

Corporate Policy

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Section:	Administration	01
Sub-Section:	Council Meetings – General	0530
Title:	Electronic Participation in Council Meetings by Video Conference or Telephone	2020-02

Related Policies

Number	Title

Approvals

Approval Date:	Resolution #:
Amended:	Resolution #:
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Amended:	Resolution #:

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Electronic Participation in Council Meetings by Video Conference or Telephone

Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for Council Members to participate by video conference or telephone in Council and Standing Committee meetings. This policy comes into effect once the Designated Services are declared available by the Manager of Information Services.

Definitions

Designated Services refers to the meeting systems and software specified by the Information Services Division.

Electronic Participation refers to the remote attendance by video conference or telephone of a Council or Standing Committee meeting at which a quorum is physically present at a specified location; this policy does not apply to Special Council meetings that are wholly conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities per section 8(1) of the Council Procedure Bylaw.

Member refers to a member of Council.

Procedures

Meeting Types for which Electronic Participation Is Allowed

Electronic participation is permitted for Regular Council meetings, Special Council meetings, Public Hearings, and Finance Committee meetings to be held at City Hall in the Brovold Room or in Council Chambers. Remote participation is not permitted for any meeting or portion of any meeting that is held closed to the public under section 90 of the *Community Charter*. Availability of Electronic participation for Regular Council meetings, Special Council meetings, Public Hearings, and Finance Committee meetings to be held in locations other than those specified above is subject to availability of equipment and support.

Notification Requirements

A Member must notify the Corporate Officer or Deputy Corporate Officer of their intention to participate electronically as early as possible. The minimum notice required is one week prior to the time at which the meeting is scheduled to take place.

Connection Requirements

For electronic participation by video conference, a Member may connect to the Designated Services through a secure internet connection with a minimum upload speed of 2Mbps and a minimum download speed of 2Mbps. The connection must enable the Member to see and hear the proceedings and to be seen and heard by other Members clearly and with a delay of no more than three seconds. The connection must emit no sounds when the Member participating remotely is not speaking.

For electronic participation by telephone, a Member may connect to the designated telephone number at City Hall by landline, through a cellular network, or with a voice-over-IP connection. The connection must enable the Member to hear the proceedings and to be heard by other Members clearly and without delay. The connection must emit no sounds when the Member participating remotely is not speaking.

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Remote Location Requirements

For electronic participation by telephone, the location from which a Member is participating remotely must be free from background sounds that may interfere with the intelligibility of the Member's speech. When the Member is not speaking, no sound should be transmitted.

For electronic participation by video conference, the location from which a Member is participating remotely must be free from background sounds, movements, images, and words that may interfere with the intelligibility of the Member's speech or distract viewers. The Member must be positioned directly in front of a plain wall or plain backdrop so that no contextual information about the remote location is included in the video feed. When the Member is not speaking, no sound should be transmitted.

Quorum

A Member participating electronically must be in attendance before the meeting is called to order. Members participating electronically are counted for quorum only once the meeting is called to order with a quorum of Members physically in attendance. Except for declarations of conflicts of interests, a Member participating electronically cannot rejoin a meeting once they intentionally leave the meeting or connection or intelligibility is lost. When the Member participating remotely declares a conflict of interest for a specific item, they may leave and return to the meeting, and do so without severing the connection.

Voting

A member participating electronically must respond to the vote on every motion with the exception of temporarily leaving the meeting due to a conflict of interest. When calling a question, the Chair must specifically ask the Member participating electronically for their vote. While Members physically in attendance are deemed to have voted in favour of a motion if they are not recognized as having voted against a motion, Members participating electronically who vote neither for nor against a motion is deemed to have left the meeting before the question was called and will not be permitted to return.

Priority

As Electronic Participation is only available to one Member per meeting at which a quorum is physically present, priority for Electronic Participation will be given based on notification date.

Record Keeping

Members who participate in a meeting electronically will be recorded in the minutes as having participated electronically.

Monitoring/Authority

This policy is to be administered and monitored by the Legislative Services Division