

Department:	<u>Council</u>	Policy No.:	<u>COU-012</u>
Sub-department:	<u>Corporate & Legislative</u>	Created By:	<u>Gwendolyn Kennedy</u>
Approved By:	<u>Council</u>	Amended By:	<u></u>
Approved Date:	<u>13 December 2022</u>	Amendment:	<u></u>
Meeting No.:	<u>1572</u>	Meeting No.:	<u></u>

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework to support the use of hybrid and electronic formats for council and committee meetings and public hearings.

REFERENCES

Council Procedure Bylaw No. 788, 2015

[Guidance for Adapting to the New Electronic Meetings Framework.](#)

DEFINITIONS

Hybrid meeting means a meeting or public hearing where some members of council or a committee may participate electronically, by audioconferencing, by videoconferencing, or by telephone.

Electronic meeting means a meeting or public hearing where all members of Council or a committee may participate electronically, by audioconferencing, videoconferencing, or by telephone.

Corporate Officer means the person appointed to this role by Council, or their delegate.

POLICY

This policy applies to regular and special council meetings, council committee meetings, and public hearings.

Pursuant to Council Procedure Bylaw No. 788, 2015, council and committee meetings may be held electronically if the Mayor, or in the absence of the Mayor, the Acting Mayor, determines it is advisable; or if necessitated by a health, safety, or environmental emergency or urgent Village business.

A public hearing may be held in person or by a hybrid or fully electronic format.

Meeting Attendance

1. Notwithstanding s. 3., a councillor, including the Chair, may attend any meeting by electronic means.
2. Members of council are encouraged to attend meetings in person when possible and to resort to electronic attendance only when in-person attendance is not a reasonable option.

Electronic and Hybrid Meetings Policy

Department:	<u>Council</u>	Policy No.:	<u>COU-012</u>
Sub-department:	<u>Corporate & Legislative</u>	Created By:	<u>Gwendolyn Kennedy</u>
Approved By:	<u>Council</u>	Amended By:	<u></u>
Approved Date:	<u>13 December 2022</u>	Amendment:	<u></u>
Meeting No.:	<u>1572</u>	Meeting No.:	<u></u>

3. If the Chair, or a majority of Council members, considers that a council member’s ability to participate fully in Council business is negatively impacted by the member’s frequent use of electronic means to attend meetings, the Chair or a majority of Council may, at an in camera meeting of Council:
 - a. request that the member explain the need for electronic attendance at meetings, and
 - b. establish a reasonable limit to the number of future meetings in the calendar year that the member may attend by electronic means.
4. The Mayor, or in their absence, the Acting Mayor, will chair the meeting.
5. At least one member of Council and one officer of the Village must be present in person at a *hybrid meeting*.
6. A councillor is encouraged, if possible, to inform the *Corporate Officer* of their intention to participate in the meeting by electronic means at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.
7. The *Corporate Officer* will, on request, provide a councillor with the information necessary to access a meeting electronically.

Public Notice

8. Public notice for a meeting must be provided pursuant to the *Community Charter*.
9. Public notice of a meeting must state if the meeting will be held by electronic means and must provide instructions to the public for attendance.
10. The meeting agenda cover sheet must state if the meeting will be held by electronic means and must include the meeting identification number or other information necessary for a person to join the electronic meeting.

Public and Delegation Attendance

11. Members of the public and delegations may attend an open meeting or public hearing in person or by electronic means.
12. The public must be permitted to attend Council Chambers or another location to hear, or watch and hear, electronic and hybrid meetings and public hearings, and an officer of the Village must be present at the location during the meeting.
13. Members of the public attending an open meeting or public hearing by electronic means may ask a question or provide comments when the Chair provides the opportunity to do so by using the chat function of the video conferencing platform or by signaling their desire to speak by appropriate means, such as the raise hand function. The *Corporate Officer* will unmute the participant’s microphone when it is their turn to speak.

Electronic and Hybrid Meetings Policy

Department:	<u>Council</u>	Policy No.:	<u>COU-012</u>
Sub-department:	<u>Corporate & Legislative</u>	Created By:	<u>Gwendolyn Kennedy</u>
Approved By:	<u>Council</u>	Amended By:	<u></u>
Approved Date:	<u>13 December 2022</u>	Amendment:	<u></u>
Meeting No.:	<u>1572</u>	Meeting No.:	<u></u>

Instructions to the Chair

14. The *Corporate Officer* must provide instructions to the Chair for the hosting of hybrid and electronic meetings.

Technical Difficulties

15. If technical difficulties prevent a councillor from attending a meeting via the usual video conferencing platform, the councillor may attend by telephone or audio conference call.
16. If technical difficulties on the Village's side result in loss of quorum or the electronic meeting platform failing to function, the Chair may call a recess of no more than one hour. If the electronic meeting platform and quorum are not restored during the recess, the Chair will adjourn the meeting and the meeting will be rescheduled.
17. A meeting will not be cancelled or rescheduled due to technical difficulties that affect only the recording of the meeting.
18. A meeting will not be cancelled or rescheduled due to technical difficulties on the side of an individual participant unless quorum is lost.

In Camera (Closed) Meetings

19. Members participating electronically at an in camera (closed) meeting session must ensure that no other person may view the meeting or hear the discussion through the member's electronic device or connection to the meeting.

Conflict of Interest

20. A council member in conflict with respect to an agenda item:

- a. must declare the conflict to the Chair, and
- b. must either be placed in the meeting waiting room, if available, or disconnect from the meeting,

until the *Corporate Officer* advises the member that they may reconnect to the meeting.

Review and Amendment

21. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Committee of the Whole.
22. Amendments to this policy must be approved by Council.

Electronic and Hybrid Meetings Policy

Department:	<u>Council</u>	Policy No.:	<u>COU-012</u>
Sub-department:	<u>Corporate & Legislative</u>	Created By:	<u>Gwendolyn Kennedy</u>
Approved By:	<u>Council</u>	Amended By:	<u></u>
Approved Date:	<u>13 December 2022</u>	Amendment:	<u></u>
Meeting No.:	<u>1572</u>	Meeting No.:	<u></u>

PROCEDURE

1. The Chair shall make a statement at the beginning of each open hybrid or electronic meeting that will include the following information:
 - a. the names of the members participating by electronic means;
 - b. the names of the members participating in person; and
 - c. that the meeting is being recorded, and that a recording of the meeting will be available to the public after the meeting.
2. Council members attending the meeting electronically will:
 - a. advise the Chair when the member disconnects or reconnects to the meeting, so that this may be recorded in the minutes; and
 - b. contact the *Corporate Officer* if experiencing technical difficulties in joining the meeting.
3. The Chair may call a recess of up to ten (10) minutes if a participant is experiencing difficulty joining the meeting by electronic means.
4. When voting, councillors are required to state a nay vote; no statement is required for a vote in favour of the motion.
5. Council members will ensure that their audio feed is muted except when addressing the meeting.
6. Council members will turn off their video and audio feed when leaving the meeting or during a recess of the meeting.
7. When Council moves in camera during a regular, special, or committee meeting the *Corporate Officer* will:
 - a. stop the recording;
 - b. ensure that no unauthorized persons are present in-person or electronically;
 - c. move any invited guests to the waiting room until the business for which their attendance is requested is to be addressed;
 - d. lock the electronic meeting to prevent unauthorized access; and
 - e. once the meeting is secure with no unauthorized attendees present, inform the Chair that they may proceed with the closed session.
8. When Council moves in camera during a regular, special, or committee meeting the Chair will remind participants to ensure that their connection is private and that no one may see their screen or overhear the meeting audio.