
TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2020 May 20

FROM: CITY CLERK

**SUBJECT: NEW PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING SELECT COMMITTEE,
COMMISSION, AND BOARD OF VARIANCE MEETINGS**

PURPOSE: To propose the schedule for the resumption of select committees, commissions and the Board of Variance in accordance with the Burnaby Procedure Bylaw 2004 and in consideration of physical distancing guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the following select committees, commissions and Board of Variance meetings between 2020 June 01 and 2020 July 31 be scheduled in the Council Chamber on the following dates and times, unless otherwise directed by the Chair:
 - a) Social Planning Committee – 2020 June 16, 5:00 p.m.
 - b) Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission – 2020 June 17, 5:00 p.m.
 - c) Community Heritage Commission – 2020 June 18, 5:00 p.m. (rescheduled from 2020 June 11)
 - d) Traffic Safety Committee – 2020 June 25, 5:00 p.m.
 - e) Environment Committee – 2020 June 24, 5:00 p.m. (rescheduled from 2020 July 7)
 - f) Board of Variance – 2020 June 30, 5:00 p.m.
 - g) Board of Variance – 2020 July 9, 5:00 p.m.
 - h) Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission – 2020 July 14, 5:00 p.m.
 - i) Public Safety Committee – 2020 July 15, 5:00 p.m.
2. **THAT** all select committee, commission, and board meetings held between 2020 June 01 and 2020 July 31 be broadcasted on the City's website for public viewing.

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3. **THAT** all closed agenda items arising between 2020 June 01 and 2020 July 31 be sent directly to Council, with the exception of closed items to be considered by the Burnaby Public Library Board.
4. **THAT** the location of the following community meetings be changed to the Council Chamber:
 - a) Council Meeting – 2020 October 05
 - b) Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission Meeting – 2020 October 13
5. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to all select committee, commission, and Board of Variance members and or organizational representatives for information.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Committees, commissions and boards are central to the operations of Local Governments as they allow for the detailed examination of complex matters, offer the opportunity for Council to hear from Resident/Organizational Representatives on a variety of policy topics, and provide a means for the City to probe into the details of services and initiatives that action policy decisions and directives. As the City seeks to resume this vital input and policy development platform, adjustments are required to facilitate committee, commission and board processes while balancing and recognizing the need to implement new processes that protect the health and safety of members, staff and the public.

2.0 POLICY SECTION

This report aligns with the following goals and sub goals of the Corporate Strategic Plan.

Goal

- A Safe Community
 - Community amenity safety –
Maintain a high level of safety in City buildings and facilities for the public and City staff
- A Connected Community
 - Digital connection –
Provide online access to core City services and information

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- A Healthy Community
 - Healthy life –
Encourages opportunities for healthy living and well-being
- A Thriving Organization
 - Communication –
Practice open and transparent communication among staff, Council and the community
 - Technology and innovation –
Support technology development and innovation to empower staff and to advance community objectives

3.0 BACKGROUND

On 2020 March 18, the Provincial Government declared a Provincial State of Emergency to support the province-wide response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The declaration was made based on a recommendation from B.C.'s health and emergency management officials, after Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer, declared a Public Health Emergency on 2020 March 17. In addition to the limitations on mass gatherings set under a Class Order, the BC Centre for Disease Control released guidelines for "physical distancing" to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing means limiting close contact with others by keeping two meters (six feet) away from one another.

Upon the release of physical distancing guidelines, the City cancelled the select committee, commission, and board meetings at the beginning of March. The decision to cancel select committee, commission, and board meetings was done out of an abundance of caution to ensure the health and safety of members, staff, and the public.

During the cancellation period, items that would have normally been considered by the various select committees, commissions, and boards were placed on Council meeting agendas to ensure the timely review of ongoing items providing an avenue for receiving direction on important issues. Although some of the work that would have been reviewed by committees, commissions, and boards has continued under the direction of Council, the input and perspectives of resident/organizational representatives is of great importance procedural changes have been identified that will once again allow for broader review and input.

4.0 AUTHORITY

Select committee, commission, and Board of Variance members are authorized to participate in a meeting electronically under the *Burnaby Procedure Bylaw 2004*, Section 10 (Participation in Meetings by Electronic Means).

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5.0 MEMBER PARTICIPATION

Committee, commission, and board members will be able to participate in their respective meetings either in-person or electronically. When surveyed, the majority of committee, commission, and board members indicated a preference to electronically participate, with a few members indicating their desire to physically attend the meeting. Based on the member feedback, staff are confident in the City's ability to hold meetings that follow physically distancing guidelines.

Although the majority of members who indicated a strong preference towards electronic participation have access to the technology needed to participate electronically, some members of the Community Heritage Commission do not have the needed technology and stated they would not attend a meeting physically at this time. To allow for the provision of the technology to some members of the Community Heritage Commission, the recommendation is to reschedule the 2020 June 11 meeting to 2020 June 18.

6.0 BOARD OF VARIANCE

Unlike Public Hearings, Board of Variance applications are considered in 15 minute intervals. Staff are confident Board of Variance meetings will be able to meeting physical distancing guidelines through scheduled appeal times and minor changes to the entrance and exit routes into the Chamber. Due to the cancellation of the April and May Board of Variance meetings, there is a backlog of applications for consideration. To address the backlog of applications, the Chair has requested an additional Board of Variance meeting to take place on 2020 June 30 at 5:00 p.m.

Requiring in-person attendance of applicants and those that wish to provide comment on any particular application may discourage or prevent participation by some applicants or members of the public who have public health concerns with in-person attendance. To address barriers to meeting participation, the following options will be provided:

In-Person: The applicant and members of the public may attend the meeting physically. This existing procedure will not change.

Written Submissions: The public may provide written comments regarding any of the Board of Variance applications via email or Canada Post. This existing procedure will not change.

Phone Participation: Applicants and members of the public that do not wish to attend the Board of Variance meeting in-person, may provide submission and comment via telephone.

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Unlike Public Hearings, webinar participation will not be provided as Board of Variance applications do not result in a large number of attendants. All participation options will be communicated to applicants and the public through existing notification practices such as applicant letters, neighbourhood notifications, and on the City's website.

7.0 TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

To ensure transparency of the select committee, commission, and Board of Variance meetings, staff recommend the aforementioned meetings be broadcasted (via live web broadcast) on the City's website. Live broadcasting the meetings will reproduce as closely as possible a physical attendance experience at home.

8.0 MEETING LOCATION AND START TIMES

Location

Select committee, commission and Board of Variance meetings take place in various meeting rooms at Burnaby City Hall. To ensure physical distancing guidelines are adhered to, and to enable live broadcasting of the various meetings it is recommended that all select committee, commission, and Board of Variance meetings take place in the Council Chamber.

Planning for two community meetings (2020 October 5 Council meeting, and 2020 October 13 Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meeting) begins early in the year with facility bookings, audio visual contracts, and advertising. Upon the closure of the City's recreation facilities, the bookings for these meetings were cancelled as there was/is uncertainty of their availability should the closures remain. Staff is recommending that the two community meetings, Council 2020 October 5, and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meeting 2020 October 13, be relocated from the community facilities to the Council Chamber.

Start Time

Select committee, commission, and board meetings have previously been scheduled to start at 6:00 p.m. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began impacting the delivery of services and business practices, the City has adjusted the start time of Council meetings from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. To provide consistency in meeting start times and to create a new routine for the public, committee, commission, and board members, it is recommended that the start times of select committees, commissions and boards be changed to 5:00 p.m. to align with Council meeting start times. Committee, commission and board members were surveyed to determine the acceptability of an earlier start time. The vast majority of members were supportive of a 5:00 p.m. start time.

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9.0 CLOSED MATERIALS

Select committees, the Community Heritage Commission, and the Board of Variance rarely considered items in a closed meeting. Typically closed items considered by the aforementioned groups relate to the consideration of an individual for an award. Although the technology used to facilitate electronic participation in meetings seeks to minimize the risk of unauthorized access of confidential information, as a precaution, it is recommended that all closed items be sent directly to Council for consideration. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission does consider closed items more frequently than others, and upon discussion with the Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, it is further recommended that all closed items previously considered by the Commission be sent directly to Council with the members to receive a copy of the report for information.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure physical distancing, facilitate live web broadcasting of the meetings, and to provide consistent start times, staff recommend Council approve the select committee, commission, and Board of Variance meeting schedule (date, time and location) as proposed. Should Council or meeting Chairs wish to add meetings not currently scheduled, additional staff resources will likely be required as new procedures for supporting electronic participation in meetings has increased the support needed for each committee significantly.

To minimize the risk of unauthorized access to closed materials, it is further recommended that all closed materials be sent directly to Council for consideration. Lastly, to ensure all select committee, commission, and Board of Variance members are aware of the changes outlined in the report, it is recommended that a copy of the report be sent to members for information.



Kate O'Connell, MPP
CITY CLERK

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Copied to: Management Committee Members