

Helpful Tips When Participating in Meetings Electronically

DO'S

- Join the meeting at least 15mins prior to the start to adequately test sight, sound and connections on both ends.
- For best results, use headphones, or additional speakers to be able to hear meeting participants clearly.
- Be aware of your background and set up your space
- Ensure there is proper lighting
- Minimize distractions (go to a quiet room; silence other electronic devices, etc.)
- Be aware of the options available to you for electronic meetings (Zoom video/telephone, Conference Call), and chose the one that most suits you.
- Know when to turn off your audio and video (if you are not speaking or participating right away remain muted with your camera off until called upon).
- Use the chat feature in the Zoom meetings for further assistance during the meeting.

DON'TS**

- Do not position your camera too low, and ensure your background is appropriate
- Do not be disrespectful or talk over anyone – (no eye rolling, inappropriate hand or face gestures, etc.)
- Do not multitask (this ensures efficiency on both ends)
- Do not share your screen unless you are making a noted presentation to council
- Do not talk over each other – please wait for your turn to speak

**This is not an exhaustive list. Please review the policy and contact the Clerk's department with any questions. clerk@wasagabeach.com or deputyclerk@wasagabeach.com

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WASAGA BEACH
POLICY MANUAL



SECTION NAME: Council	POLICY NUMBER: 1-15
POLICY: Electronic Meeting Participation Policy	REVIEW DATE: May, 2025
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 21, 2020	REVISIONS:
ADOPTED BY BY-LAW: 2020-50	ADMINISTERED BY: Town Clerk

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide opportunity for Council and applicable committees to maintain regular meeting practices during periods where electronic meetings are conducted under the provisions of Council's Procedural By-law, and to set out the methods by which public participation can continue during virtual meetings.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to attendees of electronic meetings, including all existing members of Wasaga Beach Council, committee members as provided for in the Procedural By-law, and members of the public and other individuals who wish to participate in a meeting through remote means, where an item requiring or allowing public participation is listed on the agenda.

This policy sets out additional protocols pertaining to the applicable section of the current Procedural By-law as adopted by Council, and amended from time to time.

RATIONALE AND LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Provincial Government declared a state of emergency on March 17, 2020. As the delivery of municipal services presented challenges, including the ability for Council's to conduct meetings and maintain the directives and recommendations of government and health organizations, legislation was proposed to amend *the Municipal Act* to allow for meetings to be conducted virtually.

On March 26, 2020 Council adopted an amendment to their Procedural By-law to allow for electronic meetings to be conducted during a state of emergency, in accordance with Bill 187, *The Municipal Emergency Act, 2020*, which received royal assent on March 19, 2020.

As technology and procedures were not in place, a solution was quickly sourced and staff began the process of implementing virtual meetings in order to allow important business to continue. A

solution was quickly brought forward as a means to conduct meetings through video conference. Prior to adoption of this policy, two meetings were conducted virtually, allowing for technical challenges to be managed. Now that a process is tested and staff and members of council are trained, the next step in fully implementing virtual meetings, is to bring forward a method for public participation.

POLICY PROVISIONS

General Provisions:

All Council, Coordinated Committee, and Committee of the Whole meetings will be conducted at 9:00 a.m., or at a time that is scheduled by the Mayor or designate per the Procedural By-law. Virtual meetings are conducted using Zoom Videoconferencing.

Support on how to join a meeting through Zoom can be found [here](#) . Questions can be directed to clerk@wasagabeach.com, or by calling 705-429-3844 x2223

All participants are asked to join by computer or laptop with webcam and audio capabilities, and connected to the internet. Those who cannot join through these means may join by telephone.

All participants are reminded that meetings are livestreamed and recorded for public viewing via the Town's website and YouTube. Meetings can be watched live or at your convenience [here](#).

Should proper meeting conduct or protocols not be respected at any point, the individual will be removed from the meeting by the Host and not permitted to rejoin.

All components of this policy should be viewed as guidelines only, and language, procedure and general requirements may be amended as required due to technology used, or to facilitate efficiencies or effectiveness of the meeting.

Definitions

Zoom – the video conferencing software used to conduct virtual meetings.

Host – the member of staff responsible for facilitating the virtual meeting through Zoom.

Registrant – an individual authorized to join a zoom meeting for live participation.

Deputations/Presentations

In addition to the provisions of the Procedural By-law, the following applies to meetings held through virtual means, once the deputation/presentation has been scheduled by the Clerk:

1. All requests for deputations will follow the normal process of approval/registration through the submission of the appropriate form, available on the Town website.
2. All registrants will be forwarded participation details to their scheduled meeting by 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting. This information is strictly confidential and intended for the registrant only, and is not to be forwarded or details of the zoom meeting shared without prior written consent of town staff.

3. All registrants are asked to test their systems prior to the scheduled meeting date, and to join the meeting a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the start time, ensuring that they are identified by setting their display name to their first and last name, in order to be admitted into the meeting.
4. Should the registrant fail to join the meeting in time for their scheduled item, or should connection be lost during the deputation/presentation, a recess of no more than 5 minutes may be held in order to attempt to establish the connection to the meeting. The meeting will continue if the technical challenge cannot be solved within the recess, or at the call of the Chair, and the delegation/presentation re-scheduled if necessary.
5. Registrants will be admitted into the meeting when it is their turn to speak. The Host will make every effort to message the registrant within zoom when their item is approaching to cue them for the live meeting. Registrants are asked leave the meeting when their item has concluded, or as an alternative, the Host will discontinue their attendance.
6. Electronic presentations (ie. Powerpoint) provided by the required deadline, will be run by town staff using the technology available to share the screen to the public. Registrants will not be permitted to share their screens at any point, and will request that the host advance slides as required during the meeting. The Host or any Town Staff shall not be responsible for any technical issues related to a presentation. The provision of presentation hard copies are encouraged.

Question/Comment Period

Members of the public are encouraged to submit comments on a staff report or by-law listed on the agenda by email by 12:00 p.m. on the day preceding the council meeting to clerk@wasagabeach.com, or by calling 705-429-3844 x2223 for distribution to Council prior to the meeting. Comments will not be read out at the meeting.

In addition to the provisions of the Procedural By-law, the following applies to participation in meetings held through virtual means, where Question/Comment Period is included on an agenda:

1. Individual members of the public must register to participate in a Question/Comment Period listed on a posted agenda by sending an email to clerk@wasagabeach.com or by calling/leaving a voice mail message at 705-429-3844 x 2223 by noon on the day preceding the meeting date.
2. Requirements to be included in the email/voice mail in order to register to speak include but are not limited to:
 - a. Email address, first and last name, and street address of the individual wishing to speak during this Question/Comment Period.
 - b. Item number and staff report title or by-law title that the individual wishes to make a comment on or pose a question on, as listed on the agenda for approval.
3. In accordance with the Procedural By-law, Question/Comment Period will be limited to 15 minutes with a 5-minute maximum time limit per registrant. In addition, a limit to a maximum of 5 registrants will be imposed due to added administration and technical requirements of hosting participants virtually.

4. Should more than 5 individuals request to participate in Comment/Question period by the deadline with all the required information, preference will be given on a first come first served basis for each staff report /by-law that an individual requests to speak on. The remaining individuals may submit their comments orally or by email as encouraged above.
5. All those who are registered by the deadline with the required information will be forwarded meeting participation details by 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting. This information is strictly confidential and intended for the registrant only, and is not to be forwarded or details of the zoom meeting shared, without prior written consent of town staff.
6. Registrations are not transferrable to another individual. Only registered individuals will be admitted into the meeting.
7. All registrants are asked to test their systems prior to the scheduled meeting date, and to join the meeting a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the start time, ensuring that they are identified by setting their display name to their first and last name, in order to be admitted into the meeting.
8. Should the registrant fail to join the meeting in time for their scheduled item, or should connection be lost during the comment/question being presented, the meeting may continue to other registrants and/or a recess of no more than 2 minutes may be held in order for the registrant to attempt to join/rejoin the meeting, should time permit. The meeting will continue to follow the agenda if the technical challenge cannot be solved within the time allotted for this item.
9. Registrants will be admitted into the meeting when it is their turn to speak. The Host will make every effort to message the individual within Zoom when their item is approaching to cue them for the live meeting. Individuals must respect the time allotment as described in the Procedural By-law, and are asked leave the meeting when their item has concluded, or as an alternative, the Host will discontinue their attendance.

Planning Act Public Meetings

1. Individual members of the public must register to participate in a Public Meeting by the date and time and with the required information as stated in the Notice of Public Meeting.
2. All those who are registered by the deadline with the required information will be forwarded meeting participation details by 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting. This information is strictly confidential and intended for the registrant only, and is not to be forwarded or details of the zoom meeting shared, without prior written consent of town staff.
3. All registrants are asked to test their systems prior to the scheduled meeting date, and to join the meeting a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the start time, ensuring that they are identified by setting their display name to their first and last name, in order to be admitted into the meeting.
4. Registrants will be admitted into the meeting when it is their turn to speak. The Host will make every effort to message the individual within Zoom when their item is approaching to cue them for the live meeting. Individuals are asked leave the meeting when their item has

concluded, or as an alternative, the host will discontinue their attendance.

5. Should the registrant fail to join the meeting in time for their scheduled item, or should connection be lost during the comment/question being presented, the meeting will continue and the individual may submit their comments by alternative method as described in the Notice of Public Meeting.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION AND REVIEW

This policy shall be administered by the Town Clerk. Minor amendments may be made by the Clerk as necessary to accommodate technology used.

This policy will be reviewed every three (5) years or as required based on revisions to corporate practices or Provincial legislation.

Delegation & Dispute

The Town Clerk of the Corporation is delegated the responsibilities related to the implementation of this policy, who in consultation with the C.A.O. shall make a determination regarding any issue.