

# Procedure By-law Review

Overview of Findings and Recommendations

**Shrishma Davé, Acting Municipal Clerk**



MUNICIPALITY OF

**PORT HOPE**

## Introduction

What is a Procedure By-law?

- Governs the Calling, Place and Proceedings of Council.
- Provides for Public Notice of Meetings.
- Determines rules of procedure and conduct.

**It is important that Council makes the most of their time together as this is when authority is exercised.**

- Debi Wilcox, Registered Parliamentarian, Meeting Solutions Group

## Background

- Council directed staff to conduct a robust review of the Municipality's Procedure By-law in December 2022.
- Staff commenced review in January 2023, through the following means:
  - Community Engagement through survey
  - Extensive secondary research of best practices around municipalities in Ontario, including meetings with other Clerks
  - Intensive one-on-one interviews with Council Members
  - Meetings with select staff to gather feedback
- The proposed by-law encompasses all of these elements.

## **Background, continued**

- Community survey received approximately 140 responses. Demographic breakdown and responses to questions related to place, time and location of meetings, question period, Deputy Mayor appointment, etc. are noted in the survey responses document.
- As part of the report, staff are also recommending changes and enhancements to Public Participation, including a new Petition Policy.
- Report details the recommended changes. Highlights of the main changes are noted in the next few slides.

## **Meeting Principles**

- The Majority of Members have the right to decide
- The Minority of Members have the right to be heard
- All Members have the right to information to help make decisions, unless otherwise prevented by law
- All Members have the right to an efficient meeting
- All Members have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy
- All Members have equal rights, privileges and obligations

**When Members actively participate, Council makes good decisions**

## **Date, Time and Location of Meetings**

- Staff recommend that location of the meetings remain the same (Council Chambers) but have included language that allows for flexibility.
- A notable change is with respect to the schedule of meetings:
  - Staff are recommending a split, with Council at one week at 6 pm, and CoW on the second week, at 3 pm.
  - Proposed schedule would be as follows: Week 1: Council; Week 2: CoW; Week 3: Break; Week 4: Council.
  - This means we have 15 Council and CoW meetings on average versus 22 (which is our current number).
  - Have also included placeholders for statutory public meetings, and budget meetings so that staff can work towards these dates.

## **Presentations and Deputations**

- Clear definitions of what constitutes a presentation versus a deputation.
  - Presentation is related to bringing an item to the attention of council related to an event, a non-profit, etc.
    - During Committee of the Whole only.
    - No operational decisions made.
    - Any financial or in-kind requests will be directed to staff.
    - Maximum of three, and 10 minute limit.
  - Deputation is related to only an item that is on the agenda.
    - During Council only.
    - No limit on number of deputations. 5 minute time limit per deputation.
    - Must register in advance
  - This means that there is no more Question Period during Council!

## Order of Business

- To address concerns regarding potentially “shorter” Council meetings, staff are also recommending several changes to the order of business for Council and Committee of the Whole.
  - More opportunities for discussion/deliberation at Council.
  - Presentations and Deputations at Council. CoW focuses on discussion on staff reports, notices of motion, etc.
  - More “pomp” at Council.
  - Opportunity for public participation at Council.
- Removal of redundant items from the Order of Business like “new business”.
- The “Life-cycle of reports”
- No more third reading of By-laws
- Removal of the standing committee structure.
  - Items related to your department will be led by your Portfolio Chair, but **Mayor will be the Chair of CoW as well as Council.**



## **Order of Business**

### **Committee of the Whole**

- Consideration of staff reports
- Consultant and staff presentations on particular matters
- Correspondence
- Discussion of any Notice of Motions
- New Business
- Question Period

### **Council**

- Final disposition of reports
- Public and Community Presentations
- Deputations on a matter on the agenda
- Recognitions and Community Updates
- By-laws
- Adoption of Minutes
- Report from Youth Councillor (if required)

## **Workshops, Portfolio Chairs, and Youth Councillor**

- Workshops as education and training sessions for Council.
  - Will be open to the public unless required by the Act.
  - Will not be livestreamed.
- Language around Town Halls is not included.
  - Option to incorporate Town Halls is possible through language that is in the proposed by-law.
- The Role of Portfolio Chairs is further clarified.
- Youth Councillor appointment and reporting.

## Question Period

- Survey respondents split on its usefulness, so we can not justify its removal.
- To encourage more thoughtful commentary during meetings, we will encourage deputations at Council meetings regarding item on the agenda. No more Question Period.
- QP will still remain in CoW, in its current form. Will continue to encourage Council to answer the questions and not direct them to staff.
- In order to ask a question, the attendee must be in person.

## **Public Participation**

- By-law includes an entire section on Public Participation options. Schedule A provides more information.
- Petition Policy also being recommended as part of this Special Council Meeting.
- Clear process for how correspondence is considered by Council.

## **Deputy Mayor**

- Did research on community feedback regarding Deputy Mayor appointment and role, as per Council request.
- Will continue to keep the rotating appointment in place.

## Other Notable Changes

- Clear guidelines regarding Notice of Motions
- Better Table of Contents, definitions, formatting and language.
- Clarified duties and responsibilities of the Chair, attendees, council members. Enhanced duties of Portfolio Chairs.
- Updated language regarding Notice of Meetings.
- New language regarding the role of Staff Reports.
- Simplified and clarified rules of debate and explanation of motions.
- And much more!

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

