

Subject: Council Meeting Procedure Guidelines - Hybrid Meeting Format - COVID-19 Pandemic**APPROVALS:****Jamie Doyle**_____
Director_____
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

THAT the Council Meeting Procedure Guidelines, as outlined in Attachment 1, be adopted by Council for the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Summary:

Council amended its meeting process based on the provincial legislation and regulation made as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. With many Alberta municipalities beginning to meet in a "hybrid meeting format", allowing both electronic and physical attendance, it is appropriate for Council to adopt meeting procedure "guidelines" for the duration of the Pandemic. It is not recommended that the Procedure Bylaw be formally amended at this time.

Background:

As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Province of Alberta enacted Order in Council 099/2020 which made the "Meeting Procedures (COVID-19 Suppression) Regulation" A.R. 50/2020 to provide for electronic meetings. The intent was to avoid exposing persons in public meetings to possible infection from the COVID-19 virus. Subsequently, the Council meeting process was adjusted to conform with the new regulation, as meetings have been held virtually.

As the restrictions and regulations arising from the various Provincial Health Orders are being amended and may eventually be lifted, it would be beneficial for Council to adopt hybrid meeting procedures for transparency and clarity. The intent is to set out guidelines and practices for members of the public to have the option to participate as a delegate by teleconference. This will apply in the event they are uncomfortable attending Council meetings in person. Additionally, this will provide for attendance flexibility for Council members based on their individual circumstances and personal degree of comfort.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The COVID-19 Pandemic has forced municipal governments across Alberta and Canada to reconsider the operation of their Council meetings. The Government of Alberta approved Order in Council 099/2020 making the "Meeting Procedures (COVID-19 Suppression) Regulation" A.R. 50/2020 to allow for strictly virtual and electronic meetings. There is no regulation addressing a hybrid meeting format.

With municipalities across Alberta now easing back into close to normal operations and more Council members wishing to physically attend their meetings, Administration is recommending that the procedure guidelines, as outlined in Attachment 1, be adopted by Council for the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic to allow for continued participation of Council members as well as members of the public for hybrid style meetings.

Strategic Priorities:

Responsible Government

Attachments:

1. Council Meeting Procedure Guidelines - COVID-19

Council Meeting Procedure Guidelines
For the Duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. For Council meetings where the Council Chamber is open to the public and Council Members are physically present, the procedures are set out as follows:
 - a) Council Members have the option of participating in person at the Council Chamber or via electronic means (Microsoft Teams or Teleconference).
 - b) The Council Chamber is open to the public.
 - c) Anyone wishing to participate in a meeting to speak as a Delegation to an agenda item is encouraged to do so by:
 - Registering in advance to speak in person at the Council Chamber; or
 - Registering in advance to speak via teleconference.
 - d) The deadline to register to speak as a Delegation via teleconference is 12 noon, the day of the Council meeting, unless otherwise communicated.
 - e) The deadline to register to speak as a Delegation in person at the Council Chamber is prior to the item on the agenda commencing in accordance with Council's Procedure Bylaw.
 - f) Written comments for agenda items will not be accepted unless the item before Council is a Public Hearing.

2. If a Council meeting is being held in accordance with the Order in Council 099/2020, Meeting Procedures (COVID-19 Suppression) Regulation or in accordance with section 199 of the *Municipal Government Act*, and the meeting is run virtually, the procedures are set out as follows:
 - a) Only a minority of Council members may participate by being physically present at the location the meeting is being facilitated at; the majority of Council members must participate virtually.
 - b) The Council Chamber is closed to the public.
 - c) The Municipality will make available to the public a live stream of the meeting.
 - d) Anyone wishing to participate in the meeting is encouraged to do so by registering to speak as a Delegation via teleconference or by submitting written comments.

- e) A person wishing to speak via teleconference to an item must pre-register by 12 noon on the date the meeting is to be held, unless otherwise communicated.
- f) A person wishing to participate via written comments will be required to provide the office of the Chief Legislative Officer their name for the record, the agenda item they are wishing to respond to along with their written comments.
- g) All written comments received are public and will form part of the public agenda package.
- h) Written comments for an agenda item must be received prior to the start of that agenda item during the meeting. Comments received after the agenda item has been introduced or are not relevant to an agenda item, will not become part of the record of the meeting.