



Committees, Commissions and Boards

A Session for Committees

Introduction

- The City of Prince George is assisted by dozens of volunteers serving on various committees, commissions, and boards.

Agenda

1. Overview: Purpose of Council Committees
2. Definitions
3. Role of the Chair
4. Role of the Legislative Support Person
5. Role of the Staff Liaison
6. Work of the Committee
7. Reporting
8. Meeting Guidelines
9. Where to Get More Information
10. Questions and Answers

Overview: Purpose of Council Committees

- In addition to the purpose established by statutes, terms of reference, and bylaws, Council committees:
 - Provide information and well-considered advice to Council and City Staff on issues of concern relevant to the Committee's mandate;
 - Educate and raise awareness of Council and City Staff on issues relevant to the Committee's mandate; and
 - Provide concrete recommendations for consideration by Council and City Staff.

Definitions

- **Legislative Support Person**: Non-voting staff member assigned to provide administrative support in the preparation and circulation of agendas, meeting logistics, and the recording and retention of meeting minutes.
- **Staff Liaison**: Non-voting staff member assigned to assist the committee in an advisory and resource capacity.
- **Chair**: Person authorized to control the proceedings and procedure of a committee meeting.
- **Quorum**: The number of voting committee members required to be present for the committee's business to be validly conducted. Unless otherwise stated in the committee's Terms of Reference, quorum is 50% + 1 of appointed committee members (i.e.: of a committee of nine, five members constitute a quorum).

Role of the Legislative Support Person

1. Not a member of the Committee; does not vote
2. Provides administrative support
 - Circulates agendas
 - Logistical support (arranges meeting space)
 - Recording, preparing and retaining minutes
 - Maintains committee membership contact information

Role of the Staff Liaison

1. Not a member of the committee; does not vote
2. Provides information and advice ensuring matters considered falls within the committee's mandate and aligns with council's strategic priorities
3. Assists in writing reports and recommendations to Council
4. Assists in preparing agendas, minutes and correspondence
5. Although the staff liaison's work for the City may relate to the work of the committee, the committee does not direct the work of the staff liaison.

Role of the Committee Member

- Committee members are expected to attend and actively participate in regular meetings, quickly respond to City staff requests/emails, and engage in constructive dialogue.
- Review all agenda materials in advance of the meeting
- Respectfully engage with committee members, staff, Council and members of the public

Role of the Chair

- The chair plays an essential role in ensuring effective meetings.
- The chair should be:
 - willing to give up personal interests and work with the whole group; and
 - a facilitator and encourage people to participate, help people to listen to each other, and reflects the common threads of the discussion.

Duties of the Chair

- Confirms quorum is present and starts the meeting on time.
- Announces business items in the order they appear on the agenda.
- Ensures all members have an opportunity to speak to an issue.
- Statee the resolution and ensuring a mover and seconder before calling for a vote
- Enforces rules of procedure and decorum
- Expedites committee business
- Declares the meeting adjourned

Annual Reports

Annually, at the first Council meeting in March, each committee will submit to Council their annual report that includes:

- Review of achievements from the previous year
- Review of its terms of reference, mandate or bylaw, including an assessment of the need for the committee to continue its work
- Goals and work plan for the coming year
- Financial and policy implications of the Committee's work

Meeting Attendance

Meeting agendas are circulated by the Legislative Support Person one (1) week in advance of the meeting. When the agenda is circulated members are asked to confirm via email if they will be attending in-person or electronically.

If attending electronically, members are required to advise the Legislative Support Person at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting and must be connected to the meeting before the meeting is called to order at its scheduled start time.

Meeting Guidelines

1. Follow the agenda
2. Rule of the Clock
3. Handling the Business of the Meeting
4. Decision-Making
5. Voting
6. Role of the Chair
7. Rules of Decorum and Debate

Committee Decisions (Resolutions)

1. Decisions of the committee are made by majority vote
2. All members may make or second motions, debate motions and vote
3. If a vote of committee members are equal for and against a motion, the motion is defeated
4. A committee member who abstains from a vote is deemed to have voted in the affirmative
5. If a conflict of interest is declared, the member can be recused from the discussion and vote and must leave the room until the matter is completed
6. Voting is conducted publicly by a show of hands (in person) and the stating of names (electronic). There are very few matters in which the vote will be conducted by ballot

Conflicts of Interest

- A conflict of interest exists where a committee member:
 - Is a director, member or employee of an organization seeking a benefit from the City upon which the committee will make a recommendation;
 - Has a direct or indirect pecuniary (business) interest in the outcome of committee deliberation.
- A conflict of interest does not exist if the
 - The pecuniary (business) interest of the committee member is a financial interest in common with members of the municipality generally; or
 - The pecuniary (business) interest is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonable be regarded as likely to influence the member in relation to the matter.

Where to Get More Information

1. Committees, Commissions, and Boards Procedures Manual
2. Committee Terms of Reference or Governing Bylaw
3. City of Prince George Council Procedures Bylaw No. 8388, 2011
4. City Website (<https://princegeorge.ca/committees>)
5. Legislative Support Person and Staff Liaison
6. City Clerk

Questions?