



Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: October 28, 2020

Report Number: SRCF.20.032

Department: Corporate and Financial Services

Division: Office of the Clerk

Subject: **SRCFS.20.032 - Hybrid Council and Committee Meetings Update**

Purpose:

To recommend delaying the implementation of hybrid in-person/electronic Council and Committee Meetings until January 2021 as a result of York Region having been moved back to the Province's Stage 2 Re-opening plan.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That the implementation of hybrid in-person/electronic Council and Committee Meetings be delayed until January 2021.

Contact Person:

Stephen M.A. Huycke, Director, Legislative Services, extension 2529

Ryan Ban, Manager, Legislative Services/Deputy City Clerk, extension 5547

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Sherry Adams, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services

Approved by: Mary-Anne Dempster, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Background:

On September 9, 2020, Council passed the following resolution:

- a) That Council approve keeping municipal buildings closed to the public, with few exceptions as determined by the City Manager, until January 4, 2021 at the earliest;
- b) That Council and Committee Meetings be conducted as hybrid meetings in the Council Chamber beginning with first Council meeting in November 2020.

At the time this resolution was adopted, York Region was in Stage 3 of Ontario's re-opening plan.

On September 23, 2020, Council adopted the recommendations in Staff Report SRCF.20.027 regarding upgrades to the Council Chamber and Committee Room audio-visual equipment. The Staff Report noted that the upgrades required to implement hybrid meetings with the necessary equipment would not be complete until January 2021. The report also noted that for November and December:

- Council and Committee meetings will continue to be conducted using Zoom only (i.e. the technology installed in the Council Chamber will not be used until the upgrade is completed).
- Any Member of Council or staff who participate in a meeting will need to connect to the meeting using their own laptop and headset even if they attended the meeting in-person (i.e. all sound and visuals will be through Zoom only).
- A laptop with web camera and headset will be available for any Delegations and Public Forum attendee who attend in-person.
- The number of residents who are able to attend in-person will be limited to ensure physical distancing during a meeting.

On October 16, 2020, the Government of Ontario announced that York Region was being moved back to a modified Stage 2 of the re-opening plan for at least 28 days, or until at least November 16, 2020. Covid-19 continues to be an evolving situation, and most Government of Ontario announcements over the last few weeks are discouraging most in-door public gatherings in response to what is commonly being referred to as the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of York Region being back in Stage 2, consistent public health advice to avoid in-door public gatherings wherever possible, and the fact that the technology update in the Council Chamber will not be completed until January 2021, staff are recommending that the implementation of hybrid meetings be delayed until January 2021.

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If Council chooses to maintain the implementation of hybrid meetings beginning in November, in addition to the requirements noted above and in Staff Report SRCFS.20.027, staff will be required to implement the following:

- Due to challenges with Zoom and sound feedback with multiple persons in the same room, the Chair and meeting Clerk will operate from a Committee Room with other in-person Members of Council attending in the Council Chambers using their own individual laptop and headset;
- Delegations and Public Forum attendees will be required to choose if they are attending in-person or electronically when registering to speak.
- Limit the number of in-person delegations and Public Forum attendees to ensure physical distancing, and accepting requests for in-person versus electronic delegations on a first come first serve basis
- When maximum capacity is reached, require delegation and Public Forum attendees to be electronic only.
- To ensure meeting efficiency, hear from all in-person delegations and Public Forum attendees first followed by all electronic delegations and Public Forum attendees regardless of when the request to participate was received.
- Delegations and Public Forum attendees will be required to use a laptop and headset provided by the City, which will have to be sanitized before and after each delegate or person speaks (as noted above, Council Chamber technology cannot be used until the upgrades have been completed)
- The total number of residents who are not Delegates or Public Forum attendees able to attend a meeting in-person will be limited based on the number of in-person delegations.
- In keeping with Provincial Regulations, Members of Council, Staff, Delegates, Public Forum Attendees and any other residents will only be permitted to attend a meeting in-person if they:
 - have no symptoms or signs of COVID-19.
 - have not travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.
 - have not been in close contact with a confirmed or probably case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- In keeping with Provincial Regulations, any person attending a meeting in-person will be required to complete a COVID-19 screening form.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

None

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

None

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Conclusion:

As a result of York Region having been moved back to Stage 2 of Ontario's re-opening plan, it is recommended that the implementation of hybrid meetings be delayed until January 2021.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

None

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCFS.20.032 - Hybrid Council and Committee Meetings Update.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Oct 23, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Sherry Adams - Oct 22, 2020 - 3:38 PM

MaryAnne Dempster - Oct 23, 2020 - 11:49 AM