

By-law No: 10-

Being a By-law to provide for advance voting for the 2010 Municipal Election

WHEREAS Section 43 (1) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, provides that a municipal council shall pass a by-law establishing one or more dates for an advance vote and the hours during which voting places shall be open on that date or dates;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the City of Hamilton hereby enacts as follows:

1. That advance voting is held for the 2010 Municipal Election, on the following dates and during the following hours:
   (a) Thursday, October 7, 2010, Wednesday, October 13, 2010, and Thursday, October,14, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.;
   (b) Saturday, October 9, 2010, and Saturday, October 16, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

2. That special advance voting is held for the 2010 Municipal Election on Tuesday, October 12, 2010 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

3. This By-law comes into force on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED and PASSED this day of May, 2010.

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MAYOR                                         CITY CLERK