Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 15, 2020

REPORTS

Item No. 19 Updated Interim Council and Committees of Council Schedule of Meetings and Delegation of Authority

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law No. 41/2020, be amended to allow for Council and its Committees to continue to meet by communication device until October 31, 2020 (draft by-law attached as Appendix A).

2. That all meetings of City Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee, Community Committee, Appeal Committee, Board of Adjustment and any other Committee of Council or Sub-committee of Council, between September 1, 2020 and October 31, 2020, be cancelled.

3. That the Council and Committees Prorogue Period, previously approved by Council, be changed from July 24, 2020 – September 7, 2020 to July 24, 2020 – August 31, 2020.

4. That the interim Council and Committees of Council schedule of meetings, attached as Appendix B, for the period of September 2020 through the end of October 2020, be approved.

5. That authority over the scheduling of additional meetings of Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee and Community Committees not listed in Attachment A, be delegated to the Mayor or a majority of Council members, similar to Charter provision for the calling of a special meeting of Council, until October 31, 2020.

6. That the City Clerk be delegated authority over scheduling of meetings of committees other than Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee and Community Committees, via communication devices, as is determined to be operationally feasible, until October 31, 2020, and that Council be notified of any such scheduling.

7. That in accordance with the Development Procedures By-law 160/2011, temporary authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Property & Development to approve all ’C’ conditional use and ‘C’ variance development applications until October 31, 2020.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

8. That the relevant Council Policies be amended to provide that, until October 31, 2020, the City Clerk be delegated authority to approve expenditures of Per Capita Grant funds, the Director of Community Services be authorized to approve expenditures of Community Incentive Grants, and the Director of Planning, Property and Development be authorized to approve expenditures of Land Dedication Reserve funding on condition that:

    A. decisions respecting these expenditures must be made only after consultation with the relevant Ward Councillors; and
    B. the applications must meet Council approved criteria.

9. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Browaty,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Updated Interim Council and Committees of Council Schedule of Meetings and Delegation of Authority

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
A. Poitras	M. Lemoine, City Clerk	N/A	M. Ruta, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an effort to continue to serve the citizens of Winnipeg during the COVID-19 situation, City Council adopted By-law 41/2020, a by-law which permits Council and its Committees to meet remotely. Remote meetings allow for Council and its Committees to continue to function while adhering to the health and safety guidelines imposed by the Province of Manitoba.

On May 6, 2020, City Council adopted an interim Council and Committees of Council schedule of meetings, as well as various delegations of authority which are designed to reduce the need for certain items to be considered by committees. The interim schedule, delegations of authority and remote meetings enabled through By-law 41/2020 all expire in August, 2020.

The Province of Manitoba has lifted many of the public health orders implemented over the past three months, however, they still recommend social distancing at public gatherings. Due to this recommendation and the size and technical limitations of the Committee rooms available, Council and its Committees will be restricted to meeting in the Council Chamber.

Although the Council Building at City Hall reopened to the public on June 22, 2020, allowing for delegations to attend meetings in person, social distancing recommendations make it difficult to facilitate meetings as they were in the past, that is with everyone attending in person. Therefore, this report seeks to amend By-law 41/2020, change the Prorogue Period to accommodate one committee meeting per day, approve an interim schedule through October, 2020, as well as to extend various delegations of authority previously approved by Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law No. 41/2020, be amended to allow for Council and its Committees to continue to meet by communication device until October 31, 2020 (draft by-law attached as Appendix A).

2. That all meetings of City Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee, Community Committee, Appeal Committee, Board of Adjustment and any other Committee of Council or Sub-committee of Council, between September 1, 2020 and October 31, 2020, be cancelled.

3. That the Council and Committees Prorogue Period, previously approved by Council, be changed from July 24, 2020 – September 7, 2020 to July 24, 2020 – August 31, 2020.

4. That the interim Council and Committees of Council schedule of meetings, attached as Appendix B, for the period of September 2020 through the end of October 2020, be approved.

5. That authority over the scheduling of additional meetings of Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee and Community Committees not listed in Attachment A, be delegated to the Mayor or a majority of Council members, similar to Charter provision for the calling of a special meeting of Council, until October 31, 2020.

6. That the City Clerk be delegated authority over scheduling of meetings of committees other than Council, Executive Policy Committee, Standing Policy Committee and Community Committees, via communication devices, as is determined to be operationally feasible, until October 31, 2020, and that Council be notified of any such scheduling.

7. That in accordance with the Development Procedures By-law 160/2011, temporary authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Property & Development to approve all 'C' conditional use and 'C' variance development applications until October 31, 2020.

8. That the relevant Council Policies be amended to provide that, until October 31, 2020, the City Clerk be delegated authority to approve expenditures of Per Capita Grant funds, the Director of Community Services be authorized to approve expenditures of Community Incentive Grants, and the Director of Planning, Property and Development be authorized to approve expenditures of Land Dedication Reserve funding on condition that:

   A. decisions respecting these expenditures must be made only after consultation with the relevant Ward Councillors; and
   B. the applications must meet Council approved criteria.

9. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Council approval is required to amend by-laws, adopt schedules of Council and Committee meetings and to delegate the authority for certain matters.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the recommendations contained in this report are approved, the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law 41/2020 will be amended, remote meetings will continue as are occurring currently, as will all other delegations approved on May 6, 2020 and the attached schedule of meetings will replace the previously approved annual schedule of meetings until October 31, 2020.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Remote meetings of Council and its Committees began on April 20, 2020. Through June 30, 2020, the City Clerk's Department has facilitated approximately 45 remote meetings, including public hearings and appeal hearings, all of which have seen remote participation by Members of Council, the Winnipeg Public Service and 100 plus delegations.

The facilitation of remote meetings has evolved since its implementation in April and the Department has made a number of technical and process improvements to better serve Council and the citizens of Winnipeg. Some of these improvements include:

- Addition of monitors in the Council Chamber to view remote participants.
- Addition of workstations, including computers and microphones, to allow for more members to physically attend meetings while ensuring proper social distancing.
- Expanded service to allow delegations to participate via telephone, audio or video.
- Expanded service to allow for all meeting participants, including delegations, to screen share during meetings.
- Involvement of the Emergency Operations Centre to facilitate the reopening of the Council Building to allow for in-person delegations.
- Use of a full-time camera operator to allow for full use of camera system.
- Use of a full-time audio visual technician to monitor video stream and other A/V needs in the Council Chamber while meetings are underway.
- Use of a full-time remote meeting clerk to manage remote meeting participants.

Further to the technical and process improvements made in the Council Chamber, the Department has also modified the North Committee Room to allow for Board of Revision Assessment appeals to continue. These hearing began on June 22, 2020 and will continue throughout the summer. Hearings are facilitated utilizing Zoom in a similar fashion to what's being used for Council and Committee meetings. Due to the size of the Committee Rooms, only 5 participants can be socially distanced around the committee room tables, making these rooms unsuitable for most meetings of Council Committees.

While the Department has been able to make modifications and changes to its current technical infrastructure to accommodate remote meetings, many of these are temporary and were not intended to be permanent solutions. There is also a significant increase in staff involvement for these meetings. For example, a typical Standing Policy Committee held in person would simply be staffed by one Committee Clerk. For a Standing Policy Committee functioning remotely, we require five staff (Committee Clerk, Clerk to operate and manage Zoom, camera operator, audio visual technician to monitor stream and a/v equipment and a microphone operator). As well, there are other costs such as remote meeting software subscription costs.

If remote meetings continue past October, or become a permanent feature, the Department will likely need to seek additional funding for capital improvements to properly retrofit the Council Chamber and Committee rooms to enable this technology as well as review the potential addition of full-time equivalents (FTEs) to facilitate this and other technology based improvements.

The Department will continue to engage Council to determine how remote meeting technology can be best used in the future once Provincial health orders are lifted and social distancing is no longer recommended. For example, should remote meeting procedures remain in all instances or should it be limited to state of emergencies, or limit remote participation perhaps only to delegations.

A new calendar for September and October 2020 is attached for adoption. Similar to April through July schedules, all meetings are scheduled in the Council Chamber to allow for proper social distancing and all meetings are held during the day to ensure that proper support is available for remote meetings. Schedules are required in advance to ensure enough time to advertise, post and schedule public hearings and appeals.

The department will prepare a report to update Council of any changes required should the Province of Manitoba make changes or implement any new public health orders which affect any aspect of this report. Should social distancing continue to be recommended into the fall, the department will bring forward an additional meeting schedule covering November and December 2020 for Council's consideration in September.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** June 26, 2020

Project Name:
Updated Interim Council and Committees of Council Schedule of Meetings and Delegation of Authority

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Electronically signed by T. Yanchishyn

Tanis Yanchishyn
Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

Legal Services (as to legal issues)
Planning, Property and Development Department
Community Services Department

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The recommendations contained in this report align with OurWinnipeg Direction 1: Provide efficient and focused civic administration and governance.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

SUBMITTED BY

Department: City Clerk's
Prepared by: A. Poitras
Date: July 6, 2020
File No: N/A
Attachments:

Appendix A – Draft Amending By-law

Appendix B – Interim Council and Committees of Council Schedule of Meetings