



# Staff Report

## Administration – Town Clerk

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**Report To:** COW-Finance, Admin, Fire, Legal, Community Services  
**Meeting Date:** August 14, 2023  
**Report Number:** FAF.23.100  
**Title:** Follow-up from Public Meeting regarding Proposed Changes to Procedural Bylaw 2022-76  
**Prepared by:** Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.23.100, entitled “Follow-up from Public Meeting regarding Proposed Changes to Procedural Bylaw 2022-76”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to include the new Procedural By-law, as attached to this staff report, on the next Council Agenda, for enactment.

### B. Overview

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This report is provided to Council to summarize the comments received at the April 18, 2023 Council, Public Meeting, regarding proposed revisions to the Procedural By-law.

### C. Background

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At the March 27, 2023 Council Meeting, Council directed staff to proceed to a public meeting in response to staff report [FAF.23.015 Procedural By-law Review](#).

In response to the request for comments regarding changes to the Procedural By-law, one written comment was received from Rick Tipping and is attached as Schedule A to this report. Mr. Tipping expressed concern that public comments would not be read.

At the Public Meeting, Alar Soever and Bill Abbotts provided verbal comments. The comments received noted that there should be a limit on the number of meetings attended virtually by Council, that the roll call at the beginning of the meeting should continue, closed sessions should be recorded where the infrastructure is available, and public comments should be permitted.

At the Public Meeting, Council members provided comments on the proposed revisions to the Procedural By-law, as follows:

- i. does a record exist noting how each member attends a meeting, either in person or virtually and, has virtual attendance improved attendance at meetings.
- ii. concern was raised regarding the suggestion to remove the option of the Clerk reading public comments for members of the public

Following the Public Meeting, additional comments were provided as noted below:

- i. Concern with the length of meetings, and questioned how many year-to-date hours Council has spent in meetings, compared to previous years.
- ii. Council Members should have the opportunity to ask one question, and one followup question for clarification on a staff report.
- iii. Recommendations from the Committee of the Whole meeting should not be pulled for separate discussion at the Council Meeting unless there is additional information to be provided by staff, or a question to be clarified.
- iv. Should Council return to Standing Committees where just three members of Council are present, with the recommendations from the Standing Committee considered at the following Council Meeting
- v. Council should not make fiscal decisions in response to a deputation at the same meeting the deputation is received. If Council wishes to consider financially supporting a matter, a motion should be passed requesting a staff report that provides the full details of the subject matter of the deputation for consideration at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.
- vi. Move deputations to the same date as Public Meetings, at the end of the Council, Public Meeting Agenda.
- vii. Committee Chairs should be appointed for a minimum of two years, from the current one-year appointment.
- viii. Electronic participation is working well with Escribe, with no issues.
- ix. Extend the summer break from July 1 to return the week following the AMO Conference to allow for a Council break and for staff vacation to limit overtime.
- x. In an election year, no regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole or Council Meetings will be scheduled following Election Day
- xi. Limit the number of deputations on Council Agendas to four. No more than two deputations on the same matter will be included on the same Agenda

## **D. Analysis**

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In response to the comments received, staff confirm that the length of meetings and number of meetings has increased this term of Council, from the previous term, with it being noted that Special Committee of the Whole Meetings and Special Meetings of Council have been scheduled to complete matters included on a regularly scheduled Agenda. Staff believe that limiting the number of deputations on an Agenda, not making a fiscal decision in response to a deputation, staying within the three minute time limit for public comments, and ensuring that each member speaks no more than once without leave from the Chair, unless it is to explain their remarks, will reduce the length of the meetings. Staff confirm that achieving quorum for Council and Committee of the Whole meetings has not been an issue, and that currently Council have the opportunity to attend in person or virtually until November 1, 2023. Staff

confirm that to date, electronic attendance has proven to be a benefit to allow Council members to attend meetings, when they may not have had the ability to attend in person.

Staff do not recommend returning to a Standing Committee format. Prior to 2013, The Blue Mountains had a Standing Committee structure with three members of Council sitting on each Standing Committee. The recommendations from those same Standing Committees were then considered by all of Council at the following Council meeting. The movement to a Committee of the Whole structure was then considered based on observations that staff reports/deputation requests considered at Standing Committee meetings were often “pulled” from the Standing Committee Report, as the Council members not sitting on that Standing Committee had not received the same information, ie staff presentations, as those Council members sitting on the Standing Committee. This duplication of efforts was not an efficient use of time, and Council moved to a Committee of the Whole structure, where all members of Council receive all information at the same time.

Staff have received a number of suggestions from some members of Council since the Public Meeting. Staff recommend Council consider the following revisions to the Procedural By-law, with all associated housekeeping updates that will also be required:

- i. Reference to the 2022 regular election (paragraph 3.1) will be removed.
- ii. When the infrastructure is available, closed session meetings shall be recorded (paragraph 4.10).
- iii. As it relates to Electronic Participation, remove the limit on the number of meetings a Council Member may attend virtually (Council, Closed Sessions, Committee of the Whole, Council Public Meetings). Any members attending electronically will be counted in determining quorum.
- iv. Remove the roll call at the beginning of each meeting
- v. Document the attendance of Council Members in the minutes. The Council attendance summary posted to the website, will note when members attended in person, electronically, or if an absence is due to a Council function (example, conference, other municipal business)
- vi. As it relates to Public Comment (paragraph 13.6), allow members of the public to attend meetings virtually to provide their Public Comments. On request, the Clerk will continue to read Public Comments on behalf of the author, staying within the three minute time limit
- vii. Council shall not make fiscal decisions in response to a deputation request, at the same meeting as the deputation was received. Council would be required to request a staff report to be considered at a future Committee of the Whole meeting that would include all information in response to the deputation request.
- viii. In an election year, no regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole or Council Meetings will be scheduled following Election Day until the new Council is sworn in.
- ix. Committee Chairs will be appointed for a minimum of two years from the current one-year appointment.
- x. Schedule the summer break from July 1, with the meetings recommencing the week following the AMO Conference (note, 2023 AMO Conference is scheduled August 20-23)

Attached to this staff report is the current Procedural By-law 2022-76, together with the proposed Procedural By-law, with the changes tracked for ease of reference.

## **E. Strategic Priorities**

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### **1. Communication and Engagement**

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

### **2. Organizational Excellence**

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

### **3. Community**

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

### **4. Quality of Life**

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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None

## **G. Financial Impacts**

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Staff time to author staff reports, public meeting notice and revised Procedural By-law.

## **H. In Consultation With**

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Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

## **I. Public Engagement**

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The topic of this Staff Report has been the subject of a Public Meeting which took place on April 28, 2023. Those who provided comments at the Public Meeting, including anyone who has asked to receive notice regarding this matter, has been provided notice of this Staff Report. Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Corrina Giles, Town Clerk, [townclerk@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:townclerk@thebluemountains.ca).

**J. Attached**

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1. Current Procedural By-law 2022-76
2. Draft Procedural By-law to Repeal and Replace Procedural By-law 2022-76

Respectfully submitted,

Corrina Giles  
Town Clerk

For more information, please contact:  
Corrina Giles, Town Clerk  
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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.23.100 Follow-up from Public Meeting regarding Proposed Changes to Procedural By-law.docx
Attachments:	- 2022-76 Procedural By-law.pdf - Draft Procedural By-law.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 27, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Shawn Everitt - Jul 27, 2023 - 12:35 PM**