



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From: Stefanie Stickwood
Position: Acting Deputy Clerk
Title / Subject: Procedural By-law Amendments
Date of Report: October 16, 2023
Date of Meeting: November 13, 2023
Report No: 2023-GG-027

1.0 Issue / Origin

As the Township of Brock is moving towards the implementation of Hybrid meetings it was imperative to amend the Procedural By-law to reflect those changes, as well as implementing other procedural changes to improve meeting efficiency.

2.0 Background

Staff met with Members of Council during three-on-three meetings to discuss the proposed changes, as well as any requests from Council with respect to the procedural by-law.

3.0 Analysis

There were a number of items that were discussed and were either recommendations of staff or came from requests from Members of Council. Below are the items that were discussed:

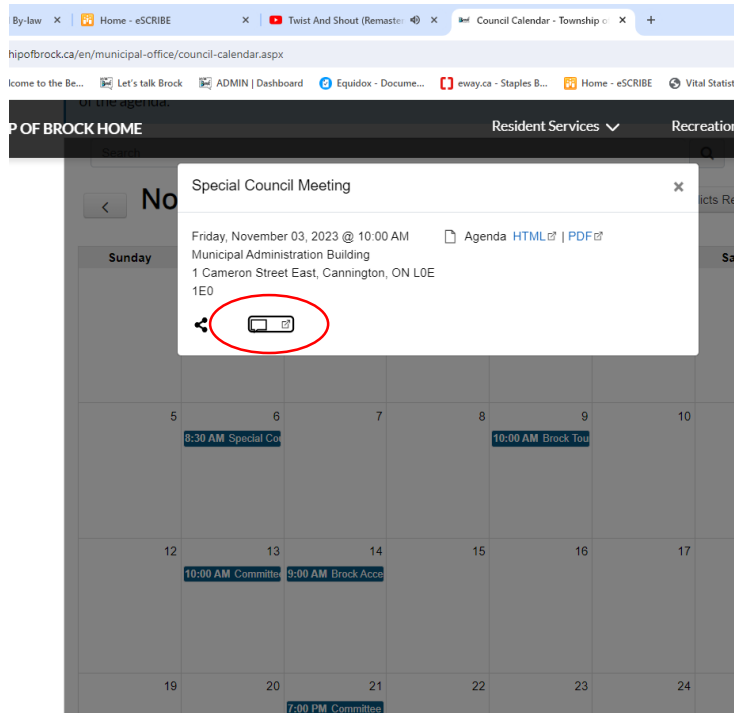
The inclusion of an Open Forum category towards the beginning of the agenda:

The purpose of this was to allow members of the public to bring forward questions or comments of items on the agenda prior to the discussion beginning.

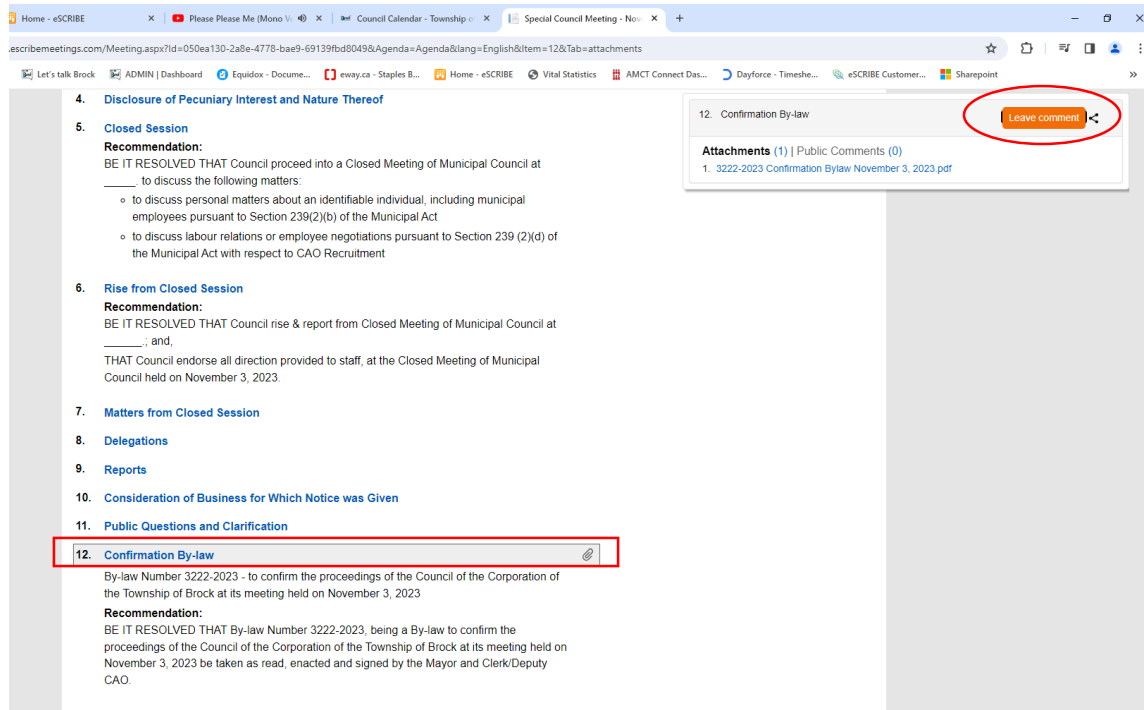
Staff acknowledge the importance of public communications and note that the agenda currently has a category titled Public Comments/Questions that allows the public to bring forward comments or questions related to an item on the agenda. Communication can occur by requesting a link to attend the meeting, if occurring electronically, or in-person (when we move to hybrid). The public can also send an email to the clerks@brock.ca email or through the Council Calendar during the meeting, which will be read by the Clerk or designate at the meeting.

Please see image 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 which shows how a member of the public can leave a comment to a specific item on an upcoming agenda through the Council Calendar on the Township website.

Comments can only be submitted through published agendas on the Council Calendar up until 24 hours after the meeting concluded.



Members of the Public can click on a meeting with a published agenda and a window will pop up with an option to leave a comment.



By selecting an item on the agenda, members of the public can leave a comment to that specific item.

The Public are also provided the opportunity to come forward to speak to an item through the delegation process. This can be done by completing the online form through the Township website.

Staff are suggesting no changes to the agenda template and recommend if Council is aware of a member of the public who is in attendance and wishes to speak to an item prior to its discussion on the agenda can motion to amend the order of the agenda. Staff will also raise better awareness on providing comments/questions to Council through a communications campaign.

Additions to the Agenda and Report Template:

It is recommended that an additional category, **Regional Councillor Update** be incorporated into the Council agenda template and will be placed before Other Business. These updates can be brought before Council in either a verbal or written context.

It has been requested that the inclusion of the sub-heading Asset Management under item 5.0 Financial/Budget Assessment be added to the report template. Staff have no issues with this request and agree to incorporate into the report template.

Breaks:

It is important to provide Members of Council, Staff and those participating in the meeting appropriate breaks at certain intervals over the course of a meeting or where two meetings occur in succession. Staff recommend the guideline of a break every two hours or as the agenda permits.

Staff will strive to manage agenda content appropriately, especially on days that see Committee of the Whole and Council meetings on the same day.

It is suggested that both the Chair along with the Clerk's assistance be cognisant of an appropriate break between meetings.

Motions:

Motions are written based on the recommendations contained within a report. All other resolutions are organized by the Clerk's office with the intent to facilitate Council discussion and potential decisions.

Proper parliamentary practice is the act of putting a motion forward to commence the discussion of Council. Reading of the resolution is not procedurally required.

As resolutions are published on a public agenda, staff are recommending that the mover state, "*I move the resolution as published on the agenda*" unless the mover is making an amendment to the agenda and therefore should read out the amended motion. Motions will be shared on the screen to inform the public of what is being discussed.

As good practice, Council members are respectfully requested to provide advance notice to the Clerk's department as it pertains to any amended motions.

Notice of Motion:

As a means of formalizing the process the form has been attached to the procedural bylaw as Appendix 2.

Consent Agendas:

Consent Agendas are used for the purpose of adopting all items or any group of items on an agenda through a single motion.

Currently what has been included within the procedural bylaw with respect to consent agendas will be left as is and no changes are recommended on current practice with the exception of dealing with Correspondence items individually received from organizations and residents.

9.6.10 Provision for Consent Agenda

More than one agenda item containing recommendations on a Meeting agenda may be adopted in a single motion. A Member may request that any specific agenda item be subject to individual consideration. The provision for consent agenda and adopting recommendations in a single motion may be utilized at any point in a meeting agenda.

Escribe/Vote Manager:

With Council moving into Hybrid Meetings, staff would like to express the importance of utilizing the escribe app. This will assist in providing with the most current agendas (should any last-minute addendums occur).

Vote Manager:

The Township is currently paying \$1450/year for this feature, but it is not being utilized. With the move to Hybrid, it is highly recommended that Council takes advantage of this technological feature and move to utilizing the escribe app including Vote Manager. This will have less room for error as the pan zoom tilt (PZT) cameras in Chambers may be challenging to capture votes for members in attendance, as well as those participating remotely.

Below are screen images of vote manager.

Participant Vote Screen - Web Browser

Vote

6.2. Training Report, 2020-0009

Moved By Councillor Smith


Seconded By Councillor Milanovic

THAT this report be received for information.

YES NO ABSTAIN

SUBMIT VOTE

Participant Vote Screen- Pro App

 Vote Now!



6.2 Training Report, 2020-0009

Moved By Councillor Smith

Seconded By Councillor Milanovic

THAT this report be received for information.


Yes

No

Abstain

SUBMIT

Voting in Progress Public Display: (Will show the resolution for each item being voted on)

 ADOPTION OF AGENDA
THAT The Agenda be adopted as presented.
Vote In Progress

Voting Result: Public Display (Several Options for configuration)



Green	Voted Yes
Red	Voted No
Yellow	Abstained (if enabled)
Grey	Absent

Hybrid Meetings:

An electronic participation policy has been created as Appendix 1. Some highlights from the policy are as follows:

- As long as quorum is maintained throughout the meeting, no minimum requirement for Council members attending in person is required.
- The document is intended to provide clarity on electronic meeting procedures only and is a companion document to the Procedural By-law. The Procedural By-law shall take precedence.
- Motions will be displayed on the screen to provide accessibility to all participating virtually and in attendance in-person.
- If the Livestream or Electronic Meeting Platform encounters a service disruption during a Hybrid Meeting, then the meeting will recess until service is restored. If service is unable to be restored within thirty (30) minutes, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to a later date/time. Note: Livestreaming is not a legislative requirement and in a situation the livestream fails Clerks staff will push put communications through social media on how to participate in the hybrid meeting.
- Members experiencing connectivity issues during a meeting are encouraged to contact clerks@brock.ca for technical support. However, active Hybrid meetings will not be delayed or recessed for individual members experiencing technical issues during a meeting which are unrelated to a service disruption affecting all participants so long as quorum is maintained.

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

Township of Brock Procedural Bylaw 3017-2022

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

There are no financial implications to this report.

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

With the Hybrid meeting solution, virtual attendees will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by not having to travel.

7.0 Communications

A communication campaign will be developed in junction with the Communication Coordinator to educate the public on how they can actively participate in meetings including how to view the livestream, and how to submit comments and questions pertaining to agenda items.

8.0 Conclusion

Following the adoption of this report and Procedural By-Law amendment, staff will schedule Council training sessions for the eScribe app and Voting module. In this regard Staff are proposing to formally launch the Hybrid meetings with the start of the 2024 Council schedule.

9.0 Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report 2023-GG-027, Procedural By-Law Amendments be received;
and
THAT Council approve the implementation of Vote Manager through eScribe; and
THAT Council direct Staff to present the procedural by-law amendment at the Council meeting on November 27, 2023, including the approval of Appendix 1, Electronic Participation Policy