Minute No. 328
Report – Governance Committee of Council – February 17, 2022

Item No. 1 Implementation of Rules of Decorum for Participation in Meetings by way of Electronic Devices

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council and adopted the following:

1. That the rules of decorum of the Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be amended to require the following:

   A. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device, be required to do so from their Council office or appropriate home office, or other similar suitable location determined to be satisfactory by the Presiding Officer or the Committee Chair, as the case may be;

   B. Should the Presiding Officer or Committee Chair wish to participate in a meeting by means of an electronic communication device from a location other than their Council office or appropriate home office, they must receive the approval of the majority of Council or Committee members present, by way of a vote;

   C. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device be required to leave their video on and active during the entire meeting, so as to enable Council or the Committee to determine whether they are present in the meeting or not, similar to members present in the meeting in person;

   D. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device be required to ensure their background is neutral, similar to participating in the Council Chamber, with no signs, symbols or displays in the background other than that of an office setting, with background blurred if that is not possible;

   E. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device who are experiencing technical difficulties or other circumstances which prevent the use of video, may participate via audio only subject to approval by the Presiding Officer or the Committee Chair, as the case may be;

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COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

F. Should the Presiding Officer or Committee Chair participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device experience technical difficulties or other circumstances which are prevent the use of video, may participate via audio only subject to receiving the approval of the majority of Council or Committee members present, by way of a vote;

2. That the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services be directed to prepare and submit the necessary amending by-law directly to Council.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Chambers,

That the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 16, 2022, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Governance Committee of Council and submitted the matter to Council.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On February 17, 2022, the Governance Committee of Council passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS section 74 (b) of The City of Winnipeg Charter allows Council by by-law to establish rules governing the circumstances under which meetings of council, or of its committees or subcommittees, may be conducted by means of electronic or other communication devices;

AND WHEREAS in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on April 3, 2020, Council adopted the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law 41/2020 to permit meetings of Council and Committees of Council to be conducted by means of communication devices, to allow remote participation in meetings by members of Council, the Public Service and citizens;

AND WHEREAS Section 3(4) of the Meetings of Council by Communication Devices By-law stipulates that the rules of the Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 apply to meetings which are held by means of communication device;

AND WHEREAS the Procedure By-law sets rules of decorum to ensure that meetings of Council and Committees of Council are conducted in a professional and respectful manner to allow members of Council to give their full attention to matters being deliberated;

AND WHEREAS Members of Council participating in meetings by way of an electronic communication device must be known to be present in the meeting for purposes of quorum, to move and second motions, to participate in votes and for the entirety of public hearings;

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

AND WHEREAS the Procedure By-law does not include rules of decorum for members of Council participating in meetings by communication device;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the rules of decorum of the Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be amended to require the following:

    A. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device, be required to do so from their Council office or appropriate home office, or other similar suitable location determined to be satisfactory by the Presiding Officer or the Committee Chair, as the case may be;

    B. Should the Presiding Officer or Committee Chair wish to participate in a meeting by means of an electronic communication device from a location other than their Council office or appropriate home office, they must receive the approval of the majority of Council or Committee members present, by way of a vote;

    C. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device be required to leave their video on and active during the entire meeting, so as to enable Council or the Committee to determine whether they are present in the meeting or not, similar to members present in the meeting in person;

    D. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device be required to ensure their background is neutral, similar to participating in the Council Chamber, with no signs, symbols or displays in the background other than that of an office setting, with background blurred if that is not possible;

    E. Any member of Council participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device who are experiencing technical difficulties or other circumstances which prevent the use of video, may participate via audio only subject to approval by the Presiding Officer or the Committee Chair, as the case may be;

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

F. Should the Presiding Officer or Committee Chair participating in a meeting of Council or Committee of Council by means of an electronic communication device experience technical difficulties or other circumstances which are prevent the use of video, may participate via audio only subject to receiving the approval of the majority of Council or Committee members present, by way of a vote;

2. That the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services be directed to prepare and submit the necessary amending by-law directly to Council.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.