



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

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REPORT #: CAO-24-001

COMMITTEE DATE: 2025-02-11

DUE IN COUNCIL: 2025-02-25

REPORT TO: COTW-General

SUBJECT: Procedure By-Law Updates and Council / Committee Meeting Streamlining

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 The draft Procedure By-law attached hereto as Appendix I be endorsed, and presented to Council for formal adoption.
- 1.2 The changes to the draft Delegation Policy attached hereto as Appendix II be endorsed and the policy be adopted with the By-law.
- 1.3 Staff develop an electronic meeting protocol for Council approval to better establish and define specific requirements and parameters for participation in electronic meetings.
- 1.4 Staff investigate the use of proxy voting at Council meetings and return to Council in the second quarter of 2025 with recommendations.
- 1.5 Staff implement a tracking system to record and direct Council Members' requests and inquiries at meetings not otherwise encapsulated in the minutes via resolution or By-law.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report apprises Council of changes and updates to Council and Committee meeting processes. It also provides an updated Procedure By-law (Appendix I), which includes changes previously approved by the Council and also incorporates additional proposed revisions, notably:

- Revisions to the start time of meetings
- Streamlining of Public Meetings held under the Planning Act
- Additional clarity added to the Definition Section
- Updated Notice of Motion Procedure
- Lord Mayor Report and Member Announcements process
- Updated Closed Session requirements to align with the Municipal Act
- Added clarity to the Minutes Section to reflect the Municipal Act

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of initiatives to make procedures more efficient and authorize updates to the Procedure By-law and Delegation Policy for the purpose of clarifying meeting procedures, streamlining meetings and improving efficiencies at the mid-point of the 2022-2026 term of Council.

4. BACKGROUND

Section 238(2) of the Municipal Act requires that “every municipality and local board shall pass a procedure by-law for governing the calling, place and proceedings of meetings”. The current Procedure By-law No. 5508-23 was approved by Council in 2023. Regular review of procedure by-laws is a common practice to ensure that the by-law is meeting the Town’s needs.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

The current By-law is comprehensive; however, members of Council, Committees, and residents have noted that revisions are needed. A revised Procedure By-law has been prepared to ensure effective meeting management while improving efficiencies surrounding processes.

A revised Procedure By-law is attached to this report as Appendix I. A summary of the substantive changes along with the red line version of the current Procedure By-law, are attached as Appendix IV. In addition, a Notice of Motion template as noted in the revised Procedure By-law, is attached as Appendix III.

In addition to amending the Procedure By-law, Staff are recommending changes to the current Delegation Policy. A revised Delegation Policy is attached as Appendix II. The red line version outlining the changes is attached as Appendix V. The changes add clarifying language, criteria and additional application protocol for delegations as well as expand the scope of the policy to include the Committees of Council.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

4. Optimize Organizational Excellence

Priority

4.1 Streamline & Modernize

Action

4.1 a) Streamline Processes

7. OPTIONS

7.1 Option 1: Council approves changes to the draft Procedure By-Law and Delegation Policy for adoption and authorizes staff to draft an electronic meeting protocol

(Recommended)

7.2 Option 2: Council does not authorize amendments to the by-law beyond the previously approved changes *(Not Recommended)*

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial impacts to the adoption of the procedure by-law.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental impacts to the adoption of the procedure by-law.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

In accordance with Notice Provision By-law No. 3784-03 and Section 238(4) of the *Municipal Act*, a notice of a proposed change in a procedure by-law must be publicized ten days before the proposed enactment, and the public given an opportunity to speak to the By-law.

11. CONCLUSION

This report provides an overview of the changes proposed to the Procedure By-law and Delegation Policy. Staff respectfully recommends that the Committee approves the development of an electronic meeting protocol and authorizes the presentation of the attached draft By-law to Council for approval.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

- Report CS-23-013 Update of the Procedure By-law for Council and Committees and Introduction of a Delegation Policy

13. APPENDICES

- Appendix I – 2024-XX – Procedure By-law – Final Draft – Clean Copy
- Appendix II – 2024 – Delegation Policy – Final Draft – Clean Copy
- Appendix III – Notice Motion Template
- Appendix IV – 2024 – XX Procedure By-law – Final Draft with Markups and Summary of Substantive Changes
- Appendix V – 2024 – Delegation Policy – Final Draft – With Markups

Respectfully submitted:

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