

NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES

COUNCILLOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For Municipal Elections 2020

Better government. Stronger communities.





WHAT ARE
MUNICIPALITIES
RESPONSIBLE FOR?

MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Policing
- Fire Protection
- Parks and Recreation
- Garbage collection/Recycling/Composting
- Drinking Water
- Storm Water/Wastewater Management
- Streets and Sidewalks including snow and ice removal
- Economic Development



MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Public Transit
- Land-Use Planning
- Emergency Management
- Building/Fire Inspection
- Animal Control
- Tourism and Culture





WHAT DO INDIVIDUAL
COUNCILLORS DO?

COUNCILLORS:

- Respond to community and citizen concerns
- Are aware of important issues in the community and bring them forward to meetings
- Keep citizens informed about important issues and seek their feedback
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing Council packages ahead of time
- Attend and participate in regular meetings: council, committee of the whole, public advisory committees various ad hoc committees





WHAT DO COUNCILS
DO TOGETHER?

COUNCILS:

- Establish long-term strategic vision for the municipality (view from 30,000 feet)
- Approve annual operating and capital budgets
- Establish property tax rates and area rates
- Adopt bylaws, policies and resolutions



WHAT COUNCILS
DO NOT DO...

COUNCILS DO NOT ...

- Direct staff on a day-to-day basis
- Concern themselves with operational matters
- Hire staff other than the CAO





ROLE OF MAYOR/WARDEN

MAYORS AND WARDENS

- **Have one vote on Council, just like everyone else**
- **But they also:**
 - Chair all council meetings and set agendas with CAO
 - Are an ex-officio member of all committees of Council
 - Perform ceremonial functions
 - Serve as spokesperson for council and as the main contact with media
 - Can represent municipality in negotiations with Provincial Government
 - Can influence policy development through CAO
 - Act as a team builder, and should unite council, foster common vision





TIME COMMITMENTS



TIME COMMITMENTS

Number of hours per week varies greatly depending on size and geography of municipality and personal preference

At a minimum, expect to attend regular council meetings, committee of the whole, public advisory committee meetings and public meetings on specific issues

Most meetings occur in the evening on weekdays

Some councils meet in the daytime during the week

You only get out of it what you put into it - level of commitment!!



WHAT MAKES A
SUCCESSFUL
COUNCILLOR?



A SUCCESSFUL COUNCILLOR:

Has previous community or volunteer involvement
– non-profit agencies, school boards, PTA

Attends council meetings and community functions to understand local issues

Has people skills and public speaking experience

And a network of community contacts and strong family support

Assets:

- Professional employment/formal education
- Computer/social media skills



A SUCCESSFUL COUNCILLOR:

Can focus on what is important – and not get bogged down in “too much information”

Can focus on “the big picture” for the municipality

Uses available staff support

Has conflict resolution skills

- Ability to remain calm and clearly articulate to council
- Ability to build consensus



A SUCCESSFUL COUNCILLOR:

Tries to respond to resident concerns within 48 hours

Is respectful and courteous to staff – you can get information from them much quicker!

Does their homework: Think through an issue – be able to present good arguments why you support or do not support a particular issue

Respects others views even though they may be different from yours

Is adaptable/open minded – and willing to change a position on an issue if strong arguments are brought forward that suggest there is a better way to do things



A SUCCESSFUL COUNCILLOR:

Work as a team player - you are not a "member of the opposition"

Professional Development

- Life Long Learning!!
- Courses on municipal government, workshops, webinar/online learning, conferences
- Networking with elected officials from other municipalities to learn different perspectives



REASONS NOT TO RUN
FOR COUNCIL

REASONS NOT TO RUN FOR COUNCIL

- Single issues
- Wealth
- Perks
- Fame
- Power



The background is a solid teal color. It is decorated with numerous maroon circles of varying diameters. Some circles are large and prominent, while others are small and scattered, creating a pattern that resembles a bubble or particle effect. The circles are distributed across the entire frame, with a higher density on the right side.

CHALLENGES OF BEING A COUNCILLOR

CHALLENGES OF BEING A COUNCILLOR


- Personal lives under scrutiny by media and public – more so in larger municipalities
- Public and constituent expectations – may seem overwhelming
- Time commitments
- Attacks can be or feel personal
- Information overload
- Public speaking and media management can be intimidating





REWARDS OF BEING A
COUNCILLOR


REWARDS OF BEING A COUNCILLOR



Making a difference in your community
Ability to bring a different perspective to the table
Life-long learning - building your knowledge and skills
Opportunity to meet new people in the municipal world
Opportunity to get to know the people in your
community even more than you do now

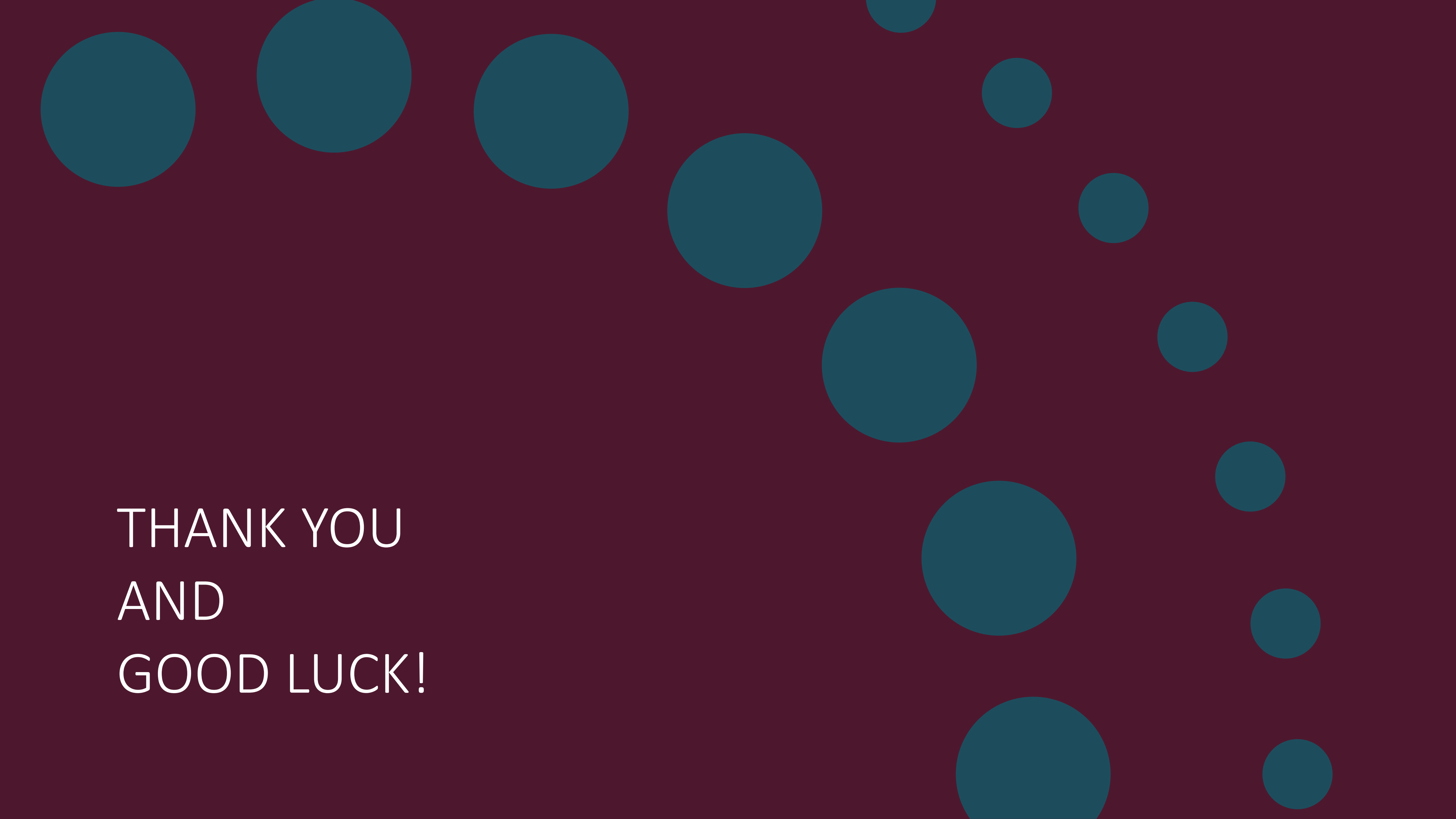


REWARDS OF BEING A COUNCILLOR



Networking - Meet many new and interesting people who share your interests
Share your strengths and knowledge with others
Be part of the decision-making process on issues in your community
Sense of pride and accomplishment



The background is a solid dark red color. Scattered across the right side and top are several teal-colored circles of various diameters, ranging from small dots to large circles that take up a significant portion of the frame. The circles are arranged in a somewhat diagonal pattern from the top-left towards the bottom-right.

THANK YOU
AND
GOOD LUCK!