

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM5.22	ACTION			Ward: All
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The Need for More Openness at Metrolinx Board of Director Meetings - by Councillor Chris Moise, seconded by Councillor Mike Colle

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Chris Moise, seconded by Councillor Mike Colle, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Minister of Transportation and the Province of Ontario to amend the Metrolinx Act (2006) to require that Metrolinx and the meetings of its Board of Directors operate in a more open, transparent, and fully accountable manner by being required to give notice and hold all meetings in public, with the ability for members of the public to make deputations both in-person and online, except when considering confidential information, operating under similar policies as municipal and regional governments.
2. City Council request the Minister of Transportation and the Province of Ontario to review and amend Section 11 (3) of the Metrolinx Act (2006) to specify what topics at Board of Directors meetings must be accessible to the public and what topics must be handled in closed session.

Summary

At the City of Toronto, and the Toronto Transit Commission, and in all municipalities in Ontario there are several matters that are typically discussed by Councillors “in camera.” It is understood and well accepted by all municipalities in the province that there are items are properly discussed behind closed doors. Private sessions take place to discuss matters such as those that may be about an identifiable individual, property acquisition, labour relations, litigation and potential litigation, advice subject to solicitor-client privilege, and many other topics.

Metrolinx routinely discusses regular matters in secret and behind closed doors – matters that are dealt with out in the open and with full transparency in all major municipalities and transit agencies across the province. Routinely, Metrolinx discusses issues such as traffic management, updates to ongoing projects, COVID-19 impacts, strategic objectives, and fiscal outlooks in private. Notable items that were discussed entirely in private include Metrolinx’s Indigenous Relations Program Implementation, The 2023-24 Metrolinx Business Plan, and the Finch West Light Rail Transit update. These are items that the public should be aware of, and have a say in.

Unlike Toronto City Council, the Toronto Transit Commission, or other Committees of Council, Metrolinx does not allow local community members or groups to appear in person or online at Metrolinx board or committee meetings.

This should not be how a publicly owned and operated corporation runs itself, especially one that is constructing the largest transit expansion program in North America.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM5.22