



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.

Purpose of Council Committees

- Council Committees are established to provide advice and information to Council and staff related to its purpose and mandate.
- The purpose of each Council Committee is identified in its establishing statute or bylaw or its terms of reference; committees may only consider topics that fall within its purpose and mandate.

Staff Roles

- **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 and assists with the writing of reports and ensures the committee works within its mandate.

Committee Roles

- **Committee Chair/Vice-Chair:**

- Voting member of the committee who is appointed by the committee (or Council) to assist in ensuring committee meetings are effective, timely, and fair.
- Facilitates and encourages members to participate, listen to one another, and reflects the common threads of the discussion.
- Ensures action items are determined through a committee resolution and vote.
- Works with the staff liaison in the preparation and delivery of committee reports to Council.

- **Committee Members:**

- Voting members of the committee who are expected to 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

Conduct of Committee Members

- The conduct of members in the performance of their duties and responsibilities with the committee must be:
 - Fair
 - Open
 - Honest
- Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of:
 - Other members of the committee
 - Members of Council
 - City staff
 - Public

Report to Council

- Once the committee's research has concluded, the committee will submit a report to council summarizing that research and providing recommendations for their consideration related to the committee mandate.
- Typically, the committee chair (or designate) writes the report with support from the staff liaison and legislative support person.
- The committee chair (or designate) and staff liaison will be asked to attend the meeting at which the report will be presented and be available to present the committee's findings and respond to questions of Council.

Meeting Attendance

Agendas are circulated by email one (1) week in advance of the meeting. At that time, 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.

Quorum: The number of voting committee members required to be present for the committee's business to be validly conducted is 50% + 1 of appointed committee members (i.e.: of a committee of nine, five members constitute a quorum).

Meeting Guidelines

- **Agendas**

- Agendas items, including any supporting background materials, must be submitted to the Chair and Staff Liaison 9 days before the next committee meeting.
- The agenda sets the discussion topics for each meeting and are only amended for emergent items that cannot wait for the next committee meeting.

- **Meeting Times**

- The meeting should start and end on time.
- Meetings are scheduled for no longer than 1.5 hours which should be sufficient time to complete activities and achieve goals.

Committee Decisions

- All members may make or second motions, debate motions, and vote
- Strive for consensus, however, final decisions are made by a majority vote of members present and eligible to vote
- Motions with votes that are equal for and against a motion, are defeated
- A committee member who abstains (doesn't raise their hand) from a vote is counted in favour of the vote
- If a conflict of interest is declared, the member must leave the room during the discussion and vote
- Voting by a show of hands (in person) and the stating of names (electronic).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

1. Volunteers of City Committees are subject to FIPPA.
2. All emails or documents generated related to committee business is a City record and could be requested for disclosure in the case of a Freedom of Information request.
3. Committee emails between members or with staff should be limited to logistical information. Committee business should only be discussed during a meeting of the committee.
4. Committee members have a responsibility to protect any personal information they may obtain through their work on the committee (i.e.: through public application for awards opportunities or programs administered by the committee). This includes any information about an identifiable individual such as their name, address, email address, phone number, etc.

Conflicts of Interest

- Committee members must declare a conflict of interest if they:
 - are a director, member or employee of an organization seeking a benefit from the City upon which the committee will make a recommendation;
 - have 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 reasonably 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?