

Corporate Policy

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Section:	Administration	01
Sub-Section:	Council – General	0530
Title:	Electronic Meeting Participation Requirements	2020-04

Related Policies

Number	Title
01-0530-2019-01	Mayor and Council Guidelines
01-0530-2020-02	Electronic Participation by Telephone
01-0530-2020-03	Electronic Participation by Video Conference or Telephone

Approvals

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

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Electronic Meeting Participation Requirements

Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for Council Members to participate in Electronic Meetings wholly conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities per section 8(1) of the Council Procedure Bylaw. This policy differentiates emergency electronic meetings from electronic meetings in general in order to allow for fewer participation requirements in emergency situations.

This policy does not apply to the remote attendance of a member by video conference or telephone at a Council or Standing Committee meeting at which a quorum is physically present at a specified location; such electronic participation is covered by Corporate Policy – 01-0530-2020-02 – Electronic Participation by Telephone and Corporate Policy – 01-0530-2020-03 – Electronic Participation by Video Conference or Telephone.

Definitions

Designated Platform refers to the meeting systems and software specified by the Information Services Division, which may change from time to time. The City currently uses Zoom Meetings, Zoom Webinars, and eScribe.

Electronic Meeting refers to a meeting of Council or Council Committee wholly conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities per section 8(1) of the Council Procedure Bylaw. In this Policy, Electronic Meeting refers to such meetings for which notice is provided a minimum of two and a half working days prior to the meeting, and excludes such meetings for which notice is provided with less than two and a half working days' notice. Meetings for which notice is provided with less than two and a half working days' notice are considered Emergency Electronic Meetings.

Emergency Electronic Meeting refers to a meeting of Council or Council Committee wholly conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities per section 8(1) of the Council Procedure Bylaw for which notice is provided less than two and a half working days prior to the meeting.

Member refers to a member of Council.

Videoconferencing refers to holding a meeting with participants in distant locations taking part by means of electronic sound and video communication, through which participants can see and hear one another.

Participation Requirements

1. Electronic Meetings in General
 - 1.1. Electronic Meetings will be held by videoconferencing.
 - 1.2. Participation in Electronic Meetings solely by telephone is prohibited; however, Members may choose to use the telephone audio function as a substitute for the computer audio function while simultaneously using a computer, a tablet, or a smart phone app to participate in the videoconference.

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- 1.3. Notwithstanding section 1.2, each Member may participate in an Electronic Meeting solely by telephone one day per calendar year. Any Member participating in a meeting under this section is prohibited from chairing the meeting.
 - 1.4. Members participating in Electronic Meetings must be able to both hear and see other Members at all times during a meeting.
 - 1.5. While a Member is attending an Electronic Meeting, the video feed must be on at all times. Interruptions of the video feed caused by technical difficulties will be allowed provided that they are temporary in nature and not lasting more than two minutes at a time.
 - 1.6. A Member may leave and enter an Electronic Meeting without limits, except for those set out in the Council Procedure Bylaw.
 - 1.7. A Member who declares a conflict of interest must leave the meeting either by disconnecting from the meeting or by being placed into the waiting room; the Member will be readmitted to the meeting once the conflict item is concluded.
 - 1.8. 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 other participants or viewers. When the Member is not speaking, no sound should be transmitted.
 - 1.9. Members may not use virtual backgrounds in electronic meetings.
 - 1.10. This section applies to all Electronic Meetings, including open and closed meetings of Council and open and closed meetings of Committees, Commissions, and Boards.
2. Closed Electronic Meetings
 - 2.1. The location from which a Member is participating remotely in a meeting that is closed to the public must be secured against access by anyone other than the participant.
 - 2.2. In the case of unauthorized access to a Member's closed meeting location, that Member must immediately disconnect from the meeting or be placed into the waiting room by the meeting chair or meeting administrator. Once the Member has re-established the security of the location, the Member may rejoin the meeting or, if placed into the waiting room, notify the meeting chair or meeting administrator of their readiness for readmission.
3. Emergency Electronic Meetings
 - 3.1. An Electronic Meeting called without a minimum of two and a half working days' notice is considered an Emergency Electronic Meeting, and shall not be subject to the same participation requirements as Electronic Meetings in general.
4. Waiving Electronic Meeting Participation Requirements in Case of Emergency
 - 4.1. Under extenuating circumstances, such as existing or foreseeable large-scale infrastructure failure affecting a majority of meeting participants, the Corporate Officer may suspend this policy by including the notification of the suspension of this policy in the notice of meeting, regardless of whether the notice of meeting is given two and a half working days prior to the date of the meeting.

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Monitoring/Authority

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