

Making Electronic Participation Permanent for the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo

Date: June 5, 2023

To: Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo

From: City Clerk

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend amendments to the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo Procedural By-Law to make electronic participation a permanent option for meetings.

At its meeting of March 29, 30 and 31, 2023, City Council adopted Item EX3.7, and in so doing has authorized local boards governed by the City of Toronto Act, 2006, to amend their own rules of procedure to permit electronic participation by board members and the public, and to change the time required to achieve quorum from 15 minutes to 30 minutes, and authorize such boards to continue to meet electronically in accordance with the previously adopted electronic participation rules past the May 9, 2023 deadline until they can meet to consider procedural amendments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Clerk recommends that the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo:

1. Amend the Zoo Board Procedural By-Law 1-2012 to:
 - a. Permit electronic participation in all meetings
 - b. Allow 30 minutes instead of 15 minutes to achieve quorum
2. Adopt the draft bill in Attachment 1 to the report (June 5, 2023) from the City Clerk to implement Recommendation 1.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of March 29, 30 and 31, 2023, City Council adopted Item EX3.7, and in so doing has authorized local boards governed by the City of Toronto Act, 2006, to amend their own rules of procedure to permit electronic participation by board members and the public, and to change the time required to achieve quorum from 15 minutes to 30 minutes, and authorize such boards to continue to meet electronically in accordance with the previously adopted electronic participation rules past the May 9, 2023 deadline until they can meet to consider procedural amendments.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX3.7>

On October 23, 2020, the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo extended the remote electronic participation rules for a period ending one year following the termination of the COVID-19 emergency declaration under section 4 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2020.ZB11.1>

In July 2020 the Provincial government introduced Bill 197, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020. Among other things, it amends the meeting rules of the City of Toronto Act including electronic participation. It makes similar amendments to the Municipal Act so that these rules apply to every Ontario municipality

<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-197>

On July 28 and 29, 2020 City Council extended the electronic participation rules applicable only during a declared emergency contained in Municipal Code Chapter 27, Council Procedures, for a period of one year following the later of the termination of the Provincial emergency or the termination of the municipal emergency.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2020.EX15.21>

On May 25, 2020, the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo amended By-law 1-2009 to provide that during an emergency declared to exist in all or part of the City under section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, members of the Board or its Committees could participate in a meeting by electronic means and be counted for quorum when doing so.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2020.ZB9.1>

The municipal emergency was terminated on May 9, 2022, after the Provincial emergency had been terminated.

COMMENTS

Electronic Participation in Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo Meetings

Since May 2020, the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo has permitted electronic participation at its meetings. This began as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has been a success.

The public has expressed that having the option to participate remotely allows for improved access and mitigates issues around childcare, time off work and other factors that may have previously limited their ability to attend a meeting in person. The hybrid meeting model allows the public to choose how they wish to address the Board, encouraging participation and increasing accessibility.

CONTACT

Gary Clarke, Manager, Tribunals Boards and Council Advisory Bodies, 416-392-8088, gary.clarke@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

John D. Elvidge
City Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft amendment to Zoo Board Procedural By-Law 1-2012