

DATE: November 25, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: WALTER BABICZ, ACTING CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: Council Committee Procedural Changes during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community

ATTACHMENTS: Appendix “A” – Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community Terms of Reference

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. APPROVES the COVID-19 Council Committee procedural changes set out in the report dated November 25, 2020, from the Acting City Manager, titled “Council Committee Procedural Changes during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community”, to be in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 provincial state of emergency; and
2. APPROVES an amendment to Section 3.2 of the Terms of Reference for the Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community to extend the Committee’s length of term and membership appointments until June 30, 2021.

PURPOSE:

For Council’s approval to allow committee members to attend meetings remotely for the duration of the COVID -19 provincial state of emergency and to amend section 3.2 (Length of Term) of the Terms of Reference for the Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community.

BACKGROUND:

Council Committees are established by Council as a way of engaging community participation in the delivery of municipal services and providing information and advice to Council and staff on issues of concern to the public and the City as it relates to the mandate of each committee. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, since March 2020, Council Committee meetings have been suspended which has prevented the advancement of work established in each committee’s Council approved work plan.

In accordance with the *City of Prince George Council Procedures Bylaw No. 8388, 2011* and the *Committees, Commissions, and Boards Procedures Manual*, Council Committee meetings may only be established as in-person meetings with citizen appointed members of the committee and staff supports required to physically attend the designated meeting space in order to participate.

As the current Ministerial Order No. M192 authorizes all local governments to conduct meetings by means of electronic or other communication facilities, the following procedural changes are proposed for Council Committee meetings.

Recommended COVID-19 Council Committee Procedural Changes

For the duration of the provincial state of emergency, as it relates to COVID-19, and consistent with interim changes approved by Council at their April 6 and June 29, 2020 meetings in response to the Ministerial Orders, Council is requested to consider approving the procedures, outlined below to permit electronic participation by citizen members in council committee meetings.

- Staff will facilitate all members of Council Committees to attend committee meetings by telephone or other electronic means, if they wish to do so.
- The following individuals will be required to be physically present in the meeting room:
 - committee chairperson, vice chairperson, or chairperson pro tem;
 - committee staff liaison(s);
 - legislative support person; and
 - authorized presenter(s) or guest speaker(s).

Formal Committee meetings will continue to be held in a meeting room at City Hall. Committee meetings are not broadcast on the City's website, therefore, members of the public will continue to be invited to attend meetings in person. The legislative support person will be responsible for administering online video and/or telephone conferences and will oversee the number of electronic and in-person participants to ensure quorum throughout the meeting. Other rules, as provided for in the *City of Prince George Council Procedures Bylaw No. 8388, 2011* and the *Committees, Commissions, and Boards Procedures Manual*, such as notice requirements, agenda publishing and voting rules will continue to apply.

Terms of Reference: Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community

The Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community was formed with the purpose to advise Council and City Staff on priorities and strategies related to key issues and work required to be done to address social issues throughout Prince George with a focus on the downtown core and to inform the development a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Downtown Strategy for the City of Prince George.

Committee members were originally appointed for a six-month term concluding June 30, 2020, but due to COVID-19 restrictions the Committee was not able to complete its work by this date. The revised timeline of Committee activities requires that the length of term for Committee members be extended to June 30, 2021.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Administration recommends that Council approve the proposed procedural changes regarding electronic participation in council committee meetings and authorize an amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Select Committee on a Safe, Clean, and Inclusive Community to extend the term and membership appointments until June 30, 2021.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager

PREPARED BY: Leslie Kellett, Legislative Coordinator

Meeting Date: 2020/12/07