

Electronic Council Meetings

Effective Date: September 21, 2021

1. Policy Statement

Pursuant to the Community Charter and the City's Procedure Bylaw, Council and Council committee meetings may be held by electronic means.

2. Purpose

This policy establishes procedures for the administration of electronic and hybrid Council and Council committee meetings.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Council and Council committee meetings.

4. Exclusions

This policy does not apply to staff meetings, City committee meetings, or other non-Council meetings.

5. Definitions

In this policy,

- (1) **"Electronic Meeting"** means a meeting where all members participate electronically.
- (2) **"Electronic Attendee"** means a person who is attending an electronic or hybrid meeting via electronic means.
- (3) **"Hybrid Meeting"** means a meeting where some members are attending in-person and some members are attending electronically.
- (4) **"Member"** means a member of Pitt Meadows City Council.

6. Attendance/Quorum and Roll Call

- (1) A member who joins a Council meeting via electronic means, using the designated platform prescribed by the Corporate Officer, is deemed to be present at the meeting.
- (2) A member will be noted as present at the meeting whether their video camera is turned on or off, although members will make every effort to limit times when their video camera is turned off.
- (3) For the benefit of both Council and the public, the Corporate Officer will announce at the beginning of a hybrid meeting any attendees who have joined the meeting electronically.
- (4) Staff members and other guests will keep their mics muted and video cameras off unless speaking to Council.

7. Remote Location Requirements

- (1) Electronic attendees will ensure their location is conducive to a formal meeting, including:
 - (a) a background free from unnecessary or inappropriate visual or auditory noise; and
 - (b) no movements, images, items, or sounds that may interfere with clarity of speech or that would create distraction for others.
- (2) Electronic attendees' mics will remain muted unless they have been given the floor by the Chair or are raising a point of order or privilege.
- (3) During closed meetings, electronic attendees must ensure confidentiality of the meeting at all times, including ensuring that no other person can hear any aspect of the meeting.
- (4) In the case of unauthorized access to an electronic attendee's closed meeting location, that attendee must immediately disconnect from the meeting or be placed into the waiting room by the meeting chair or meeting administrator. Once the attendee has re-established the security of their location, the attendee may rejoin the meeting or, if placed into the waiting room, notify the meeting administrator of their readiness for readmission.

8. Obtaining the Floor

- (1) Electronic attendees will obtain the floor (i.e. seek permission from the Chair to speak) by using the 'raise hand' function in the electronic platform.
- (2) In a hybrid meeting, the Chair will give the floor to in-person members first, followed by electronic members.
- (3) In an electronic meeting, the Chair will give the floor to members in the order in which they raise their hands, with first time speakers given priority.

9. Voting

- (1) When Council votes on a matter in an electronic meeting, members will only raise their hand when voting against a matter, unless directed otherwise by the Chair.
- (2) If the Chair anticipates a split vote on any particular motion, they may request that all members raise their hand, whether voting in favour or against, to bring clarity to the motion. This will be done slowly, with a pause in between, to ensure the motion is captured accurately.
- (3) If a member is participating electronically and has their video camera turned off when a vote is called, they will be regarded as having refrained from voting and will therefore be deemed to have voted in the affirmative, as per the Community Charter.
- (4) When Council votes on a matter in a hybrid meeting, the Chair will call the vote for in-person members first, and will then go to each electronic attendee to request verbal confirmation of their vote in favour or against the motion.

10. Conflict of Interest

- (1) If a member has a conflict of interest when attending a meeting electronically, they will:
 - (a) advise the Chair and Corporate Officer by raising a point of order as soon as the item is introduced;



- (b) leave the meeting either by disconnecting from the electronic platform or by being placed into the waiting room by the Corporate Officer; and
- (c) wait for the Corporate Officer to invite them back into the meeting once the agenda item has concluded.

11. Related Policies

None.