

To: Governance Review Sub-Committee
Cc: Angela McRae, Legislative Coordinator

I am urging you not to move the start time of City Council meetings from the time they are currently scheduled (5:00 PM) to a much earlier time (9:30 AM) for the following reasons:

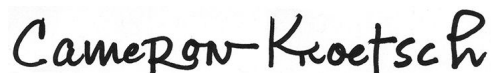
- (1) **The later time is better for the public.** Many people are much more likely to be working and unavailable to attend at 9:30 AM than they are at 5:00 PM. In fact, I think that holding meetings later in the evening (going back to holding meetings at 7:00 PM, for instance, as was the case up until late 2011) might actually be the better course of action if Council is doing this to better engage the public. Most of the community meetings I attend in Hamilton start at 7:00 PM. It is presumed to be the time that is reasonable for people to tie up their family and other commitments in order to be present for meetings.

The primary purpose of these meetings is to make the business of the City of Hamilton public. If the timing of the meetings is being changed to a time that makes it harder for the public to attend the meetings then I think it goes against the spirit and intention of the meetings themselves. The residents and citizens of Hamilton have a right to attend these meetings to witness the orderly business of the City.

- (2) **This will continue to create a culture of marathon meetings.** I think that Council must be motivated, unfortunately, to keep their meetings as short as possible. Changing to an earlier time will not achieve that goal, in my opinion. Having meetings scheduled for the entire “work day” means that councillors may feel more comfortable allowing meetings to go longer than they otherwise would. The motivation of needing to attend to personal matters outside of the City’s regular business hours can act as an incentive for councillors to be expeditious or efficient, whether they’re being mindful of their own commitments or those of staff.

I ask that you take my suggestions here seriously and that you either leave the meeting time as it currently is (5:00 PM) or consider going back to a later time.

Sincerely,



Cameron Kroetsch
Hamilton, ON