

Meeting Processes and the Simplified Rules of Procedure

City Clerk's Office

November 29, 2019



Simplified Rules of Procedure

- All advisory bodies are established under Chapter 27 - Council Procedures
- However, the Council Procedures contain more rules and procedures than an Advisory Body needs to conduct a meeting
- The Simplified Rules of Procedure maintain the principles of the Council Procedures but omit rules that apply only to City Council and its meetings, or to circumstances that an Advisory Body is unlikely to encounter

Open Meetings

- All meetings are open to the public – advance notice must be given, all consideration and debate of agenda items takes place at the meeting
- Meetings are held in a public location, during regular business hours
- May close a meeting to the public if the subject of debate falls under one of the exceptions to the open meeting rules in the City of Toronto Act
- Examples:
 - personal matters about an identifiable individual, including a city employee or a local board employee
 - acquisition or disposal of land

Rights of All Members

- The majority of members have the right to decide
- The minority of members have the right to be heard
- All members have the right to the same information to help make decisions
- Members have a right to an efficient meeting
- All members have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy
- All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations

Role of the Chair (and Co-Chair)

- Chair the meeting and follow the agenda
- Maintain order and decorum in the meeting
- Make procedural rulings
- Determine the order of questioning or speaking
- Rule on whether motions are in order
- Determine when all Members who wish to speak have spoken, that the Members are ready to vote, and ensure Members understand what they are voting on
- Co-chair is elected at first meeting, or as soon as possible

Responsibilities of All Members

- Attend scheduled meetings
- Carefully consider and make decisions about meeting business
- Vote on motions put to a vote
- Speak respectfully, listen attentively, and not interrupt the proceedings
- Refrain from using any offensive, disrespectful or unparliamentary language about any member, City Officials or other City employee, or City Council
- Speak only on the matter or motions under discussion
- Respect the confidentiality of matters discussed in closed session and not disclose the subject or substance of these discussions
- Obey the Chair's rulings and Council's decisions

Agenda and Items

Items must be within the Committee's Terms of Reference, and submitted to the Secretary by the agenda closing deadline from any of the following:

- A member of the advisory body;
- City Council;
- a Council Committee;
- a local board of the City;
- a City Official.

The agenda is published online 5 business days before the meeting.

The Clerk's Office and Economic Development and Culture staff are able to assist if you wish to put an item on the agenda.

The submission deadline is **20** business days before the meeting.

How do Council Advisory Bodies give advice?

- Make recommendations to City Officials on matters within their jurisdiction for consideration
- Make recommendations to a Council Committee for consideration
- Make recommendations to City Council on a matter on the Council agenda

Note: A recommendation that requires resources or action by City Officials or City Council must first be considered by the appropriate Council Committee and, when necessary, approved by City Council.

How are Decisions Made

The Committee must make a decision on every agenda item.

The Committee may decide to:

- Receive the item for information
- Defer the item to a future meeting
- Provide advice for consideration by City Officials
- Provide a recommendation to a Council Committee or City Council for consideration

Motions

- Decisions are made by voting on a proposal contained in a motion.
- City Clerk's staff will assist members to prepare their motions, as required.
- Motions are typed and displayed and should be read aloud so that all Members hear and understand the proposal.
- The Chair will rule motions which are not within the mandate of the Committee out of order.

Order of Business at a Meeting

- The Chair calls the meeting to order once quorum is present
- Declarations of Interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
- Confirmation of Minutes
- The Committee considers each Item one at a time
- Once the agenda is complete, the Chair adjourns the meeting – no motion required

Order of Discussion and Debate on an Item

- Identify the current Item
- Staff presentation (if there is one)
- Public speakers may address the Committee – Members may ask questions of the public speakers
- Members ask questions of City officials
- Members make remarks and make motions
- Members votes on motions

Voting

- All Members present must vote (unless prevented by law)
- Majority vote is required to pass a motion
- Motion fails if the vote is tied
- Members may vote by a show of hands or may ask to have the vote recorded in the minutes

Other Meeting Matters

- Quorum
 - Quorum is a majority of the total membership
 - Quorum must be present within 30 minutes of the scheduled start time of the meeting
 - If no quorum present, the meeting cannot take place
- Absence
 - Let the Clerk and the Chair know in advance
 - Chair will move to excuse absent members at the end of the meeting
 - If you are absent from 3 meetings in a row, without being excused by motion, you are no longer a member

Minutes & How to Follow Decisions

- Minutes are prepared without note and comment, they include motions, votes, decisions and attendance
- Agendas, Minutes and all meeting information are posted online <http://www.toronto.ca/council>
- Subscribe to e-updates to receive notification about any Council, Committee or Board agendas and minutes <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/e-updates/subscribe.htm>

Contact:

City Clerk's Office

Committee Administrator: Sylwia Przedziecki

Phone: 416-392-8485

Email: frenchac@toronto.ca