

# **Town of Grimsby**

## **Simplified Meeting Procedures**

### **Part 1 – Definitions**

1.1 For the purposes of these procedures, the following terms shall apply:

- (a) “Task Force” – Any body that Council establishes by resolution for the purpose of dealing with a special project or issue with a clear mandate; start and finish date; which includes as its Members persons nominated by other bodies, citizens or Staff.
- (b) “Advisory Committee” – Any body that Council establishes by by-law or resolution to provide advice or recommendations on broader matters as set out in the terms of reference provided by Council, which includes as Members persons nominated by other bodies, citizens or Staff. Advisory Committees are continuing bodies that generally exist beyond a single term of Council.
- (c) “Chair” – The person presiding at a Meeting.
- (d) “Committee” – All advisory bodies established by Council, including a Task Force, Advisory Committee, or Legislated Advisory Committee and any sub-committee.
- (e) “Committee Coordinator” – The person who records the minutes of Meetings, distributes the agenda and material, keeps the records of the Committee and may provide procedural advice. This person may be the Clerk or delegate, or a committee delegate.
- (f) “Clerk” – The Clerk of the Town of Grimsby or delegate.
- (g) “Deputation” – An oral submission made to a Committee at a Meeting of the Committee.
- (h) “Director” – The senior City department head with operational responsibilities for the matters within the terms of reference of the Committees.
- (i) “Legislated Advisory Committees” – Advisory Committees that carry out in whole or in part a mandate defined by provincial statute, but do not make binding decisions. The establishment of a Legislated Advisory Committee may be either mandatory or discretionary.
- (j) “Local Board” – A municipal service board, transportation commission, board of health, planning board, or any other board, commission, committee, body or local authority established or exercising any power under any Act with respect to the

affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities, excluding a school board, police service board, public library board and a conservation authority.

- (k) “Meeting” – Any regular, special or other meeting of the Committee.
- (l) “Member” – A member of a Committee who has been appointed to the Committee by Council.
- (m) “Motion” – A Member’s formal proposal for consideration that may then be voted on and approved or lost. Motions usually begin with “That with respect to I move that.....”
- (n) “Quorum” – The minimum number of Members required to be present at a Meeting in order to conduct business.
- (o) “Report” – A Staff report that makes recommendations to a Committee, including a report to be received for information only.
- (p) “Staff” – Employees of the Town of Grimsby and may include any independent contractor, consultant or advisor retained by the Town.
- (q) “Sub-Committee” – A committee or working group established by a Committee with a clear mandate that has a start and finish date and reports directly to the Committee that established it.
- (r) “Terms of Reference” – Terms of reference adopted by Council for the Committees.

## **Part 2 – Interpretation**

- 2.1 All Committees are advisory only and do not exercise any power or authority. They do not have decision-making powers.
- 2.2 It is the Terms of Reference, and composition of a body that determines if it is a Committee. The name of the Committee is not determinative and need not contain either the term “advisory” or “committee”.
- 2.3 In any case of conflict between the Simplified Rules of Procedure and a Committee’s Terms of Reference as adopted by Council, the Terms of Reference shall govern.
- 2.4 In the case of conflict between the Simplified Rules of Procedure or a Committee’s Terms of Reference as adopted by Council and any provincial statute or regulation that applies to the Committee, the statute or regulation govern.
- 2.5 The Simplified Rules of Procedure are to be interpreted in a manner that recognizes the right of the majority to decide, the minority to be heard, the public

to have an opportunity to participate, and all participants being treated with courtesy and respect.

### **Part 3 – Eligibility to Serve on Committee**

- 3.1 Every Member on a Committee must be either a member of Council, Staff, a person nominated by another body specified in the Terms of Reference, or a citizen representative eligible to be elected as a member of the Council in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act* unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise. If a Member becomes ineligible during the term of their appointment, they are automatically deemed to have resigned as a Member.
- 3.2 All appointments to Committees are made at the pleasure of Council and appointments may be terminated by Council at any time.

### **Part 4 – Ex Officio Members**

- 4.1 The Mayor is ex-officio of all Advisory Committees but does not vote and is not counted towards quorum, unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.
- 4.2 The Mayor and members of Council shall not be appointed as Chair or Vice Chair of any Advisory Committee; unless the Committee requests that they do so.

### **Part 5 – Remuneration**

- 5.1 Committee Members shall serve without remuneration.

### **Part 6 – Chair and Committee Coordinator**

- 6.1 If the Committee's Terms of Reference do not provide for the appointment of a Chair, Vice Chair or Committee Coordinator; the Committee will elect a Chair, Vice Chair and a Committee Coordinator.
- 6.2 The Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will preside at all the Meetings of the Committee, follow the agenda, decide on whether Motions are in order, rule on all procedural matters and maintain decorum.
- 6.3 The Chair will ensure Motions and amendments are clearly expressed and, if there is no motion under consideration, summarize the discussion for the purpose of the minutes.

- 6.4 The Vice-Chair will perform the duties of the Chair in their absence or if the position should become vacant.
- 6.5 If a procedural matter is not provided for in this document or the Terms of Reference, the matter shall be decided by the Chair. The Chair's decision is final.
- 6.6 The Committee Coordinator will give notice of any special meeting of the Committee with an agenda of the matters to be considered so that the notice and agenda will reach the Members and Staff assigned to the Committee as soon as reasonably possible in advance of the Meeting.
- 6.7 The Committee Coordinator will prepare and distribute minutes of every Meeting of the Committee by attaching them to the agenda for the next regular Meeting of the Committee, or as soon as possible.
- 6.8 The Committee Coordinator shall provide the Clerk with copies of all agendas when they are distributed to the Members, and copies of all the minutes within or as soon after five days when they are confirmed by the Committee.

## **Part 7 – Agendas, Minutes, Records**

- 7.1 An agenda and minutes are required for every Meeting of a Committee.
- 7.2 A committee as part of its agenda will consider only matters set out in its Terms of Reference.
- 7.3 Items to be included on the agenda for a Meeting must be submitted to the Committee Coordinator in sufficient time before the Meeting to ensure public notification and Committee notification is achieved. The Committee Coordinator may establish a schedule of agenda deadline dates for Committee reference.
- 7.4 Members may submit items that are set out in the Committee's Terms of Reference for inclusion on the agenda, keeping in mind an agenda deadline date.
- 7.5 The Chair, in consultation with the Committee Coordinator and Staff assigned to the Committee, set the agenda, based on matters submitted prior to the agenda deadline.
- 7.6 The Chair will accommodate Member requests for inclusion of agenda items, whenever possible, but the Chair makes the final decision about which items are included on the agenda.
- 7.7 The Committee Coordinator will make the agenda available to the public after delivery of the agenda to the Members and the Clerk.

- 7.8 Any communication or agenda item that is received prior to the Meeting but too late to be included on the agenda may be added to the agenda by the Chair, if it pertains to a matter listed on the agenda or is considered by the Chair to be urgent. Otherwise it will be included on the agenda of the next subsequent Meeting.
- 7.9 In accordance with the principles of adequate notice, transparency, and openness, new substantive items should not be introduced on the Agenda during a Meeting as new business.
- 7.10 Should there be confidential material to be distributed, it will be forwarded through the Committee Coordinator and/or Staff assigned to the Committee under separate cover, and may also be provided to select Town officials who may have an interest. This material shall be provided to the Clerk as part of the official record of the Committee.
- 7.11 The Minutes shall be prepared using a prescribed format, which will be provided by the Clerk. The Minutes shall record:
- all in attendance,
  - where the Meeting was held,
  - when the meeting started and adjourned,
  - who chaired the Meeting,
  - whether any participants left or arrived while the meeting was in progress and if so, what time this occurred,
  - the names of delegates that appeared before the Committee,
  - a detailed description of the substantive and procedural matters discussed, including any specific documents that were considered,
  - any Motions, including the Member who moved the Motion, and
  - all votes taken, and all actions approved or directions given.
- 7.12 The minutes of each Meeting will be submitted to the Committee for confirmation at the next meeting, or as soon as possible.
- 7.13 The Committee Coordinator shall keep all papers and documents pertaining to the business of the Committee, and all books, documents and files kept by the Committee shall be under the custody and control of the Clerk.

## **Part 8 – Quorum**

- 8.1 A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the Members.
- 8.2 A vacant position will not be counted to calculate quorum.
- 8.3 If quorum is not reached 15 minutes after the intended start time or if quorum is lost during a meeting for a period of 15 minutes or the Member leaving the

Meeting clearly indicates their intention to not return to the Meeting, any Member present may ask that the roll be called and a record of the names of the Members present be done. The Meeting will then stand adjourned until the next scheduled meeting or at the call of the Chair.

- 8.4 If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair is present after 15 minutes after the start time of the Meeting, and quorum is present, one of the Members of the Committee may by unanimous consent assume the Chair and preside at the Meeting until the arrival of the Chair or Vice-Chair.
- 8.5 In the event that there is no quorum or quorum is lost during the Meeting, Members present may agree to proceed informally with the agenda and any proposals made at the informal gathering will be reported to the Committee Coordinator to the next scheduled Meeting for consideration. No Motions or votes can be taken at an informal gathering.

## **Part 9 – Meetings**

- 9.1 A Committee may meet at the call of the Chair or may decide to adopt a schedule of regular meetings, unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.
- 9.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair, with 24 hours' notice, when exceptional or urgent circumstances require the Committee to meet. The notice of a special meeting shall include an agenda and indicate the exceptional or urgent reason that requires the meeting.
- 9.3 If a written request is made by a majority of the Members to call a special meeting, it is the duty of the Chair to summon a special meeting on 24 hours' notice.
- 9.4 A regular meeting that is rescheduled is not a special meeting.
- 9.5 Members of the Committee are expected to try to attend every Meeting at the time established, be prepared for the Meeting by reading the Agenda in advance, and to be prepared to discuss agenda items.
- 9.6 Meetings of the Committee shall not conflict with regular meetings of Council or their Standing Committees, and must have regard to Staff resources and availability.
- 9.7 Meetings of the Committee shall be held at Town Hall or a designated, accessible location provided for in the Terms of Reference or by resolution of the Committee.
- 9.8 Notice of Committee Meetings shall be provided to the public by posting notice of the time and place of the meeting on the Town's website, along with a copy of

the agenda. The Committee Coordinator shall comply with the direction of the Clerk regarding procedures of public notice.

## **Part 10 – Open Meeting**

- 10.1 All regular meetings of Committee shall be open, and no person shall be excluded from a meeting except for improper conduct.
- 10.2 Open meetings require Members to discuss and debate the matters on the agenda at the Meeting held for that purpose.
- 10.3 Members shall not discuss or deal with a matter that materially advances the business of the Committee outside of Meetings, including through electronic communication.

## **Part 11 – Meetings Closed to the Public**

- 11.1 A Committee may meet in private only if the subject to be discussed relates to:
  - a) the security of the property of the municipality or local board;
  - b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;
  - c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board;
  - d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
  - e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board;
  - f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
  - g) a matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act;
  - h) information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them;
  - i) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization;
  - j) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the municipality or local board and has monetary value; or

- k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board.
- 11.2 The Chair or Committee Coordinator shall consult with the Clerk or the Town's legal counsel prior to meeting in private.
- 11.3 A Motion is required before meeting in private and the Motion must identify the general subject matter to be discussed and the reason for meeting in private.
- 11.4 Voting is not permitted in private. Any Motions must be moved and voted on in public.
- 11.5 Where a matter has been discussed in private, and where the matter remains confidential, Members must not disclose the content of the matter discussed or the substance of the discussions.

## **Part 12 – Rules of Debate**

- 12.1 The Chair decides the order in which Members speak or ask questions and makes sure that every Member indicating a desire to speak has an opportunity to speak to an item on the agenda.
- 12.2 When a proposal is on the floor, the Chair may re-state the proposal/report's intent to ensure everyone understands the intent. The proposal may then be discussed and the discussion may include possible changes to the wording. When the discussion is concluded the Chair may frame the results as a Motion that will be voted upon.
- 12.3 A Committee may act by unanimous consent and a formal vote will not be necessary. The Chair may specify a proposed action and, if there is no objection, announce that the action is approved. If a Member disagrees with the proposed action, a formal Motion to approve the action and a vote is required.
- 12.4 A Motion requires a mover but does not need to be seconded.
- 12.5 A Motion relating to a matter not within the Terms of Reference of a Committee is not in order.
- 12.6 A Motion to approve the minutes of a previous Meeting is an opportunity for the Members to correct any errors or omissions in the minutes. It is not in order on a Motion to approve the minutes to re-open the discussion on any matter recorded in the minutes.
- 12.7 A Motion to reconsider any matter previously decided by the Committee may only be moved by a member that voted on the prevailing side, and requires a two-



thirds majority of the Members present to pass. No matter may be reconsidered more than once during the term of the Committee that decided it.

- 12.8 A Committee cannot submit a recommendation to Council on an issue that has already been decided by Council during the previous 12 months of the current term of Council unless Council has re-opened the matter and authorized the Committee to do so.
- 12.9 A Committee may, at its discretion, hear depositions from the public that pertain to a matter that is within the Committee's mandate, and may set limits for speaking time. The Committee may limit the maximum number of depositions on matters not on the agenda. The Chair may end a public deputation if there is disorder or a failure to observe decorum.
- 12.10 Members of the Committee may ask questions of the speakers but should not enter into debate. The Chair shall instruct the speakers to address their comments or questions through the Chair.
- 12.11 A Committee may invite specific persons, experts, organizations, or groups to make a public presentation to it on any matter within its Terms of Reference.
- 12.12 Members of Council that are not Members of the Committee may attend any open Committee Meeting and may speak once on any matter that is on the agenda, prior to the Committee discussion.

### **Part 13- Voting**

- 13.1 Every Member that is present at a meeting when the vote is taken, including the Chair must vote, unless a Conflict of Interest is declared.
- 13.2 If a Member that has not declared a conflict of interest abstains from voting, it will be counted as a NO vote.
- 13.3 No Member shall be permitted to cast any vote by proxy.
- 13.4 A tie vote means that the Motion is defeated.
- 13.5 All votes will take place by a show of hands and recorded votes are not permitted.
- 13.6 Upon the request of any Member and when the Chair is satisfied that a matter under consideration contains distinct proposals, the vote upon each proposal may be taken separately.

### **Part 14 – Conflict of Interest**

- 14.1 Citizen Members should disclose any personal financial interest in a matter under consideration at a meeting, and should avoid taking part in any discussion of the matter or voting.
- 14.2 Except as provided in 14.1, Members that attend Committee meetings in their capacity as a representative of an organization are not required to declare a conflict of interest that is personal, nor is a pecuniary interest of the organization a conflict of interest.
- 14.3 Members of Council and Local Boards that participate on Committees shall comply with the same rules that are applicable to members of Council or Local Boards pursuant to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 14.4 The Committee Coordinator shall record all declarations of a financial interest in the minutes and whether or not the Member participated in the discussions and voted on the matter.

## **Part 15 – Code of Conduct**

- 15.1 The Town's Code of Conduct for elected officials, applies to the conduct of all Members of Committees, with necessary modifications.

## **Part 16 – Vacancies, Reappointments**

- 16.1 If a member misses three consecutive Meetings or more than 50% of Meetings in a calendar year, without cause acceptable to the Committee, the following process shall be followed:
  - a) The Committee can request that the Committee Coordinator report the absences to the Clerk;
  - b) The Clerk shall provide written notice to the Member of his/her absenteeism and advise the Member that they may resign from the Committee or submit, in writing for the next Meeting, the reasons for their absence;
  - c) The Committee may, by resolution:
    - I. Waive the attendance requirements, if reasonable or compassionate circumstances exist, and the Member will remain on the Committee;
    - II. Request that Council declare the seat vacant, if a response is not provided or if the response is not reasonable or compassionate to the satisfaction of the Committee. This motion will be referred directly to Council and the position will be considered vacant upon a decision of Council.

- 16.2 Upon written confirmation from a Member that they will no longer be serving on the Committee, the position will immediately be considered vacant and the Clerk will commence the recruitment process to replace the Member.
- 16.3 In the case of a vacancy, for any cause, the Member appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the balance of the term of the Member whose place is vacant.
- 16.4 Members shall be eligible for reappointment, unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.

### **Part 17 – Role of Staff**

- 17.1 Staff are not Members and do not vote, unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.
- 17.2 Committees do not direct the work of Staff. Any advice or recommendations of the Committee that require implementation, reports or other action by staff, that is outside the scope of work reasonably contemplated by the Committee's Terms of Reference, shall be requested in a Motion to be considered by Council unless otherwise delegated.

### **Part 18 – Action to be taken**

- 18.1 Where a Committee approves an action to be taken that is within the authority of the Committee, the person authorized to take the action may do so immediately and does not need to wait for the minutes of the Committee to be approved.

### **Part 19 – Sub-Committees**

- 19.1 Sub-committees shall be established by Motion and the Motion shall include the specific purpose of the Sub-committee, the Members of the Sub-committee, and a proposed time-frame within which it will make a final report to the Committee. When a Sub-committee has made its final report it is automatically disbanded.
- 19.2 Members of Sub-committees shall be Members of the Committee that established it, unless the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.