

Wheatland County
LEGISLATIVE POLICY SECTION

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Policy Name:	Elected Official Remuneration
Policy Number:	5.1.1
Policy Owner:	Chief Administrative Officer
Adopted Date:	May 2, 2006
Effective Date:	May 2, 2006
Date Last Amended:	May 21, 2024
Date Last Reviewed:	N/A

PURPOSE

To establish fair and reasonable compensation for Elected Officials to fulfill their official duties, and provide reimbursement for expenses incurred while performing their responsibilities.

POLICY

Wheatland County will provide fair, consistent, and reasonable compensation to Elected Officials for performing the duties of their office and the reimbursement of expenses.

Compensation provided to Elected Officials shall be done in a transparent and cost-effective manner.

Wheatland County shall aim to offer compensation that is attractive to community-minded citizens considering candidacy and that is affordable for taxpayers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council shall:

- a. Conduct a periodic review of this policy and remuneration of Elected Officials by either:
 - i. The Chief Administrative Officer appointing a group of three ratepayers to review this policy and present recommendations to Council for review and consideration. All ratepayers residing within Wheatland County are eligible to apply to this committee, or;
 - ii. The Chief Administrative Officer engaging professional services to conduct a remuneration review for Elected Officials.
- b. Approve the Terms of Reference for the Committee.
- c. Approve any amendments to this policy.

Elected Officials shall:

- a. Adhere to this policy to demonstrate transparency and accountability to taxpayers.
- b. Obtain receipts and/or other required documents to substantiate all expenditures included in their Monthly Expense Claim;
 - i. Only detailed itemized receipts with GST number (if applicable) will be accepted as standard documentation.
 - ii. In cases where an itemized receipt is unobtainable (e.g., parking meters), exceptions may be made on a limited basis. Such instances will require a detailed explanation to be submitted along with the Monthly Expense Claim.
- c. Submit their Elected Official Monthly Report and Monthly Expense Claim to Administration, along with their monthly timesheet. These documents will be included in the Council package and published on the County website for public viewing;
- d. Demonstrate a prudent use of resources focusing on accountability;
- e. Obtain Council pre-approval for attendance at meetings, conferences, or courses that are not included in Schedule A of this policy. Approval must be based on the provision of either a written or oral report to the Council that includes actionable items; and
- f. Track their per diems by utilizing a monthly timesheet report. This report must be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, by the 8th day of the following month. Timesheets will be processed for deposit by the 15th of that month. If timesheets are not received by the 8th, only the monthly honorarium will be processed.

The Reeve shall:

- a. Serve as the designated approver of the Chief Administrative Officer's timesheet and vacation requests;
- b. Approve bi-weekly Accounts Payable electronic payments;
- c. Act as the official signer of documents including Council and Committee Minutes, real estate purchase and sale agreements, and letters of support, as authorized by Council resolution;
- d. Chair meetings of Council; and
- e. Perform all other duties as prescribed in the Procedure Bylaw, other applicable bylaws, and the Municipal Government Act.

The Deputy Reeve shall:

- a. Assume and perform the duties of the Reeve in the Reeve's absence.

Administration shall:

- a. Review and budget sufficient funds during the budget cycle, in consultation with Council, to enable individual Elected Officials and Council to carry out their respective duties;
- b. Update Council compensation annually in alignment with the Council-approved staff Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). This adjustment will be made as part of the annual Administration Pay Grid review authorized by Council;
- c. Process payment of all approved claims;

- d. Coordinate travel, accommodation, convention, and conference activities of Elected Officials to benefit from group rates or discounts to the extent feasible and practical; and
- e. Publish monthly reports pertaining to Elected Official remuneration.

GUIDELINES

Monthly Base Salary (Honorarium)

A monthly base salary shall be paid to Elected Officials for the performance of their duties as Elected Officials. The current honorarium amounts are:

	Reeve	Deputy Reeve	Councillor
Honorarium	\$3,337.73 per month	\$2,796.14 per month	\$2,790.37 per month

The monthly base salary is intended to compensate for:

- a. Meetings with, and responding to inquiries from, residents (time and mileage);
- b. Report and research preparation for Council meetings;
- c. Divisional-specific open houses held by an individual Councillor;
- d. Attendance at events hosted by County Administration (Christmas Party, staff functions, etc.);
- e. Attendance at events hosted by community groups, non-profit organizations, developers, and other municipalities;
- f. Meetings with the Chief Administrative Officer and/or designate;
- g. Home office costs including, but not limited to office supplies, and internet expenses;
- h. Completion of Training Courses; and
- i. Preparation time for all meetings.

Per Diems

Per diem rates will be reviewed by Administration during the development of the County's annual budget and in consultation with Council. The current per diem amounts are:

	Reeve / Deputy Reeve / Councillor
Full day per diem	\$266.84– up to 8 hours
Partial day per diem	\$133.42– up to 4 hours

Per diems will be paid for attendance at the following:

- a. Regular, special, and organizational meetings of Council, and Committee of the Whole meetings;

- b. Internal committees to which the Elected Official is appointed by Council, or attendance as an appointed alternate when the appointed Elected Official is unable to attend;
- c. External committees, boards, or commissions to which the Elected Official is appointed by Council, or attendance as an appointed alternate when the appointed Elected Official is unable to attend;
- d. Meetings held with Administration other than Council meetings, this includes, but is not limited to, budget workshops, strategic planning sessions, and road tours;
- e. Meetings with other governments and/or government agencies outside of Council meetings or Committee of the Whole meetings;
- f. Conferences and conventions that have been included in Schedule A; and
- g. Elected Official orientation and training sessions necessary to complete duties, including training necessary or required to be a committee member.

If per diems are provided by external organizations, the Elected Official will be paid according to this policy and any per diem received from an external organization will be paid to Wheatland County.

Elected Officials must provide details of the meetings they attend, including the meeting duration, reported in 0.5-day increments.

Elected Officials are entitled to charge more than one full per diem if they attend meetings and/or events that cumulatively exceed 8 hours in a single day.

Elected Officials will receive a maximum of one (1) per diem per day for attendance at conferences and conventions.

A maximum of 12 per diems per board or committee, including Annual General Meetings, will be provided to each Elected Official per term, as determined at the annual Organizational Meeting. Additionally, each Elected Official is entitled to a separate total of 12 per diems for all subcommittee meetings combined, regardless of the number of subcommittees served. This allocation allows for up to 24 per diem compensated meetings in total per term — 12 for board or committee meetings and 12 for all subcommittee meetings combined. Should there be a need to exceed these limits, a Council resolution will be required to authorize additional compensation.

Benefits

Elected Officials will be given the opportunity to join the County Benefits Plan in accordance with the rules and regulations set out in the plan.

Participation in the Group Health and Benefits Plan is optional, and Councillors will abide by the Human Resources Policy on Extended Healthcare and Related Benefits.

Councillors are eligible to contribute up to a maximum of \$3,500.00 annually, towards RRSP contributions. This contribution is optional and will be matched by the County.

If a Councillor is no longer eligible for RRSP contributions, Councillors will be eligible to contribute up to a maximum of \$3,500.00 annually, towards an investment account. This contribution is optional and will be matched by the County.

Elected Officials are to provide sufficient information for Administration to determine eligibility for benefits, and to register for the Group Health and Benefits Plan.

Mileage

Mileage incurred while conducting official Council business will be reimbursed at the current rates established by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Expenses

Councillors shall be reimbursed for direct expenses incurred while undertaking approved County business.

Other Compensation

Personal Electronic Device Allocation

- a. Council members are entitled to one personal electronic device per type (specifically, one laptop or tablet, and one mobile phone) to effectively perform their duties during each Council term. Each member will be provided with these devices at the beginning of their term, limited to one of each type per term.

Training and Professional Development/Conferences and Conventions

- a. Elected Officials are encouraged to participate in professional training and development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge to effectively fulfill their governance roles and responsibilities.
- b. Elected Officials are expected to represent Wheatland County at conferences and conventions. Attendance at conferences and/or conventions require Council approval via Council resolution, unless otherwise listed in the attached Schedule A.
- c. Elected Officials are allocated an annual budget of \$2,000.00 specifically for training courses, such as the Elected Officials Education Program (EOEP). This budget is intended to cover expenses related to these training courses, including registration costs, accommodation, meals, and mileage, but excludes per diems. All expenditures from this budget require prior approval via Council resolution. Unused funds will not carry forward into future budget years. The limits for these costs are as follows:

	Reeve / Deputy Reeve / Councillor
Accommodation	Based on actual expense (receipt required)
	\$60.00 per day (receipt required)
Meals	Determined as follows: Breakfast - \$10.00 Lunch - \$20.00 Dinner - \$30.00
Transportation	Based on actual expense (receipt required)

- d. The Reeve will be provided with an annual expense account of \$1,500.00 for public relation and Council recognition purposes. This may include, but is not

limited to, the purchase of a gift of recognition or team-building exercises for Councillors. Any gifts of recognition that are provided to Councillors by the Reeve must be fair, consistent, and equal for all Council members.

- e. The County will cover the cost of banquet tickets for Councillors and their partners for up to two events per year, provided these events are related to the conduct of Council business.
- f. Per diem for any other conferences and conventions not included in Schedule A must be approved by Council resolution.

Community Engagement Expenses

- a. To support community participation and engagement, Council members are authorized to purchase candy for distribution at annual parades within the borders of Wheatland County, and any adjacent municipalities. These expenses are reimbursable, provided they do not exceed \$200.00 annually per Councillor. Additionally, these funds can be pooled by Councillors if they are attending the same parade, to allow for more flexible and coordinated usage of the allocated budget.
- b. Council members are also authorized to purchase drinks and refreshments for open houses held in their respective divisions. These expenses are considered reimbursable under this policy to facilitate community engagement at these events.

Exclusions

- a. Elected Officials shall not be paid a per diem for attendance at an event hosted by a provincial or federal political party held for the purpose of fundraising or campaigning.
- b. Wheatland County shall not reimburse an Elected Official for, or otherwise directly or indirectly pay for, any political contribution.
- c. Wheatland County shall not pay a per diem or reimburse an Elected Official for expenses incurred for attending or participating in meetings, or events that the Elected Official is not authorized to attend in their official capacity as a committee member or Elected Official without pre-approval by Council.
- d. Wheatland County shall not pay for any spousal or guest expenses, other than the cost of banquet tickets for a Councillor and their partner to attend a maximum of two events.
- e. Wheatland County shall not pay for the purchase of alcohol at any time.

Conflicts or Disputes

If requested remuneration exceeds the limits outlined in this policy or a conflict arises, the matter should be referred to the Council for resolution.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy shall be reviewed mid-term of each four (4) year Council term to ensure transparency and accountability. Additionally, it may be reviewed at any time upon proposal by Council or when Administration becomes aware of any legislation changes that would warrant a review.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

“Conference” means a formal gathering where individuals exchange ideas, information, and expertise in work-related subject areas, often leading to collaborative outcomes and decisions.

“Convention” means an assembly, usually of members of a professional group or delegates, whose primary purpose is to elect officers, report progress, and obtain approval for future activities.

“Council” means the collective body of Elected Officials who have been duly elected by the residents of Wheatland County to govern and make decisions on municipal matters as specified by the Municipal Government Act and other relevant bylaws and policies.

“Council Business” means the activities conducted by Council in keeping with the provisions of the MGA. Examples of Council business includes, but is not limited to, attendance at Council and Committee meetings in person or virtually, municipally sanctioned events, meetings with the Chief Administrative Officer, and meetings with constituents.

“Cost of living adjustment” (COLA) means the salary adjustment approved by the Council, based on annual reviews, to align with changes in the cost of living as measured by recognized economic indicators.

“CRA” means the Canada Revenue Agency.

“Deputy Reeve” means the Deputy Chief Elected Official as defined in the *Municipal Government Act*.

“Elected Official” means any individual elected by the residents of Wheatland County to a public office, responsible for making decisions, representing community interests, and fulfilling the duties and responsibilities as outlined in the Municipal Government Act, municipal bylaws, and Council-approved policies.

“Elected Official Monthly Report” means a document prepared monthly by an Elected Official, summarizing their activities and meetings of potential interest to the Council. This report must include all compensated meetings, specifying the date, an identifier of each meeting, and a brief description of the meeting's purpose.

“Eligible Expenses” means the costs incurred by Elected Officials when conducting Council business, and includes, but is not limited to, hotel accommodations, meals, parking, and mileage.

“MGA” means the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c. M-26, as amended.

“Monthly Expense Claim” means a detailed report submitted by Elected Officials, summarizing reimbursable expenses incurred during the performance of their duties,

including per diem meetings, mileage, and other items as specified under this policy, with all claims supported by appropriate documentation.

“Organizational Meeting” is a meeting of the Council to determine annual committee and external board assignments.

"Receipt" means the original documentation provided by a vendor which provides detail about the item(s)/service(s) received and the amount of GST paid. Debit and/or credit card slips are not considered receipts and are not sufficient for reimbursement purposes.

"Reeve" means the Chief Elected Official as defined in the *Municipal Government Act*.

"RMA" means the Rural Municipalities of Alberta, an independent association representing Alberta’s counties and municipal districts.

“Training Course” is an individual online or in-person course (e.g., EOEP) or a formal program of study involving more than one course leading to a degree, diploma, certificate, or professional designation. Online courses must be offered by an accredited educational institution and must be approved via Council resolution.

REFERENCES

Policies

- *Alberta Municipal Government Act*
- Human Resources Policies

Schedule A – List of Approved Conferences and Conventions

<u>Conference, Convention or Event</u>	<u>Eligibility for Per Diem Payments</u>
RMA Fall and Spring Convention	All Council Members
RMA District 2 Meetings	All Council Members
Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Convention	All Council Members
Alberta CARE Conference	Council members appointed to Alberta CARE Board
Alberta Seniors & Community Housing Association (ASCHA) Conference	Council Members appointed to Wheatland Housing Management Body Board
FCSSAA Conference	Council members appointed to WFCSS Board
Provincial or Federal Minister Meetings	All Council Members formally invited by the Provincial or Federal Minister’s Office
Parades held within Wheatland County or neighbouring Municipalities	All Council Members
County Hosted Open Houses	All Council Members
Groundbreaking Events for County Developments or Announcements	All Council Members

Policy Name:	Appointed/Non-Elected Committee Members Remuneration
Policy Number:	5.1.2
Policy Owner:	Chief Administrative Officer
Adopted Date:	May 2, 2006
Effective Date:	May 2, 2006
Date Last Amended:	June 4, 2024
Date Last Reviewed:	June 4, 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish remuneration rates and expense reimbursement for Wheatland County appointed, non-elected committee members. This policy includes members appointed to the internal and external boards and committees of Wheatland County.

POLICY

Wheatland County Council values the time that board and committee members spend attending meetings, training, and other official activities or events, and recognizes the importance of reimbursing these members for out-of-pocket expenses relating to such events. All County-appointed, non-elected committee members will be subject to this policy. Wheatland County Councillors who sit on boards and committees will be reimbursed in accordance with Policy 5.1.1 – Elected Officials Remuneration.

Timesheets

All Committee Members shall track their per diems by utilizing a monthly timesheet report. This report must be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, by the 8th day of the following month. Timesheets will be processed for deposit by the 15th of that month.

Per Diem Rate

	Chair* / Members at Large
Full day per diem	\$266.84– up to 8 hours
Partial day per diem	\$133.42 – up to 4 hours

*If the Chair is a Councillor, the Councillor is compensated in accordance with Policy 5.1.1- Elected Officials Remuneration and not this policy.

Per diem rates will be paid for attendance at approved committee meetings as established annually, at the Organizational Meeting or, for any other meetings approved by Council

resolution. A combination of multiple meetings on the same day, that has a total duration under 4 hours, will be compensated as 1 per diem total.

Mileage

	Chair* / Members at Large
Mileage	Current CRA Rates

*If the Chair is a Councillor, the Councillor is compensated in accordance with Policy 5.1.1- Elected Officials Remuneration and not this policy.

Mileage reimbursement will be paid in accordance with the current Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) prescribed rates.

Courses, Conferences, and Conventions

	Chair* / Members at Large
Accommodation	Based on actual expense (receipt required)
	\$60.00 per day (receipt required)
Meals	Determined as follows: Breakfast - \$10.00 Lunch - \$20.00 Dinner - \$30.00
Transportation	Based on actual expense (receipt required)

*If the Chair is a Councillor, the Councillor is compensated in accordance with Policy 5.1.1 – Elected Officials Remuneration and not this policy.

REFERENCES

Policies

- Legislative Policies – 5.1.1 Elected Officials Remuneration

Policy Name:	County Property
Policy Number:	5.2.1
Policy Owner:	Chief Administrative Officer
Adopted Date:	June 7, 2011
Effective Date:	June 7, 2011
Date Last Amended:	March 2, 2021
Date Last Reviewed:	March 2, 2021

PURPOSE

To establish a policy for the return of any Wheatland County owned property assigned, or provided to, elected officials for their business use during their tenure with Wheatland County.

POLICY

Wheatland County elected officials may choose to receive County owned technology devices such as a smartphone, laptop or tablet computer. These may include, but are not limited to, an iPad Pro or Microsoft Surface Book, to connect to County systems, unless a Councillor chooses to use their own compatible technological devices.

Outgoing Councillors shall return all County property that has been assigned to them at the end of their term date.

REFERENCES

Policy

- Human Resources Policies
- IT Policies