Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – June 16, 2021

REPORTS

Item No. 13 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 amendments to the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law No. 41/2020 be enacted to allow for Council and its Committees to continue to meet by communication device until December 31, 2021 (draft amending by-law attached as Appendix A).

2. That the interim Council and Committees of Council schedule of meetings, attached as Appendix B, for the period of September 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, be approved.

3. 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 December 31, 2021.

4. 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 December 31, 2021, and that Council be notified of any such scheduling.

5. That the City Clerk be directed to report back to the Governance Committee of Council by October 2021, for submission to Council, with a draft schedule of meetings for 2022 and recommendations regarding the continued ability to participate in meetings remotely beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. That in accordance with the Development Procedures By-law No. 104/2020, temporary authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Property & Development to consider and make decisions on all ’C’ conditional use and ‘C’ variance development applications until December 31, 2021.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

7. That the relevant Council Policies be amended to provide that, until December 31, 2021, 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.

8. 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.

Yea:	Bowman, Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	7
Nay:		0

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 pandemic, on April 3, 2020, City Council enacted the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law No. 41/2020 (the "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 February 25, 2021, 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 the By-law enabling remote meetings all expire on August 31, 2021.

Until such time as the Province of Manitoba changes its recommendation regarding social distancing, Council and its Committees will continue to be required to meet in the Council Chamber.

The City Clerk's department has made technical upgrades to the West and North Committee Room to allow for remote meetings should social distancing recommendations change. Both meeting rooms continue to be used by the Board of Revision with very limited in person attendance to facilitate assessment appeals.

This report seeks to amend the By-law to allow for Council and its Committees to continue to meet remotely, approve an interim schedule of meetings and extend various delegations of authority previously approved by Council, until December 31, 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That amendments to the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law No. 41/2020 be enacted to allow for Council and its Committees to continue to meet by communication device until December 31, 2021 (draft amending by-law attached as Appendix A).

2. That the interim Council and Committees of Council schedule of meetings, attached as Appendix B, for the period of September 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, be approved.

3. 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 December 31, 2021.

4. 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 December 31, 2021, and that Council be notified of any such scheduling.

5. That the City Clerk be directed to report back to the Governance Committee of Council by October 2021, for submission to Council, with a draft schedule of meetings for 2022 and recommendations regarding the continued ability to participate in meetings remotely beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. That in accordance with the Development Procedures By-law No. 104/2020, temporary authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Property & Development to consider and make decisions on all 'C' conditional use and 'C' variance development applications until December 31, 2021.

7. That the relevant Council Policies be amended to provide that, until December 31, 2021, 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.

8. 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, various delegations of authority approved on February 25, 2021 will be extended and the attached schedule of meetings will be in effect.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Remote meetings of Council and its Committees began on April 20, 2020. Through May 31, 2021, the City Clerk's Department will have facilitated approximately 230 remote meetings of Council and its Committees, including public hearings and appeal hearings, all of which have seen remote participation by Members of Council, the Winnipeg Public Service and delegations.

Over the past year, the Department has made improvements to the Council Chamber and the North and West Committee Rooms to facilitate remote meetings. With current social distancing requirements implemented by the Province, the Council Chamber is the only meeting room which can be used for meetings of Council and its Committees. The North and West Committee Rooms have been used, and continue to be used, by the Board of Revision to facilitate assessment appeal hearings, with very limited in person attendance. To date, the Board has facilitated approximately 145 remote hearings.

The report recommends that the Department report back to the Governance Committee in October 2021 with a draft schedule of meetings for 2022. It also recommends that the Department bring forward recommendations regarding the continued ability to participate in meetings remotely.

Prior to the implementation of remote meetings, most committee meetings only required one Clerk. Only Council and EPC meetings had more than one clerk in attendance. Facilitating remote meetings requires additional staff to assist with increased audio/visual needs behind the scenes as well as the operational assistance of a second clerk at the meetings to manage remote meeting participants. These positions are currently being funded on a temporary basis through additional funding provided to the department. This funding expires at December 31, 2021. In order to continue to offer remote meeting participation for Council Meetings beyond December 31, 2021 for either Council members and / or delegations, the increase to the Departments current FTE compliment will need to be made permanent.

The ability to participate remotely has also led to a marked increase in requests to appear in delegation. The Department fully supports this initiative that facilitates citizen participation. However, increased delegations have resulted in longer meetings overall and may lead to increased operational costs depending on whether or not some Committees return to evening meetings outside of normal operating hours.

The Department will continue to engage Council to determine how remote meeting technology can be best used in the future and bring forward any recommendations that may improve the overall meeting process for all those involved.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** May 28, 2021

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 F. Dela Cruz
Fernando Dela Cruz
Acting Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

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: June 2, 2021

Attachments:

Appendix A – Draft Amending By-law

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