

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 21, 2025
To: Stratford City Council
From: Tatiana Dafoe, City Clerk
Report Number: COU25-082
Attachments: Appendix A: Procedural By-law Recommendations
Appendix B: Meeting Stats

Title: Procedural By-law Review - Update

Objective: To provide an update on the Procedural By-law review which began in 2023. To seek direction on the recommendations and on the holding of a public meeting to hear from members of the public.

Background: Section 238 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 states that every municipality shall adopt a procedural by-law. A procedural by-law:

- governs the calling, place, and proceedings of Council
- provides for public notice of meetings
- determines rules of procedure and conduct

In 2007, the City adopted Procedural By-law 140-2007, which has been reviewed and amended to address legislative changes and practical procedural updates.

In 2023, the City began a review of the Procedural By-law. The review consisted of:

- community engagement through a survey and public open house
- extensive secondary research of best practices from municipalities in Ontario
- review of legislative amendments
- receipt of feedback from Council members and staff

For the survey, 132 responses were received. The Survey Summary Report is available for review from the Clerk's Office.

The open house had approximately 12 people attend and participate in the activities.

Analysis: Following consideration of feedback received, relevant legislation, and municipal best practices, the following principles guided the recommendations as outlined in the attachment marked as Appendix A:

- one vote, subject to a declaration of pecuniary interest
- information to help make decisions, unless otherwise prevented by law
- an efficient meeting
- be treated with respect and courtesy.

Recommendations relate but are not limited to:

- Council meeting structure
- Date, location and time of meetings
- Timeline for publishing of agendas
- Presentations and deputations
- Decorum
- Order of business
- Implementation of a Vote Manager system
- Open Forum

Staff are seeking direction on the proposed recommendations. Following receipt of direction from Council, staff will finalize a draft Procedural By-law and are seeking direction on the holding of a public meeting to seek additional feedback from members of the public on the draft.

The feedback will then be reviewed, changes made as necessary, and a draft by-law presented to Council for adoption in September or October 2025.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

Financial implications are nominal relating to many of the recommendations; however, consideration of a vote manager system or hybrid technology will result in financial implications. Those impacts will be reported in a subsequent report following direction of Council.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

Should implementation of a vote manager system or hybrid technology be pursued, those impacts will be reported in a subsequent report following direction of Council.

Link to asset management plan and strategy:

Any enhancements to technological assets would require inclusion in the City's Asset Management Plan and levels of service and future financial sustainability assessed.

Legal considerations:

The Municipal Act requires Council to review its procedural by-law every term of Council. This review will fulfill this requirement.

Insurance considerations:

None

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Not applicable: This report does not align with one of the Strategic Priorities as the purpose is to provide an update on the Procedural By-law review and to seek direction from Council.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Not applicable: This report does not align with one of the One Planet Principles as the purpose is to provide an update on the Procedural By-law review and to seek direction from Council.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the proposed revisions to the Procedural By-law as noted in the Procedural By-law Recommendations attached to Report COU25-082 as Appendix A be considered and direction given on any additional suggested revisions;

THAT staff be directed to prepare a draft Procedural By-law;

AND THAT staff be directed to proceed to a Public Meeting to receive comments from members of the public on the draft Procedural By-law.

Prepared by: Tatiana Dafoe, City Clerk

Recommended by: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services
Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer