



## POLICY

Council and Committee Meeting Proceedings Policy	
<b>Policy Number:</b> 110-002	<b>Supersedes Policy Number:</b> N/A
<b>Effective Date:</b> 2025-09-23	<b>Approved by Council Motion:</b> 16-09-2025

### 1.0 Purpose

For any organization to function smoothly, it is critical that all members clearly understand its governing rules and operating principles. The Council and Committee Meeting Proceedings Policy outlines the operating principles and procedures for Council and Committees of Council as listed in Section 5.1.1 of Committees of Council Policy #110-001 for the Town of Wolfville.

The objectives of the Policy are to clearly communicate the procedures to be used for Council and Committees of Council in the execution of all business for the Town of Wolfville relating to meeting protocol, election of officers, conflict of interest, public input, public presentations, rules of order and debate, motions and voting, choices in governance by bylaw, policy or resolution, and provide a guide to procedural motions.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all meetings of Town of Wolfville Council and Committees of Council unless stated otherwise.

### 3.0 References

- 3.1 Municipal Government Act
- 3.2 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
- 3.3 Committees of Council Policy #110-001
- 3.4 Code of Conduct for Elected Municipal Officials Policy #110-011
- 3.5 Council & Committees of Council Virtual Meeting Policy #110-014
- 3.6 Deputy Mayor Policy #110-003

### 4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 **Abstain** is when a member who is lawfully entitled to vote chooses not to exercise their right to vote on a matter.
- 4.2 **Agenda** is the specific items of business to be dealt with at a meeting. Items are placed on the agenda in the sequence defined by the order of business.



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- 4.3 **CAO** is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Wolfville (or designate in an Acting capacity).
- 4.4 **Chair** is the person officially appointed or elected to lead a Council or Committee of Council.
- 4.5 **Clerk** is the Town Clerk of the Town of Wolfville or designate.
- 4.6 **Committee** is any Committee of Council.
- 4.7 **Conflict of interest** is any matter that may have a direct or indirect conflict with the matter under consideration as defined by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
- 4.8 **Council** is the Council of the Town of Wolfville.
- 4.9 **In Camera** means closed proceedings to the public under strict and limited conditions as authorized by legislation.
- 4.10 **Improper conduct** is behaviour that obstructs in any way the deliberations and/or proper action of Committee or Council.
- 4.11 **Majority** is a number greater than half of the total.
- 4.12 **Motion** is a proposal or suggestion that becomes a **Resolution** or decision only after it's passed.
- 4.13 **Personnel** are the employees of the Town of Wolfville (excluding elected officials).
- 4.14 **Point of order** is a matter that a member considers to be a departure from, or contravention of, the rules, procedures and/or generally accepted practices of Council.
- 4.15 **Point of personal privilege** is a matter that a member believes questions their integrity and/or the integrity of the Council.
- 4.16 **Policy Matter** is a matter covered by a policy and includes anything Council may need to make decisions about on a regular or repeated basis, and where Council wants to give direction or set rules for how they or staff should make those decisions.
- 4.17 **Presiding Officer** is the person presiding over a meeting and may also be referred to as "chair".
- 4.18 **Public Input** is a period of time during public meetings when members of the public can offer their comments and feedback.
- 4.19 **Quorum** is the number of members required to make decisions at the meeting. A majority (more than half the total number) of the total number of voting members at Council or Committee meetings equals a quorum.
- 4.20 **Regular meeting** is a scheduled meeting held in accordance with the approved calendar/schedule of meetings.
- 4.21 **Resolution** is a **motion** that has been passed, and it is now an official decision.

## 5.0 Policy

### 5.1 Application

- 5.1.1. The rules of procedure contained in this policy shall be observed in all proceedings of Council and Committees of Council and shall be the rules for the



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order and dispatch of business in Council and Committees of Council.

- 5.1.2. All points of order or procedure for which rules have not been provided for in this policy shall be decided by the presiding officer/chair in accordance with the rules of parliamentary law as contained in “Robert's Rules of Order”, 12th edition, providing it is feasible, otherwise the CAO will make a recommendation on how to proceed.

### 5.2 Presiding Officer

- 5.2.1 The mayor shall be the presiding officer/chair at all council meetings, unless unavailable, in which case the deputy mayor shall be the chair/presiding officer.
- 5.2.2 The deputy mayor shall be the presiding officer/chair at the Committee of the Whole meeting unless unavailable, in which case the mayor shall be the chair/presiding officer.
- 5.2.3 If the mayor and deputy mayor are absent for a Committee of the Whole or regular Council meeting, the remaining members present can elect a presiding officer/chair from among themselves for that meeting, providing there is quorum. The process to follow is:
- i. Clerk confirms quorum is achieved and the meeting can legally take place.
  - ii. CAO or Clerk calls the meeting to order for the purpose of electing a presiding officer/chair.
  - iii. Council members present vote to choose a member to act as presiding officer/chair for that meeting only. This vote is decided by simple majority.
  - iv. Once elected, the temporary presiding officer/chair takes over and the meeting continues as usual.
- 5.2.4 As per Committees of Council Policy #110-001 (sections 5.2.6 and 5.2.7), the presiding officer/chair and vice chair of all committees of council except for Committee of the Whole as noted in 5.2.3 above will be served by a seated member of council.
- 5.2.5 It shall be the duty of the presiding officer/chair to:
- i. Open the meeting by taking the chair, calling the members to order and announcing the business before the assembly and the order in which it is to be acted upon.
  - ii. Ensure the meeting agenda is followed and that the meeting progresses with due efficiency.
  - iii. Protect all rights of those attending the meeting.



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- iv. Receive and put to a vote all motions presented and announce the result.
- v. Decline to put to vote motions which infringe upon the rules of order or are beyond the jurisdiction of the council or the mandate of the committee.
- vi. Enforce the rules of order.
- vii. Preserve order and decide points of order.
- viii. Restrain the members within the rules of order when engaged in debate.
- ix. Determine, at their discretion, whether a motion is in order and whether a motion deals with a policy matter and therefore requires the mandatory 7 days' notice to councillors from council as per the MGA.
- x. Exclude from debate or expel from any meeting any person who is guilty of improper conduct at the meeting.
- xi. If the chair/presiding officer desires to leave the chair for the purpose of taking part in the debate or otherwise, call on the vice chair, or in the absence of the vice chair, on another member, to fill their place until resuming the chair.
- xii. Ensure that decisions of committees/council are in conformity with the laws governing the activities of committees/council.
- xiii. Adjourn the meeting when business is concluded.
- xiv. Adjourn the meeting without question in case of grave disorder arising in the meeting place.

### 5.3 Council / Committees of Council Meetings

#### First Meeting of a New Council

- 5.3.1 The first meeting of the new council shall be held on the first available date no earlier than 10 days and not later than 4 weeks after ordinary polling day for the purpose of administering the Oath of Office.
- 5.3.2 The clerk shall be responsible for the content and format of the agenda as well as all arrangements for the proceedings.
- 5.3.3 The clerk shall serve as presiding officer for the first meeting until the mayor has taken the Oath of Office, at which time the mayor will assume chair of the meeting.

#### Regular Council Meetings

- 5.3.4 Unless otherwise decided by council, all meetings of council and standing committees shall be held in Council Chambers, located at Town Hall, 359 Main Street, Wolfville, NS.



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- 5.3.5 From time to time, the clerk and mayor may decide to host a meeting of committee or council through video/web conferencing services as described in the Council & Committees of Council Virtual Meeting Policy #110-014.
- 5.3.6 Regular meetings of council will be held on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm, local time, except for January and September, where they will be held on the fourth Tuesday of the month to allow for holidays and summer vacations. No meetings are held in the month of August. Regular meetings of committees will be held according to the schedule set annually by council and at times determined by council.
- 5.3.7 Except as provided in this policy and the MGA, all meetings shall be open to the public.
- 5.3.8 In addition to regular meetings, the council may hold other meetings as may be necessary or expedient for the dispatch of business at such time and place as the council determines if each **council member** is notified at least **three days** in advance and the clerk gives at least **two days public** notice of the meeting.
- 5.3.9 As per the provisions of section 19 of the MGA the clerk shall call a meeting of the council when required to do so by the mayor or upon presentation of a written request by a majority of the councillors. When calling a meeting in this manner, the clerk shall give at least **two days public** notice of the meeting.
- 5.3.10 Any decision to cancel a meeting that was called by a petition of a majority of councillors shall only be upheld by a two-thirds (2/3) majority decision of councillors.
- 5.3.11 The mayor and CAO jointly may decide to cancel or convert to virtual a council/committee meeting due to inclement weather or other circumstances, which in their judgement appears appropriate.
- 5.3.12 As per Section 19(7)(a)(b) of the MGA, a meeting of council is still legal and valid even if proper notice is not given or the meeting takes place in a different location than planned or stated in this policy or in a notice of the meeting.

### Emergency Meetings

- 5.3.13 As per Section 19 (3) of the MGA, where the mayor determines that there is an emergency, the council may meet without notice or with such notice as is



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possible in the circumstances.

### **In-Camera Meetings**

5.3.14 Committee and council meetings, or portions thereof, may be held in-camera only in accordance with Section 22 of the MGA, as may be amended from time to time, as follows:

- i. acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property;
- ii. setting a minimum price to be accepted by the municipality at a tax sale;
- iii. personnel matters;
- iv. labour relations;
- v. alleged breaches of the municipality's code of conduct;
- vi. code of conduct complaints proceeding to the investigation stage;
- vii. contract negotiations;
- viii. litigation or potential litigation;
- ix. legal advice eligible for solicitor-client privilege;
- x. public security.

Or, in the case of a planning advisory committee, joint planning advisory committee or area planning advisory committee or a commission where the committee or commission, by a majority vote, moves a meeting in private to discuss matters related to:

- i. personnel, labour relations, contract negotiations, litigation, or potential litigation or legal advice eligible for solicitor client privilege; or
- ii. a potential application for a development permit,
- iii. land use by-law amendment,
- iv. development agreement
- v. amendment to a development agreement before the applicant has applied to the municipality or development officer e.g. where a developer is looking for feedback regarding a development agreement or development agreement amendment prior to investing in the cost of drawings for an application.

5.3.15 Prior to moving to an in camera session, a motion stating the fact that the committee/council is convening into in camera session will be passed and will include the general nature of the matter to be considered.

5.3.16 As per Section 22(4) of the MGA, where council meets in camera, a record must be made that is open to the public setting out only:

- i. that council met in camera and the type of matter that was discussed as set out in the section.



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- ii. where the matter discussed relates to alleged breaches of the municipality's code of conduct,
  - a. the section of the code of conduct the complaint was lodged under, and
  - b. the recommendations of any report made under subsection 23(C)(2); and
  - c. the date of the meeting

5.3.17 A vote may occur during an in-camera session, provided the reason for being in camera is sanctioned under Section 2.8.1 of the MGA, and the vote is for a procedural matter or for giving direction to staff or solicitors of the municipality.

5.3.18 Recommendations to council from an in-camera session will be dealt with in open session immediately following dissolution of the in-camera session.

5.3.19 Staff reports presented during an in-camera session and minutes of an in-camera session will be maintained by the clerk and considered confidential unless council determines that the information, or part thereof, shall be made available to the public.

### **Call to Order / Quorum**

5.3.20 As soon as there is quorum after the time set for the start of the meeting, the presiding officer/chair shall call the members to order.

5.3.21 If quorum for a meeting is not met within five (5) minutes of the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting, the presiding officer/chair shall indicate that no quorum is present, and the meeting shall stand adjourned until the next meeting called in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

5.3.22 In the case where quorum is present and the presiding officer/chair has not arrived within five (5) minutes after the time appointed, the vice-chair as set out in section 5.2 of this policy shall assume the chair and call the meeting to order. The vice-chair shall preside until the arrival of the regular presiding officer/chair.

5.3.23 If both chair and vice-chair are not at the meeting, the meeting can only go ahead if:

- i. There are enough members present to meet quorum, and
- ii. For committee meetings, at least two council members are present—one



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to act as chair and one to act as vice-chair.

If less than two council members are present at a committee meeting, the meeting must be postponed, even if there's quorum as per Committees of Council Policy #110-001 (Sections 5.2.6 and 5.2.7) and Section 5.2.4 of this policy.

5.3.24 Members are required to inform the clerk (or designate) at their earliest opportunity that they will be absent from any meeting. The clerk (or designate) will then inform the presiding officer/chair.

5.3.25 If too many members must step away from a meeting because of a conflict of interest related to a specific topic or subject, and there aren't enough members left to make quorum, the meeting can still go ahead as long as at least two members remain to discuss that topic. Members who have declared a conflict and leave the table do not count toward quorum.

### Loss of Quorum

- 5.3.26 In accordance with the Municipal Government Act (NS), Section 19, if quorum is lost at any point during a council or committee meeting:
- i. The meeting shall be immediately paused or adjourned.
  - ii. No motions may be made, debated, or voted on while quorum is not present.
  - iii. Members may continue informal discussion; however, no decisions or direction can be given, and no part of the discussion is considered official.
  - iv. If quorum is later re-established, the meeting may resume from the point at which it was paused.
  - v. The loss and re-establishment of quorum, if applicable, shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

### Land Acknowledgement

5.3.27 At the start of any regular Council meeting, including Committee of the Whole, and committee meetings, a member will read a territorial land acknowledgement.

### Governance by Bylaws, Policy and Resolutions

#### Bylaws

5.3.28 Council will make and follow bylaws for matters listed under Section 172(1) of





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the Municipal Government Act, or where provincial legislation specifically requires a bylaw.

Bylaws are used to:

- i. Establish enforceable rules or standards,
- ii. Regulate public conduct or land use,
- iii. Create binding obligations that may involve penalties.

Bylaws must comply with all applicable provincial and federal laws.

### Policies

5.3.29 Council will develop and follow policies for all matters that meet the definition of a policy matter.

Policy matters include:

- i. Issues that require consistent decision-making,
- ii. Operational direction to staff,
- iii. Principles or processes Council wants applied in similar situations in the future.

If there is any doubt, it is better to govern by policy than by resolution.

### Resolutions

5.3.30 Council may use resolutions only when a matter does not require a bylaw or policy, and when:

- i. the decision is specific to a one-time situation.
- ii. it does not involve setting principles or processes that would guide future council or staff decisions.

Resolutions are used for one-time approvals such as awarding a specific contract, approving a budget line item, or sending correspondence.

### Livestreaming of Council and Committee Meetings

5.3.31 Council and Committee of the Whole meetings held in council chambers shall be livestreamed when possible.

5.3.32 Other committee meetings held in council chambers may be livestreamed.

5.3.33 If there are technical problems and the livestream doesn't work, or if



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livestreaming isn't possible, the meeting will still go ahead as planned.

5.3.34 Virtual meetings and virtual meeting attendance is governed by the Town's Council & Committees of Council Virtual Meeting Policy #110-014.

### **Committee Meetings**

5.3.35 The rules governing the procedures of council shall be observed in committee and board meetings, except that:

- i. A motion to close debate is out of order; meaning members can keep discussing without a formal vote to end the debate early.
- ii. Motions do not have to be submitted in writing before the meeting, unless requested by the presiding officer/chair for the purposes of ensuring clarity, accuracy, to support members in their preparation for the meeting, assist in notetaking and manage time more efficiently.

5.3.36 The establishment, membership, and administration of committees is provided for in the Town's Committees of Council Policy #110-001.

5.3.37 Where a conflict between these policies is identified, this policy will preside, and the conflict will immediately be referred to the Policy Review Task Force for assessment and a recommendation to resolve the conflict.

## **5.4 Regular & Special Council & Committee of the Whole Meetings**

### **Order of Business/Agenda Preparation**

5.4.1 The clerk, under the direction of the CAO in consultation with the mayor, will prepare the agenda for all regular and special meetings of council and Committee of the Whole meetings.

5.4.2 Members of council may submit a request for agenda item using the provided form at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which they'd like the request discussed by the Committee.

5.4.3 The clerk, or designate, will strive to have all council agendas, including for committee of the whole meetings and public hearings circulated to members, and posted for the public, one week in advance of the scheduled meeting.

5.4.4 The following shall be the order of proceedings for a regular committee of the

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whole meeting:

- i. Call to Order
- ii. Land Acknowledgement
- iii. Approval of the Agenda
- iv. Approval of Minutes
- v. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
- vi. Presentations
- vii. Public Input
- viii. Staff Reports for Discussion
- ix. CAO Report
- x. Committee Reports (Internal)
- xi. Committee Reports (External)
- xii. Adjournment to In-Camera Session Under the Municipal Government Act Section 22(2)
- xiii. Regular Meeting Reconvened
- xiv. Motions from In-Camera Session
- xv. Meeting Adjournment

5.4.5 The following shall be the order of proceedings of a regular meeting of council:

- i. Call to Order
- ii. Land Acknowledgement
- iii. Approval of the Agenda
- iv. Approval of Minutes
- v. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
- vi. Community Events, Occasions & Acknowledgements
- vii. Public Input
- viii. Motions & Recommendations from Committees
- ix. New Business
- x. Adjournment to In-Camera Session Under the Municipal Government Act Section 22(2)
- xi. Regular Meeting Reconvened
- xii. Motions from In-Camera Session
- xiii. Meeting Adjournment

### **Adding Items to the Agenda After It Has Been Circulated**

5.4.6 Staff may add urgent or important topics to the agenda after it has been circulated, with the approval of the CAO and chair/presiding officer, and without requiring a motion. Council members are not permitted to add new items to the agenda after it has been circulated. All agenda items must be submitted in advance through the normal process. This ensures the agenda



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remains organized and allows adequate time for all members to prepare for meetings.

### **Changing the Order of Business**

5.4.7 Council and Committee of the Whole meetings usually follow the order of business as listed on the agenda. If a member wants to change the order of items to discuss something earlier or later, they must make a motion to do so. If the motion is approved by the majority, the meeting will follow the new order. Changes to the order of business are allowed to address urgent or time-sensitive matters and may be treated as a suspension of the rules. If council approves the change, it is understood that the rules have been suspended for that purpose.

5.4.8 The agenda for special meetings of council, including Special Committee of the Whole meetings, shall only include the business for which the meeting was called. No additions to the agenda will be permitted.

5.4.9 Agenda preparation and Order of Business for advisory committees of council is governed by the Town's Committees of Council Policy #110-001.

### **5.5 Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

5.5.1 It is the responsibility of each member to identify and disclose any pecuniary (financial) interest as defined by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, in any item or matter before the council or committee.

5.5.2 Members must also be aware of and disclose non-financial conflicts of interest such as:

- i. when a member's personal relationships, involvement in other organizations, or private interests could affect, or appear to affect, their ability to make a fair and unbiased decision e.g. a close personal relationships, friendship or rivalry.
- ii. Volunteering or serving on a board or committee related to the matter.
- iii. Prior involvement in the issue outside of Council or committee.

5.5.3 Declaring a Conflict of Interest During a Meeting

If a member has a financial interest, either for themselves or through someone else, in a matter being discussed at a Council or committee meeting, and they are present at that meeting, they must:



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- i. declare before the discussion starts and explain in general terms what the interest is.
- ii. leave their seat and sit in the public gallery (if the meeting is open to the public).
- iii. not take part in the discussion or vote on the matter; and
- iv. not try to influence the decision in any way, before, during, or after the meeting.

If the meeting is closed to the public, the member must leave the room completely for the part of the meeting that deals with the matter.

- 5.5.4 If the member wasn't at the meeting where the matter was discussed and therefore wasn't able to declare their interest at that time, they must declare at the next meeting that had they been present they would have declared a conflict. This promotes accountability and ensures records are accurate about the conflict even if they didn't take part in the vote.

### 5.6 Presentations

- 5.6.1 External party presentations are made only at Committee of the Whole meetings.
- 5.6.2 Presentations from the community and requests for funding shall be allotted fifteen (15) minutes total, *(10 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions)*.
- 5.6.3 Presentations made at the request of council or by staff may be allotted more time on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.6.4 From time to time, staff may request stakeholders address council or committee to supplement a staff report or presentation. In those instances, the invited individual shall only speak on the subject in debate and shall not speak on any other subject.
- 5.6.5 Committee of the Whole shall refer presentations to staff for a report if they involve an expenditure of funds, grant applications, or other action on the part of the Town.
- 5.6.6 Presenters shall:
- i. Submit requests to present to the clerk with at least 14 days' notice of the meeting the request is for. **Requests received within the 14-day notice does not guarantee a slot on that agenda; the CAO / clerk will**



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### **make the final decision.**

- ii. include a summary of the organization wishing to present,
- iii. include information on purpose of presentation,
- iv. include information on any asks being made of the Town.
- v. Include any accommodation requests.
- vi. Provide to the clerk any slides or material to be handed out to council no later one full week prior to the meeting.
- vii. Advise the clerk if wishing to present virtually giving no less than 24 hours notice as per Council & Committees of Council Virtual Meeting Policy 110-014.

Presenters shall not:

- i. Speak disrespectfully of any person;
- ii. Use offensive language;
- iii. Speak on any subject other than the subject for which they have received approval;
- iv. Disobey any decision of the chair/presiding officer; and
- v. Enter into cross debate with other delegations, staff, or committee/council members.

5.6.7 If there is any question of the appropriateness of a presentation request, the CAO / clerk, in collaboration with the mayor will review the request and determine whether to approve or not. The mayor may seek further collaboration advice from council members.

5.6.8 The presiding officer/chair may curtail any delegation, any questions of a delegation and/or debate during a delegation for disorder or any other breach of this policy and, if rules the delegation is concluded, the presenter shall withdraw. The decision of the presiding officer/chair shall not be subject to challenge.

## **5.7 Public Input at Council and Committee Meetings**

5.7.1 People attending a council or committee meeting must remain quiet and respectful. No one may speak to council unless council gives them permission.

5.7.2 People are not allowed to hold up signs, clap, talk, or do anything else that could interrupt or disturb the meeting.

5.7.3 Anyone in possession of a phone or electronic device in council chambers must turn it off or set it to silent so it doesn't make any noise.



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- 5.7.4 Members of the public may speak to council for up to five (5) minutes during the Public Input part of a council or committee meeting.
- 5.7.5 When speaking to council, the public must be respectful to everyone including council, staff, and other attendees. If someone is disrespectful, the chair will stop them from speaking.
- 5.7.6 Anyone who uses rude, offensive, or insulting language will be asked to leave the meeting.
- 5.7.7 Council members will listen but will not respond or enter into debate or discussion at that time.
- 5.7.8 If clarification or a response is required, staff and/or council may follow up after the meeting either in person or via email or by telephone.
- 5.7.9 Responses to questions made at Committee of the Whole and regular council meetings will also be included in a report on the next COW agenda so they may be shared with the public as a whole.
- 5.7.10 Members of the public are welcome to interact with council and Town staff in several ways such as:
  - i. By letter or email or phone. Contact details are available on the Town website.
  - ii. To staff by phone, email, in person, or through the Town's website.
  - iii. Participate in scheduled public hearings, surveys, or community consultations on planning, budgets, or policy changes.
  - iv. The Town may share information and gather feedback through social media or online engagement platforms such as Wolfville Blooms.
  - v. Members of the public can request a meeting with a councillor or senior staff member to discuss a concern or idea.
- 5.7.11 Input related to personnel, current or potential litigation issues, or planning issues for which a public hearing has already occurred will not be responded to.
- 5.7.12 A synopsis of all comments from public input is recorded in the minutes.
- 5.7.13 Members of the public shall not approach council members when seated at the horseshoe.
- 5.7.14 Any papers or documentation presented at the public input session for council



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will be given to the clerk or designate for dispersal.

- 5.7.15 Any person who is not a member of council, that does not abide by the rules stated in this section may be asked to leave the meeting by the presiding officer/chair.

### 5.8 Minutes

- 5.8.1 The minutes of all council and committee meetings are recorded. The clerk or designate shall ensure minutes of all committee and council meetings are available to councillors. All approved minutes shall be marked as such, once approved at a subsequent meeting.
- 5.8.2 The minutes of all council and committee meetings shall include every motion, resolution, and decision made, whether the meeting is public or held in an in-camera session.
- 5.8.3 Minutes of meetings shall record:
- i. The type, place, date and time of meeting.
  - ii. The name of the presiding officer/chair and all members of the committee and council as well as the names of council members attending who are not part of the committee.
  - iii. The time of late arrival or early departure of members of committee/council.
  - iv. The name of staff in attendance.
  - v. The substantive decisions made, and actions taken.
  - vi. The results of votes on all motions.
  - vii. The time the meeting went in and out of an in-camera session.
- 5.8.4 The minutes of each council meeting shall be presented to council at the next regular meeting for approval.
- 5.8.5 The minutes of each Committee of the Whole meeting shall be presented to council at the next regular Committee of the Whole meeting for approval.
- 5.8.6 The minutes of a committee meeting shall be presented to that committee at the next regular committee meeting for approval.
- 5.8.7 Council and committees shall be asked if there are corrections to the minutes. Corrections must be factual and reflect what took place at the meeting.
- 5.8.8 If no corrections are identified, the presiding officer/chair shall declare the





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minutes approved as presented. If corrections are identified, the presiding officer/chair shall request a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

5.8.9 Approved minutes from council and committees are posted on the town website.

5.8.10 Staff reports shall be posted to the municipal website as part of the agenda package.

### 5.9 Rules of Order and Debate

#### Conduct of Members

5.9.1 Members of Council shall :

- i. Act in accordance with their Oath of Office and The Town's Code of Conduct for Elected Municipal Officials Policy#110-011.
- ii. Discharge with integrity all responsibilities to council, the Town of Wolfville, and the public, in keeping with approved corporate policies.
- iii. Treat the presiding officer/chair, other members of council, staff, and the delegates from the public with courtesy, respect and good faith.
- iv. Try to be acknowledged by the presiding officer/chair before leaving the council chambers.
- v. Remain in their seat without disturbance while a vote is being taken and until the result is declared.
- vi. Not criticize any decision of the council except for the purpose of introducing a motion for reconsideration.
- vii. Respect the rules of the council or a decision of the presiding officer/chair or council on a question of order, practice or interpretation of the rules of the council.
- viii. Ask any relevant questions of staff prior to any meeting where an issue may be introduced or debated so that staff may be able to have appropriate information at such meeting if necessary; and
- ix. Turn off or silence all cell phones, and electronic devices, except those in use to facilitate the meeting.

5.9.2 If a member continues to break the rules of the meeting or refuses to follow a decision made by the presiding officer/chair or council, even after being warned by the presiding officer/chair, the presiding officer/chair must immediately ask council to vote (without debate) on the following question:  
**"Should the member be ordered to leave their seat for the rest of the meeting?"**



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If the member later apologizes, council can take another vote to allow them to return to the meeting.

- 5.9.3 Council and committee members are not allowed to speak to provincial members of government such as an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) or federal members of government such as an MP (Member of Parliament), municipal vendors, or outside organizations about specific municipal matters unless they have permission from council or the mayor to do so. The only exception is when a councillor is helping a resident with a provincial matter and is clearly acting on behalf of the individual, not on behalf of council. If council has asked staff to handle a communication on a certain issue, individual councillors cannot act on behalf of council on that topic unless they are officially authorized. This rule does not stop councillors from interacting with residents of the Town.

### **Speaking / Rules of Debate**

- 5.9.4 When a presentation or report needs a council decision, the presiding officer/chair will first allow time for discussion and questions, then the presiding officer/chair will ask for a motion.
- 5.9.5 Members must wait for the presiding officer/chair to recognize them before speaking.
- 5.9.6 Once a member is recognized, they must direct their comments or questions to the presiding officer/chair and only speak about the topic being discussed. The presiding officer/chair will keep track of the speaking order and recognize members in the order they asked to speak.
- 5.9.7 No one may interrupt another member who is speaking unless it's to raise a point of order or a point of personal privilege (as defined in sections 4.14 and 4.15).
- 5.9.8 Any member can ask to have the motion or question being discussed re-read or shown at any time if it doesn't interrupt someone who is speaking.
- 5.9.9 A member may not speak more than once on a topic until all other members have had a chance to speak. They may speak again only to clarify a misunderstanding, not to introduce new information. No member can speak more than four times on the same topic without council's permission.
- 5.9.10 A member may not speak for longer than ten minutes on a single topic unless



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council agrees to allow more time.

- 5.9.11 Questions asked during discussion must be directly related to the matter being discussed.
- 5.9.12 Once the presiding officer/chair has called for a vote on a motion, no more discussion or new motions are allowed until the vote is finished and the result is announced.
- 5.9.13 If the presiding officer/chair wants to take part in debate, they must hand over their role to the vice-chair until the issue is finished. This keeps the presiding officer/chair's role fair and neutral.

### 5.10 Motions

#### **Not Requiring Advance Notice**

- 5.10.1 At a Council meeting, certain types of motions can be brought up verbally, without giving advance notice, and without asking for permission, unless a specific rule in this policy says otherwise.
  - i. A point of order
  - ii. A point of personal privilege
  - iii. To suspend the rules of procedure
  - iv. To table
  - v. To postpone definitely (deferral motion with a specified date/meeting)
  - vi. To refer
  - vii. To amend
  - viii. To postpone indefinitely (deferral motion without specifying a date/meeting)
  - ix. To recess
  - x. Return to the approved agenda (because it's strayed off topic)
  - xi. Fix a time to adjourn
  - xii. To close debate
  - xiii. Any other procedural motion.

#### **Motions Passed by Unanimous Consent**

- 5.10.2 The following are motions that can be adopted without a formal vote when there is no objection:
  - i. To approve the agenda (if there are no changes)
  - ii. To adopt minutes (if there are no changes)
  - iii. To adjourn the meeting



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### **Making and Passing Motions**

- 5.10.3 The presiding officer/chair may ask if a member is willing to move/second a motion, in which case any member may respond verbally. The presiding officer/chair will verbally indicate which members have moved and seconded the motion.
- 5.10.4 Motions are voted upon by the members by a show of hands and by saying aye/no or any other accepted means.
- 5.10.5 The person making a motion must clearly say what the motion is before someone else can second it and before it can be voted on.
- 5.10.6 Once a motion has been made and seconded, it officially belongs to council. The person who made the motion can still withdraw it at any time before it's voted on or changed, as long as no one on council objects.

### **Procedural Motions**

- 5.10.7 Motion to Adjourn:
- i. always allowed except where this policy says otherwise
  - ii. cannot be debated or changed
  - iii. cannot be made while someone is speaking or during vote counting.
  - iv. cannot be made immediately after a motion to close debate passes.
  - v. if defeated, cannot be made again until some business has happened.
- 5.10.8 The presiding officer/chair can end the meeting by unanimous consent, if all business is done and nothing else is pending.
- 5.10.9 A motion to adjourn to a specific time, or event pauses the meeting and continues it later.
- 5.10.10 A motion to adjourn without conditions ends the meeting immediately if passed.
- 5.10.11 A motion to table is not debatable and is not amendable.
- 5.10.12 A tabled motion won't be discussed again unless a motion is made to take it off the table.
- 5.10.13 A motion that has been tabled and not taken up from the table for six (6)

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months shall be deemed to be withdrawn and cannot be revived.

5.10.14 A motion to close debate (call the question):

- i. is not debatable or amendable.
- ii. cannot be moved if there is an amendment being discussed.
- iii. should be moved by a member who has not yet spoken on the topic, unless all have spoken.
- iv. requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members to pass
- v. if passed, ends debate immediately and a vote is taken without further discussion.

5.10.15 A motion to postpone definitely (to a fixed time or date):

- i. debatable only for reason of postponing and to when.
- ii. can be amended as to the time or date.
- iii. needs a majority vote to pass.
- iv. takes priority over motions to refer, amend, or postpone indefinitely.

5.10.16 A motion to refer (to committee or staff):

- i. is debatable and amendable.
- ii. takes priority over amendments, postponing indefinitely or definitely, and tabling.

5.10.17 A motion to amend:

- i. is debatable and amendable
- ii. must relate to the matter at hand, not change the main idea.
- iii. shall allow only one amendment at a time.

5.10.18 A motion to postpone indefinitely:

- i. is debatable and can include discussion of the main issue effectively stopping a motion and avoiding a direct vote on the question.
- ii. is not amendable.
- iii. requires a majority vote.

5.10.19 A motion to suspend the rules:

- i. is not debatable or amendable.
- ii. requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- iii. takes precedence if related to a pending motion, but yields to a motion to table.

5.10.20 A motion to reconsider:

- i. is debatable only for reasons for or against reconsidering.
- ii. is amendable.



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- iii. requires a majority vote, regardless of the original vote to adopt the motion being reconsidered.
- 5.10.21 A motion to reconsider may be made only by a member who voted on the winning side in the original vote.
- 5.10.22 A question shall only be reconsidered once, and the motion to reconsider cannot be reconsidered.
- 5.10.23 No debate on the original question can happen unless the motion to reconsider is approved first.
- 5.10.24 The mover of a motion to reconsider must say if the whole or part of the original motion will be reconsidered.
- 5.10.25 A motion to reconsider can only be made at the same meeting as the original decision.
- 5.10.26 A motion to amend/rescind a previous decision:
  - i. is debatable and amendable (only to the amendment not the original decision).
  - ii. requires two-thirds vote of the members present to pass.
- 5.10.27 If this motion fails, it cannot be brought forward again during a period of twelve (12) months following the date on which the question was decided.
- 5.10.28 No debate on the original question takes place, unless this motion passes first.
- 5.10.29 When a matter is brought back for reconsideration, the whole original motion is reviewed unless limited by the reconsideration motion.
- 5.10.30 Until reconsidered and changed, the original decision stands.

### **Point of Order**

- 5.10.31 The presiding officer/chair shall decide all points of order.
- 5.10.32 When a member wishes to raise a point of order, the member shall ask permission of the presiding officer/chair and then state the issue.
- 5.10.33 The chair/presiding officer shall decide on the point of order.



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5.10.34 Thereafter, the member shall only address the presiding officer/chair if appealing the decision. If appealed, council votes without debate. If no appeal, the presiding officer/chair decision shall stand.

### **Point of Personal Privilege**

5.10.35 Members can raise issues affecting dignity, reputation, or ability to participate (Point of Personal Privilege).

5.10.36 A Point of Personal Privilege has priority over other business.

5.10.37 No debate allowed except on the point itself.

5.10.38 The chair/presiding officer shall decide upon the point of privilege and advise the members of the decision.

5.10.39 Unless a member immediately appeals the decision, it shall be final.

5.10.40 If the decision is appealed, the question **“Shall the ruling of the presiding officer be upheld?”** shall be called without debate, and its results shall be final, based on a majority vote.

5.10.41 When a point of privilege is raised and recognized, on behalf of another member, that member may speak or move a motion only if separately recognized by the chair.

### **5.11 Voting**

5.11.1 The manner of determining the decision of the council or committee on a motion shall be by raised hands and voicing Aye/No or by another accepted means.

5.11.2 All members including the presiding officer/chair may vote once on each motion.

5.11.3 Abstentions count as ‘No’, except when the member has declared a conflict of interest.

5.11.4 A majority of the members present, and voting are required to pass motions (except when two-thirds are required as set out in this policy). A tie vote means the motion is defeated.



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- 5.11.5 Movers and seconders of a motion must be present at the meeting for debate to occur.
- 5.11.6 Members not in their seat at the call of the vote shall not be entitled to vote.
- 5.11.7 Members must remain seated until the result of the vote has been declared.
- 5.11.8 Voting at public hearings shall follow the rules as set in the Municipal Government Act.

### 6.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every four years, immediately following a municipal election.

### 7.0 Replace

The following policies are repealed and replaced with this policy:

- 110-010 Public Input Policy
- 110-015 Presentations to Council Policy

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**Approved by CAO / Town Clerk**

2025-09-23

**Date**