



MEMBER MOTION

Section 5.4.4(b) of Procedure By-law

Meeting: Committee of the Whole Meeting

Meeting Date: May 7, 2025 – Referred to the May 14, 2025 Council Meeting

Subject/Title: Return of Council Members to In-Person Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings with Limited Remote Participation

Submitted by: Councillor Carol Davidson

Whereas the City of Richmond Hill and Council value transparency, professionalism, and effective governance; and

Whereas regular Council and Committee of the Whole meetings provide a critical forum for civic engagement, decision-making, and leadership; and

Whereas the City's annual meeting schedule, posted each December, includes 18 Council meetings and 18 Committee of the Whole meetings — typically one meeting per week — with a two-month summer recess and no scheduled meetings during that period; and

Whereas the advantages of in-person meetings include:

- **Enhanced Engagement and Communication:** Facilitating clearer dialogue, stronger interpersonal connections among Members and with the public, and allowing for protests and in-person demonstrations of support; and
- **Improved Accountability and Professionalism:** Encouraging presence, focus, and commitment to municipal business; and
- **More Focused Discussions:** Reducing distractions and improving the quality of debate and decision-making; and

- Stronger Relationships and Team Building: Building rapport among Council Members, staff, and the public through informal discussions and cooperative interactions before and after meetings; and
- Strengthened Community Connections: Demonstrating commitment to the community and fostering shared responsibility through face-to-face civic responsibility; and

Whereas this policy reinforces the City of Richmond Hill and Council's commitment to accountability, effective governance, Member well-being, and public engagement by upholding an in-person meeting standard while allowing limited flexibility for virtual attendance when necessary; and

Whereas while remote participation can be a valuable supplementary tool, it is not a replacement for the dynamics and advantages of in-person governance.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

1. That the Procedure By-law 125-23, as amended, (the "Procedure By-law") be further amended:
 - (a) To require that Members of Council attend all regularly scheduled Council and Committee of the Whole meetings of the City of Richmond Hill in person; and
 - (b) To permit Members of Council to attend up to three (3) Council meetings and three (3) Committee of the Whole meetings virtually per calendar year; and
 - (c) To permit additional virtual attendance for medical reasons or inclement weather upon notice to the Mayor and Clerk.
2. That the Clerk place a By-law to make necessary amendments Procedure By-law on a future Council agenda with an effective date of September 3, 2025.

Moved by: Councillor Carol Davidson

Seconded by: