

**TOWN OF CORONATION
REMOTE ATTENDANCE AT COUNCIL MEETINGS POLICY**

POLICY # COUN-003

Date Approved: January 13, 2014

Policy Statement:

1. This policy shall provide guidelines for remote attendance of Town of Coronation Council meetings, whereas:
 - a. From time to time, or under certain defined conditions it is not possible for a Council member to attend a Town Council meeting, and
 - b. The Town would benefit by a Council member's participation in a Council meeting by means of remote communication in limited instances where the Council member is unable to attend the meeting, and
 - c. The Town desires to establish a procedure for Council members to attend meetings remotely via speakerphone, Skype or other electronic or digital data communication device.

Policy:

1. The Council of the Town of Coronation, recognizing the benefits of fullest practicable attendance and participation by its members, allows for attendance from remote location(s) through use of electronic means including but not limited to such two-way communication methods as speakerphone, Skype, or other media that provide full audio or audio and visual capability.
2. In certain circumstances, including emergencies, it may be necessary for one or more members of the Council to attend from remote location(s) in order to have a quorum.
3. For purposes of voting by a member (or members) of the Council, such attendance from remote location(s) shall be considered the equal of being physically present in the Council Chamber.
4. If the Mayor attends by remote means, he/she may participate in discussions, but the Deputy Mayor or alternate if physically present in the Council Chamber shall be the presiding officer to best facilitate an orderly and efficient process.
5. Attendance from remote location(s) is intended to be an alternative and relatively infrequently used method for participation by members of the Council.

Procedures:

1. In all meetings involving remote attendance, the Mayor or presiding officer shall inform all present in the Council Chamber of the intent to initiate a remote communication.
2. The Mayor or presiding officer shall confirm and announce to all that all present in the Chamber and in the remote location(s) can clearly hear all other parties and (as appropriate) clearly see visual content as will be presented. The Chief Administrative Officer shall record such confirmation in the minutes.
3. With such confirmation, members of Council – whether they are in the Chamber or at remote location(s) constituting a majority may approve the use of remote communication for the entirety of the meeting or for a specified portion thereof.
 - a. No portion of an "in camera" session may be conducted through the use of remote communication.
 - b. If the Council by a majority approves use of remote communication for only a specified portion of any meeting, the Mayor or presiding officer shall announce same and, at the

end of the specified section shall clearly announce to all the close of the remote communication and shall order that the connection be stopped. The attendance of the remote party shall be at an end. The Chief Administrative Officer shall record the beginning and ending times of each such remote communication in the minutes.

- c. In the event that the remote communication link is broken or significantly degraded, such that it no longer meets the full requirements of this section, the Mayor or presiding officer shall confirm the loss of service and announce the close of the remote attendance. The attendance of the remote party shall be at an end. The Chief Administrative Officer shall record the time of such closure in the minutes.

System Requirements:

1. Any such communication systems utilized shall reliably permit all persons attending – whether they are physically in the Council Chamber or in remote location(s) – to be clearly heard by all others and to clearly hear all audio content of the meeting; and where applicable by the Council’s determination, be clearly seen by all others and clearly see all visual content that is determined by the Council to be crucial to the understanding of matters discussed.
2. In a reasonable time, the Council shall make available appropriate funds and the Town shall arrange for the acquisition and installation of all appropriate equipment, communication systems and software as shall be necessary to fulfill this section.
3. The Town shall provide appropriate training to the Council and to all staff who may participate in such meetings in accordance with this section.
4. Systems, equipment and training for the purpose of this section shall from time to time be upgraded at the direction of Council as technologies advance and the Town budget allows.

Acceptable Circumstances for Use:

1. A member of Council may participate in a Council meeting by using a remote communication system if:
 - a. The Member of Council is in a location outside Coronation for any reason;
 - b. The Member of Council is in a location within the Town of Coronation, but is unable to attend a meeting for medical reasons of himself or herself, or an immediate family member;
 - c. There is a quorum of other members of Council situated in the actual meeting place to ensure the meeting could continue if the communication system failed;
 - d. The Chief Administrative Officer is present at the place specified in the notice to the public about this meeting.

Notice of Proposed Use:

1. Any person who wants to use a remote communication facility to attend a portion or all of a Council meeting must:
 - a. Notify, in writing or by email, the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer that he or she intends to participate by means of a remote communication facility; and the Council member must give two business days notice in order to allow that necessary arrangements can be made to facilitate the remote attendance, and

Initiating Use of a Communication Facility:

1. The Council Member will telephone the Town Office at the pre-arranged number at the beginning of the meeting to initiate the communication.

Voting:

1. When a vote is called on a motion, the member of Council who is participating in the meeting by means of a remote communication facility will vote verbally. If the meeting is a meeting of Council occurring in Council Chamber, the vote may be stated for all to hear and then registered in the meeting minutes.
2. The Councillor who is not in the meeting location will indicate his or her vote only after all other Councillors present at the meeting have voted by a show of hands.

Costs:

1. Long distance charges for participation of any Councillor may be charged to that Councillor, unless the Town has agreed to pay the cost.
2. When two or more persons participate in a Council or Standing Committee meeting using a communication facility, a conference call may be arranged. The cost of the long distance calls made by Councillors will be charged to those Councillors, unless the Town has agreed to pay the cost.
3. Additional costs of the conference call arrangements will be charged in equal portions to all persons paying the cost of the long distance calls.

Other Provisions:

1. Any Councillor participating in a Council meeting by means of a remote communication facility must ensure that they post a written notice in a prominent location near to their position, advising any members of the public present in that area that a public meeting is in progress.

End of Policy.