

The Corporation of the  
**Municipality of Neebing**

AGENDA for Special Meeting of Neebing Council, Sitting as Committee of the Whole  
**Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.**  
**To be held at Blake Hall, 71 Blake Hall Road**

If you cannot attend in person, you can join from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/945655885>

You can also dial in using your phone.

Canada (Toll Free): [1 888 455 1389](tel:18884551389) Access Code: **945-655-885**

**1. Preliminary Matters**

- (a) Call to Order
- (b) Attendance
- (c) Request/Receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interests  
under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (if any)

**2. Public Meeting Relating to the Review of Council Composition**

- 2.1 Report from Clerk-Treasurer Regarding Council Composition 1-27  
(Recommendation to provide direction.)
- 2.2 Hear from Members of the Public Regarding Council Composition
- 2.3 Debate from Council

**5. Adjourn the Meeting**

**The Corporation of the Municipality of Neebing  
Administrative Report**

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**Date:** October 21, 2021 (For Special Meeting on October 27, 2021)

**To:** Mayor and Council

**Subject:** Council Composition

**Submitted by:** Erika Kromm, Clerk-Treasurer

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Administration seeks Council direction with regards to proposed changes to Council Composition.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

One of Council's strategic goals is to complete a review of the composition of Neebing Council and the possibility of reducing Council to five members. In the fall of 2019, a series of articles was published in the Neebing News seeking input from the public on this matter. Very few comments were received and in September Administration put out a survey to obtain further comments. The results of the survey are summarized in Attachment One.

In addition, Council held a public meeting on September 29, 2021 to provide an opportunity for in person feedback. Attachment Three is a copy minutes from that meeting which summarizes the comments received. At this meeting, it was discussed with attendees that Council was interested in pursuing a 5-member Council which wouldn't have an at-large position and would combine the Pearson and Pardee wards. It was suggested that a follow-up survey could be circulated to receive feedback on this proposal. At the October 6, 2021 regular Council meeting, Administration as directed to circulate the follow up survey. The results of this survey are attached at Attachment Two.

The purpose of this meeting is to review the comments received from the public and debate the proposed changes to Council Composition.

At the time this report was written, 97 responses had been received for the original survey and six responses had been received for the follow-up survey. In addition, seven individuals have submitted comments by mail or email. There were four comments received in 2019, it is not known if those individuals also completed the 2021 survey. The responses are fairly split down the middle between those who are in favour of the change versus those who are in favour of the status quo. While we don't expect to have 100% participation in this type of consultation, 108 responses is not very representative of the population and there is no clear direction from the public.

If Council wishes to move forward with the change, Administration would bring forward a by-law for adoption at the November 3, 2021 regular Council Meeting. This would allow for the 45 day appeal period before the change can become effective by the end of the year. If the

by-law becomes effective by the end of 2021, then the change will take effect for the 2022 election. If someone submits an appeal, then the matter would be directed to the Ontario Land Tribunal to schedule a hearing. In this case, the by-law would not be effective until the Tribunal has a hearing and makes a ruling. Any hearings with the Tribunal likely would not take place until 2022 which means the by-law would be in effect for the 2026 election, if approved by the Tribunal.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- One: Responses to Council Composition Survey
- Two: Responses to Follow-up Survey
- Three: Minutes from September 29 Public Meeting
- Four: Responses from 2019 Consultation
- Five: Responses Received by Mail or Email

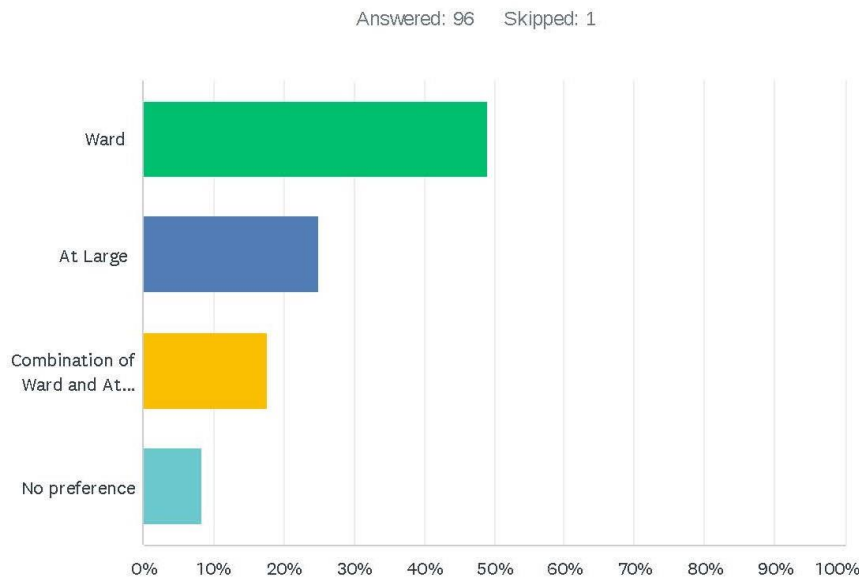
**AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST:**

Past Council reports and Neebing News Articles, Relevant legislation, Individual Survey Responses

## **ATTACHMENT ONE: Responses to Council Composition Survey**

Below are the responses to the Council Composition Survey.

1. Is it important to you to have a “ward councillor”, elected to represent your geographic township’s interests? Or would you be comfortable having all Council members elected “at large”? What is your preference?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ward	48.96%	47
At Large	25.00%	24
Combination of Ward and At Large	17.71%	17
No preference	8.33%	8
TOTAL		96

2. Please provide additional comments regarding your response to Question 1.

Answered: 57 Skipped: 40

Combination provides better public support, and at large councilors can assist ward councilors if they are overloaded with issues.
We have had no councillor visit since the current one took position.
I feel our council doesn't listen to us and vote together anyways so who cares!
With the ward, if a unpopular decision has to be made. It is that person that stands up for us. Not someone who lives in a different ward.
A councilor for a ward will be more in touch that area of the township
I have no further comments
If all are at large then they all become responsible for all areas of needing

I believe that adequate representation could be provided fairly.
I think there is no need for ward councillors and councillors at large
Let's try and be more fair to all areas, roads maintenance is a huge issue and needs more attention...
Remote and unique.
I feel my interests are better considered if there is a ward Counsellor from my township
Someone living in that ward with you would be more understanding of the situation in that ward.
I need a representative from where I live.
Good idea
Due to the history of marginalizing certain areas, a combination might insure that everyone receives strong representation.
None of these is my preference. Current Wards are disproportionate with respect to residents. There are significant geographic differences in issues, but current wards do not capture these differences. We need to reconsider ward boundaries as part of deciding on how many council members we have. Each ward should contain approximately the same number of people.
Nothing to add
Large area with different issues in each one
Councils are too large and have to be reduced.
Combination gives you a good representation of pros and cons
Don't know what they mean
Historically if certain areas do not have a ward councilor, they are quickly forgotten or purposely ignored.
Neebing is a large municipality with different interests in different areas (farming, natural resources, recreation, etc) I don't believe at large members can properly represent the diverse needs of the entire municipality.
Wards are irrelevant
As long as they represent the whole community
Theres no reason why one "township" would get favoured over another
Someone living in the ward should represent it on council
As long as ward issues are considered by Council and not eliminated from consideration, it is fine either way
Large landbase and wide diversity of users make it imperative to retain ward representation in order to prevent densely populated areas from drowning out the voices of the areas with lower density
I want representation in my area not all congregated in Cloud Bay or other areas
If all councillors are at large you run the risk of a region being un- or under-represented
Need a ward approach
Would like to retain a councillor for our specific ward with its interests at heart.
At large will allow high density areas to elect councillors to represent their interests.

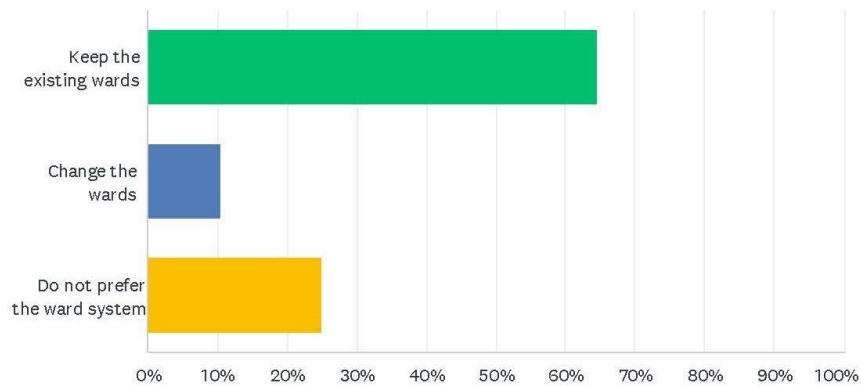
We agreed to joining Neebing from Scoble Unorganized Township with the understanding we would have ward representatives. Neebing is a large and diverse township. Ward representatives are more likely to be cognizant of the needs of their area.
All wards need equal representation to be fair to all wards. To much work Togoerinnen 5 representatives to fill all committe positions.
With our low population levels it does not seem relevant to have councilors dedicated to smaller geographic areas.
To accommodate representation by population combine Pardee/Pearson
It would be unfortunate if all were unintentionally from the same area, which could happen? If they were all at Large.
Different wards have different needs, roads, populations and challenges. Each ward deserves a voice in council
Ward councillors are needed as I feel that Neebing is quite large geographically and that people in Scoble have different concerns than someone in Blake or pardee. Also just because more people live in one area doesn't mean all the councillors should come from that area.
Neebing is such a large area that it would be important to still have councillors attached to geographic areas. It would present some more popular neighbourhoods from becoming overrepresented on Council.
Neebing is a large municipality, decisions made in one area may not necessarily be in the best interest of another.
No comments
Considering I have never met my ward council (even at time of elections), doesn't make a difference.
I prefer each ward have its own representation, with one seperate "at large" council position.
We need representation from each area or council could be loaded with people from one area as self interest group to get what they want on their area
Better representation for each township
Do not want and at large council. It could present a situation where there are several councillors from one geographical area and present a chance for a hidden agenda to be created.
I think each area is so large with different priorities and unique issues.
A ward representative has a personal stake in your geographic area. He/she will truly be in touch with their constituents.
Ward councilors are vital for fair representation of the varying priorities residents of Neebing may have – some areas have higher population densities, whereas other areas have people who own larger parcels of land. Some residences on the lakefront have a higher monetary property value, which may result in more credence being given to their priorities. However, the ecological value of most of the area in Neebing is invaluable (for example the carbon sink and water retention capacity of wetlands, including but not limited to the provincially significant wetland in Pearson) even though the 'property values' may be less. On the other hand, at-large councilors are not beholden to a given ward and can make decisions based on the best interest of the whole community. It is a difficult balance, and in the end, it rests on how good of a job council does. However, small government does not necessarily benefit the residents of a community, and should not be a goal in itself (the monetary savings are not that significant – if they are in fact \$20,000/yr).
I feel we have too many councillors and it should be reduced. Also in a small municipality the councillors should represent everyone

Council should be responsible for all areas of the municipality and know the whole municipality and needs of the residents

at large

3. If you are a fan of the “ward councillor” system, are you comfortable with the way the wards are drawn up? Or do you think the ward boundaries should be changed?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Keep the existing wards	64.58%	62
Change the wards	10.42%	10
Do not prefer the ward system	25.00%	24
TOTAL		96

4. If you would like to see the existing wards changed, how do you think they should be changed?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 54

Pearson and Pardee combined.

No comment

Vote

Na

N/A

No preference

No change

Same as before. Designated

population

N/A

Na
1) approx same number of people in each ward. Also wards should be functional entities, not just random boundaries. For example, we could have Lakeshore subdivisions, commercial (forestry, farming), and non-waterfront wards. If one of these categories contains too many people ..
combine pearson/scoble, and crooks/pardee
NA
NA
I don't really think they need changing and I am sure most people wouldn't want that. For heaven sake Thunder Bay was renamed 50+ years ago and are still referred to as FW and PA
No change
Idk
Some wards can be doubled up
No concerns
Na
Leave it as is if keeping the ward system
No opinion
NA
All at large
No change. We are a large municipality and need 7.
Do not want it changed
n/a
combine Pardee/Pearson
Keep the same. They are connected to living history of folks who lived through amalgamation; and participate (have interests and understanding) in the community accordingly.
I think they are drawn ok and could be revisited at a later date after two terms of a five member council to ensure each constituent is still fairly represented.
not familiar enough with current ward boundaries to propose changes.
I think we should stop using them
n/a
N/A
They shouldn't be changed. Just a useless waste of money
Should not be changed - keep township boundaries as they are
Keep existing
Please keep it the same
the wards should represent the composite townships. If population density were to change the wards, some areas would be under-represented



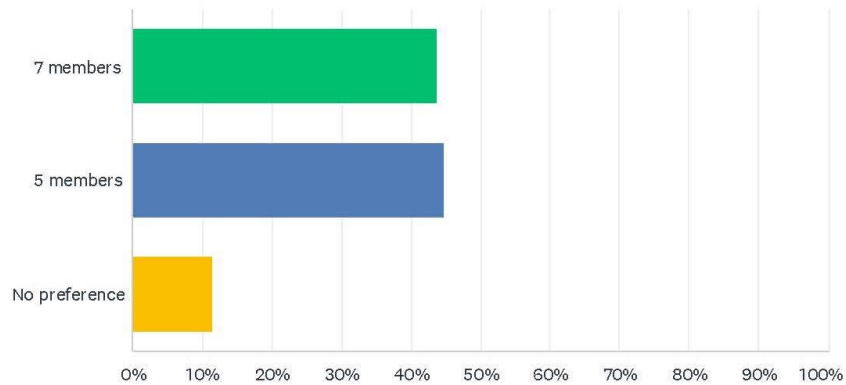
go to at large

I'm not sure how it should be changed yet.

n/a

5. Are you comfortable with a 7-member Council when most other rural municipalities opt for 5-member Councils? What is your preferred size of Council?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
7 members	43.75%	42
5 members	44.79%	43
No preference	11.46%	11
TOTAL		96

## 6. Please provide additional comments regarding your response to Question 5.

Answered: 55 Skipped: 42

It is important to have representatives from the corners of the municipality. At large councillors won't guarantee this.
With a larger council there are more opinions and ideas that can be proposed.
Save money.
Again I feel as though they all vote together anyways and non of them think for themselves so what wound it matter.
Na
I believe the savings realized by reducing to 5 councillors will be better spent elsewhere.
It shouldn't take 7 ppl to oversee this township
A 5 member council can provide sufficient governance
No need for 7 councillors
As long as equal consideration is provided...
I have no opinion
Easier decision making
Less cost
For a population of 2,000 residents five counsellors should be able to manage either electronic or in-person communication with the residents they are responsible for.
Na
increase the number of wards for that category.
Nothing to add
Again very large sized municipality, would be difficult for a smaller council to represent
If most municipalities can do it with 5, why can't Neebing?
More voices are always better. Not so polarized to one area
Idk
Nothing to add. Just makes sense
I don't think it would hurt anything to reduce council, my preference would be to remove the at large councilors if anything. The last several elections have gone uncontested while I know some residents have expressed concern with reduced representation there doesn't appear to be a significant interest in stepping forward to participate
5 is enough to represent 2000 people
5 members should be able to look after 2000 people.
More councillors means more options which can be a good thing. Also more votes cast demonstrates clear directions from council 7-0 , 4-3 means an issue is still contested
Large geographic area despite a small population base. I think there may well be extra logistical challenges as a result

Most other municipalities are much smaller geographically than the municipality of neebing
Don't need 7.. that's too many
More voices heard
Why would anyone want smaller democratic representation ?i
One councillor from each wa4d.
7 are needed due to our diversity in areas of the municipality.
All wards need to have a say in municipal affairs.
i have no strong feelings either way. i would support moving to a 5 member council though.
cost savings, administrative efficiencies,
Oh right! It can't be an even number...I would go for 5 for financial reasons; but please consider it being a "working Council", similar to many Boards in order to continue services and ensure there is time/staff/Council attention to economic development and delivery of community services PS Parks are more important to creating good citizens and building community than good roads (I still enjoy the latter, but you get my point, hopefully). So maybe Councillors can have an expanded mandate which includes applying for funding, researching things; etc. that would traditionally fall to staff.
I want each ward to have a voice in council and I believe there is a place for a few at large councillors as well
I find that as of now all 7 members vote the same usually anyway. We may take any resources freed up from 2 council positions and have it better spent/utilized in office settings, legal matters or planning situations. Volunteer committees play an active role in community input where I think they are more important than an additional two councillors
Would like to see a core group attached to geographic areas and maybe two 'at large' councillors
Neebing may be small in population however due to geographic size multiple members are required for proper representation. Just because other places do something doesn't mean you must follow suit.
7 is a lot. Disburse the additional funds to funding the fire department or health related programs
Five is sufficient.
My preference is for there to be a greater diversity of representation.
We have 5 wards 1 at large and the Reece. Leave it be
5 is enough to represent 2000 people
We have 5 townships and each township should have separate representations.
All areas should be represented
Neebing does not need seven councillors.
I think having a member representing each ward, one member at large, and the mayor representing all areas worked in the past and will continue to work going forward.
Neebing is too large as it is. We need fair representation for all taxpayers. We live in west Pearson it has seemed for years that the residents living closer to Hwy 61 get more value for their tax dollars. Reducing the number of councillors will only perpetuate this further.
Each township should have a representative. Per my first comment, at-large councilors may provide an "uninvested" voice. The monetary savings of reducing council is not significant. The questions of this survey are slanted to reflect what current mayor wants (see Q. 5 above).

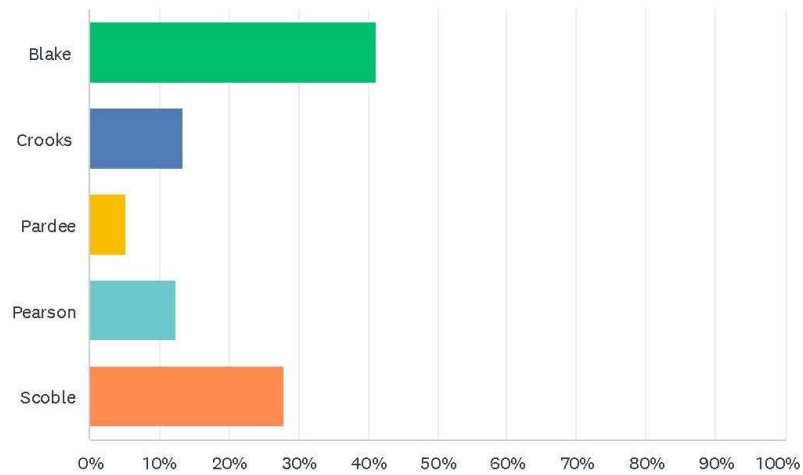
I feel 7 is too many for Neebing and many other municipalities do great with 5

Depending on the need

no should be 5

## 7. In which Ward (geographical township) do you live?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

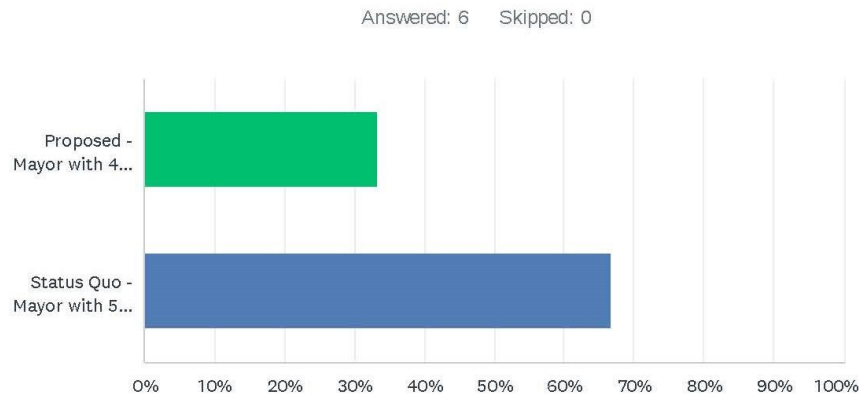


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Blake	41.24%	40
Crooks	13.40%	13
Pardee	5.15%	5
Pearson	12.37%	12
Scoble	27.84%	27
TOTAL		97

## **ATTACHMENT TWO: Responses to Follow-up Survey**

Below are the responses to the Follow-up Survey.

### 1. Which Council Composition do you prefer?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Proposed - Mayor with 4 Ward Councillors (with Pardee and Pearson combined)	33.33%	2
Status Quo - Mayor with 5 Ward Councillors and 1 Councillor-at-Large	66.67%	4
TOTAL		6

### 2. Please provide any additional comments.

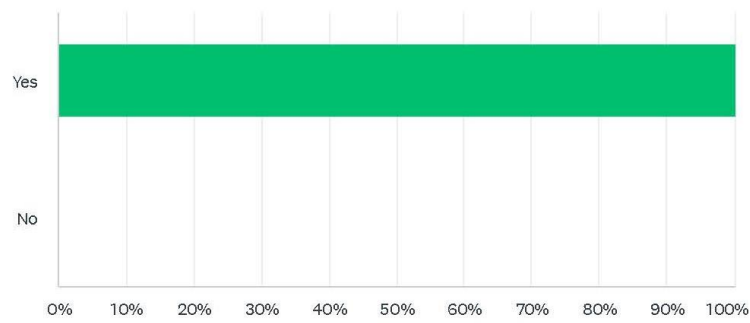
Answered: 2 Skipped: 4

In the 90's when communities amalgamated it was to cut costs. Council should be cut to save costs

Leave as is - better representation

### 3. Did you complete the first Council Composition Survey?

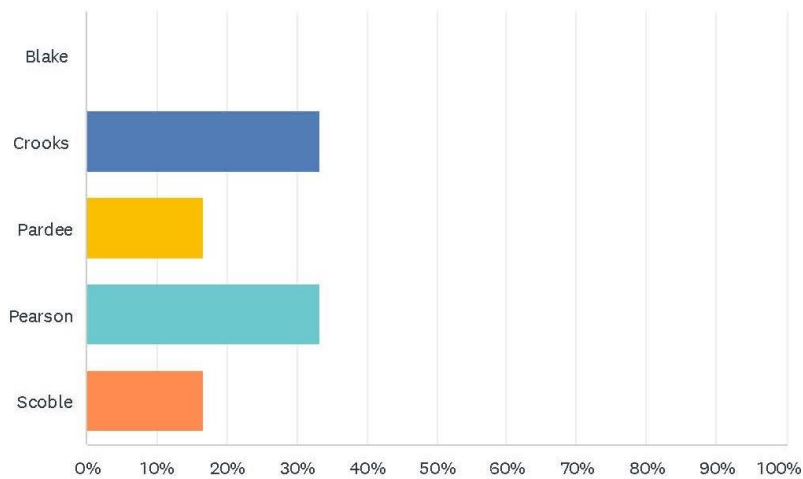
Answered: 6 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	6
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		6

### 4. Which ward do you live in?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Blake	0.00%	0
Crooks	33.33%	2
Pardee	16.67%	1
Pearson	33.33%	2
Scoble	16.67%	1
TOTAL		6

**ATTACHMENT THREE: Minutes of September 29 Public Meeting****THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEEBING****MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL**

Held using GoToMeeting Web Conference System and in-person at Blake Hall

On Wednesday, September 29, 2021

**PRESENT:** Mayor Erwin Butikofer  
 Blake Councillor Mark Thibert  
 Councillor at Large Gordon Cuthbertson  
 Crooks Councillor Brian Wright  
 Pearson Councillor Gary Gardner  
 Pardee Councillor Curtis Coulson  
 Scoble Councillor Brian Kurikka

Erika Kromm, Clerk-Treasurer  
 Laura Jones, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

Ev and Mike MacGray (participating via web conference)  
 Tracy Gardner  
 Gertrude Belanger  
 Bill Lankinen  
 Marilyn Lankinen  
 Shannon Loukola  
 Clara Butikofer

**PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

- (a) **Call to Order:** Mayor Butikofer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- (b) **Attendance:** Attendance was recorded.
- (c) **Declarations of Interest:**

No declarations of pecuniary interests under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act were brought forward.

**PUBLIC MEETING RELATING TO THE REVIEW OF COUNCIL COMPOSITION****1.1 Report from Clerk-Treasurer Regarding Council Composition**

Council is proposing a reduction in the number of Councillors from 7 to 5 people, and Council also requested feedback as to how that could occur. Ms. Kromm highlighted the number of ways that the reduction in Council members could occur.

The Mayor spoke in support of the Council size reduction. He listed the population of each of the wards and stated that most surrounding Municipalities have five Councillors and by reducing Neebing to four Councillors and a Mayor that the expected cost savings of \$20,000 could be used by the Municipality towards other budget items.

## 1.2 Hear from Members of the Public Regarding Council Composition (

Bill Lankinen spoke and stated he disputed the amount of the savings and while he was not opposed to the reduction in the number of Council representatives from seven to five, he was strongly opposed to having the representation all from one area of the Municipality. He also inquired if Councillor received separate remuneration for being on committees and was informed that they do not receive extra remuneration.

Mayor Butikofer stated the savings would be applied to other areas. Mayor Butikofer and other Councillors spoke of how each Councillor representing Neebing as a whole.

Shannon Loukala spoke and stated she also did not believe there would be \$20,000 saved. Ms. Loukala stated she thinks something will be lost by the reduction in the size of the Council and she is not in support of the reduction. She stated her father informed her that when amalgamation occurred the deal was that each area would have representation. Ms. Loukala is also not in favour of having all Councillors from the same geographic area of the Municipality.

Councillor Coulson stated that he personally supports the existing system, however he can also see the reasoning behind why the change is being recommended. He stated that in the past Pearson and Pardee had their own recreation organization.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated there are problems finding people to run for Council. Scoble has had no one from Scoble wanting to run for the past three terms. In the last election all the Councillors were acclaimed and the only election was for the position of Mayor.

Gertrude Belanger spoke and stated that there are areas within the Municipality that have specific interests such as Oliver Lake, and those areas would still want to have representation.

Ev MacGray asked what the online survey results showed. Ms. Kromm responded and said there were 32 respondents and that approximately 40 % were in favour of five Councillor and 60% in favour of maintaining the existing system.

Tracy Gardner stated that the survey had several options, and that the number of options was concerning, and that people were apprehensive. She asked what process would be followed prior to making a decision, and where does public opinion fit into the decision

The Mayor stated that that Council wanted to know if residents wanted to have representation by numbers or neighbourhood. He informed Mrs. Gardner that there were attempts to engage the public in 2019 with newspaper articles regarding Council Composition and there was no response. He stated that what Council would likely discuss is Council representation from Pearson/Pardee, Blake, Scoble, Crooks and a Mayor.



Mrs. Gardner said that was not clear on the survey. No one wants to lose their Councillor. She asked if the survey could be condensed to two options.

Mrs. Gardner also stated that because Pearson and Pardee represent about ½ of the area's geography, she had concerns about the workload for that Councillor.

Councillor Wright reiterated that Council works as a whole to solve the problems of the Municipality, and that workload would be shared amongst the Councillors.

The Clerk-Treasurer stated that the survey provided all options to reduce the size of Council, as Council had not yet indicated a direction for any one form of representation. She will bring a report to the next Council meeting so Council can provide direction.

**2. ADJOURN THE MEETING:**

There being no further business to attend to, Mayor Butikofer adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

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Erwin Butikofer  
MAYOR

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Erika Kromm  
CLERK-TREASURER

**ATTACHMENT FOUR: Responses from 2019 Consultation**

August 30 Email Constituent	I just read the article in the Neebing News regarding the composition of our council. I think it would be better to keep it at 7 members, particularly because there would be more expertise around the table and workload would be lighter. Quorum is also import, I've sat on committees that often could meet quorum and it was really frustrating, so I wouldn't want to see that happen at our council meetings.
October 4 Letter Constituent	First of all, I like to speak to the question of the future number of councillors. I firmly believe that the present number of councillors should be maintained. And preferably they should be residing in their respected wards.
November 8 Phone Call Constituent	She wanted to respond to the Neebing News articles about Council composition, etc. She stated "she is in favour of the smallest council possible" and that she feels they should all be elected at large.
November 28 Email Constituent	For the record, I do not support reducing the number of Councillors in Neebing. Pearson has been long-ignored from what I understand over the years. It would be even more difficult to receive resources and participate in decision-making without a rep. Ditto for other areas that don't generate the same tax revenue as other areas.

**ATTACHMENT FIVE: Responses received by Mail or Email**

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**From:** Tbaytel <mosipenk@tbaytel.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 5, 2021 10:31 AM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Neebing Council Composition

This is Marlene Osipenko at 752A Cloud Lake Rd. Just thought I'd reply my thoughts on your survey. I think a 5 member at large council should be sufficient for a municipality of 2000 residents. I would agree with whatever our voted in mayor thinks would work best. The 7 member ward system is a luxury that we've been lucky to have but is probably not needed. Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** sgilmore <sgilmore@tbaytel.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 10:24 AM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Ward Councilors Edit

Hello Erika,

I would prefer a system of 5 councilors. I would like them to represent certain designated areas. Could our geographical area be divided into 5 sections so that each councilor would still be representing resident's individual concerns?

Thank you for this survey,

--

Suzanne Gilmore  
7070 Highway 61  
Neebing ON P7L 0A1  
(807) 964-2223



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**From:** sgilmore <sgilmore@tbaytel.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 24, 2021 10:52 AM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Ward Councilors

Hello Erika,

I would prefer and at large system of 5 councilors. This will save us money and relieve funds that we are able to divert to other needed areas.

Thank you for this survey,

--

Suzanne Gilmore  
7070 Highway 61  
Neebing ON P7L 0A1  
(807) 964-2223



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**From:** Ian Pattison <ipattison47@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 16, 2021 6:51 PM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Neebing's council composition

Sept. 16, 2021

25 Cottage Drive West, Cloud Bay  
 Neebing ON P7L0A9

The council and administration  
 Municipality of Neebing

**Re: Neebing's council composition**

Thank you for the invitation to participate in consideration of the makeup of Neebing municipal council as appeared in the Neebing News, September 2021 issue.

In answer to the article's three questions:

- a. It is essential to maintain ward councillors to represent the diverse interests of taxpayers in the wards. Direct representation would be diluted or lost if citizens were asked to vote entirely at-large, and successful candidates attempted to speak for all residents at once. Or worse, if they sought to speak collectively for a constituency that might seek to influence them on matters that did not serve the interests of the municipality as a whole or those of one or more of its wards.
- b. Neebing is, I believe, the second-largest municipality by size in Ontario. I don't think that many of its residents are aware of wards much beyond their own and certainly not other wards' particular issues. Residents would need this council to present a 'guide to wards' in order for people to get some idea of whether the existing ward boundaries provide an accurate division of interests and issues.
- c. A smaller council is, in theory, an opportunity for more efficient discussions at the council table and a way to save some money. The suggested number of five members lends itself to consideration of different forms of representation. For example, three wards comprise the large majority of Neebing's population. Do the two much less populous wards each need a councillor or might one representative be sufficient to speak to their similar combined interests? A reorganized council might even see new ward boundaries redrawn around primary land uses -- lakeshore, inland residential, industrial (farming and forestry). The current single at-large position seems irrelevant in this scenario (no offence to Councillor Cuthbertson). A wards study with input from interested residents would be helpful.

Any consideration of council representation must, in my view, include the core issue of taxation and how it is applied across Neebing's neighbourhoods.

Taxes at this address have risen steadily and remarkably to levels consistent with homes in the City of Thunder Bay with its vast array of public services. While recognizing Neebing's limited population and tax base, all Neebing residents receive landfills, roads and infrastructure maintenance directly from the municipality. As lakeshore residents on approximately one acre of land, is it fair that my wife and I are forced to subsidize use by most lesser-taxed inland residents, often on much larger properties, of those same Neebing services solely because we happen to live on Lake Superior? I put it to you that it is highly unfair and, for that reason, I would hope that the issue of how Neebing is governed is broadened to include how Neebing is taxed.

I look forward to further discussion of this project and to an eventual outcome that accurately represents the best interests of all residents of this wonderful municipality.

Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Ian Pattison

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**From:** Mitchell Taylor <mktaylor@lakeheadu.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:29 AM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Neebing's Council Composition

Good morning,

This message is in response to the request for input from Neebing residents recently posted in the Neebing News. My name is Mitchell Taylor (66 Cottage Drive West), Crook's Township.

With respect, I think you are going about this in the wrong way. Having all the councilors as "at large" does not serve to ensure regional representation, or representation in proportion to population, or representation of any other socioeconomic strata in Neebing (such as lakeshore subdivision residents, off-lake residents, farmers, forest industry properties, renters, business, and non-resident property owners). What purpose are you trying to achieve with the system you are proposing? Where are the residents of Neebing living and how does the system work for them (e.g., MPAC method for taxation)?

I am concerned that having all councilors "at large" would render the council vulnerable to activist special interest groups that would not consider the Municipality as a whole. I also agree that just using the historical system without evaluating it or discussing it doesn't make sense either. But the key question is not how many councilors should Neebing have. The key question is what are Neebing's main socioeconomic groups and how are they distributed. It doesn't have to be by area. Individuals could self-declare by category or it could be done by mapping types and thus assigning property (voters) into types.

Underlying all is the democratic principle of equal representation while ensuring respect for minority perspectives and human rights.

I think you are trivializing this important issue without walking the Municipality through the many considerations and options available. Redistribution of representatives can be a good thing for the Municipality, but it can also result in mistrust and a lack of confidence in government. Who were the winners and who were the losers?

Why 5? Why 7? Why not 3 or 10? This needs to be driven by demonstrated need and a careful consideration of what will function best, not picked on some vague preference like an ice cream flavor.

It's a big job, and good for you for bringing it up. But I don't think Neebing is ready to vote on any of these choices yet. It needs a lot more public discussion first.

Thanks for asking my opinion and please let me know how I can participate in any ongoing discussion.

best,

Mitch

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(807) 964-2678 (H)

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**From:** Beverley Dale <bevdale506@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 5, 2021 8:41 AM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Council composition

I like the ward representation. To cut council down to five it makes sense population wise to cut out the At Large councillor and join Pearson and Pardee. As it stands now you could have 3 members of council from one ward, a perceived bias.

Bev Dale  
78 Cottage Dr West  
Neebing

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**From:** Lea Matyuska <flmaty@tbaytel.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 4, 2021 2:36 PM  
**To:** Erika Kromm  
**Subject:** Neebing's Council Composition

Hi,

I am in favour of reducing the size and composition of Neebing's Council.

Our current ward system is geographically based upon historic township boundaries.

Although the size of our Municipality is huge, given our small population I believe the needs of all Neebing residents would be better served with a smaller Council serving all of us.

I believe the ward system of governance is no longer efficient, cost effective, or required.

Thanks,

Lea Matyuska

Sent from my iPad



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Municipality of Neebing

## COUNCIL COMPOSITION SURVEY

### *NEEBING IS SEEKING YOUR INPUT*

In the fall of 2019, the Municipality published a series of articles seeking input from residents regarding the composition of Council. As the current term of Council is nearing an end in 2022, Council is interested in providing another opportunity for residents to provide input on the composition of Neebing's Council.

In the 2019 articles, we explained the differences between elections "at large" and elections by geographic ward. In addition, we looked at the possibility of reducing the size of Council from seven to five members. These articles are available for reference on our website at [www.neebing.org/notices](http://www.neebing.org/notices).

Through the articles Neebing asked residents to respond to the following questions:

1. Is it important to you to have a "ward councillor", elected to represent your geographic township's interests? Or would you be comfortable having all Council members elected "at large"? What is your preference?

- ☒ Ward
- ☐ At large
- ☐ Combination of Ward and At Large
- ☐ No preference

2. Please provide additional comments regarding your response to Question 1.

**In the Fall of 1999, Pearson township along with Scoble township voted to amalgamate with the municipality of Neebing (Blake, Crooks and Pardee) bringing approximately 1000 residents to the tax base. For us to agree to this arrangement, we needed the assurance that we would not lose our representation. Because of the diversity between the individual wards, it is essential that our representation reflects and has the understanding of the lifestyles of the area.**

3. If you are a fan of the "ward councillor" system, are you comfortable with the way the wards are drawn up? Or do you think the ward boundaries should be changed?

- ☒ Keep the existing wards
- ☐ Change the wards
- ☐ Do not prefer the ward system



4. If you would like to see the existing wards changed, how do you think they should be changed?

Because we are approaching this restructuring of council from a cost savings point, it would make very little sense to put tax dollars to the re-defining of the existing boarders. It's our history and many of us are proud of and identify with our individual community's heritage.

5. Are you comfortable with a 7-member Council when most other rural municipalities opt for 5member Councils? What is your preferred size of Council?

- ☒ 7 members  
☐ 5 members  
☐ No preference

6. Please provide additional comments regarding your response to Question 5.

In rural area around Thunder Bay, Neebing is the largest municipality (877sqkm) then Shuniah (570 sqkm) and OliverPaipoonge (350 sqkm). Neebing has 13 committees with councillors making up 23 positions. If you reduce the number of councillors by 2, where is the make up of those lost positions going to come from? Eg: Pearson councillor – 5 committees, Pardee councillor – 6 committees, Councillor at Large – 2 committees. Eliminating two of those councillors creates 7 or 8 new positions to be filled. Also, considering the volunteer hours outside of committee meetings that would need to be filled, the workload would increase for council by many hours/miles which should and would lead to an increase in the individual honorariums paid out.

7. In which Ward (geographic township) do you live?

- ☐ Blake  
☐ Crooks  
☐ Pardee  
☒ Pearson  
☐ Scoble

**We look forward to your input. Make your voice heard on this important matter.**

Please submit comments by one of the following methods:

Email: [clerk@neebing.org](mailto:clerk@neebing.org)

Fax: 807-474-5332

Mail or hand deliver to: 4766 Hwy 61, Neebing, ON P7L 0B5

If you would prefer to complete the survey online, visit our website at [www.neebing.org/notices](http://www.neebing.org/notices).