
TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
POLICY
COUNCIL VIDEOCONFERENCING

Policy No.	109
Approved:	April 25, 2022
Resolution #:	22-108

1. This policy is entitled the “Council Videoconferencing Policy”.
2. The procedural requirements in this Policy are intended to complement and supplement, and not to replace, the requirements contained in
 - (1) the *Municipal Government Act*; and
 - (2) *Chapter 4 Town Council* , and
 - (3) *Chapter 5 Rules Governing the Town Council By-law*
3. In this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires,
 - (1) “Council” means the Council of the **Town of Bridgewater**
 - (2) “Council member(s)” include(s) the **Mayor**; and
 - (3) “meeting” means a regular or special meeting of Council.

Public Notice

4. A council meeting or council committee meeting may be conducted by videoconference if, at least two days prior to the meeting, notice is given to the public respecting the way in which the meeting is to be conducted.
5. The notice to the public referred to in section 4 must be given by:
 - (1) publication in a newspaper circulating in the municipality.
 - (2) posting on the **Town of Bridgewater’s** publicly accessible Internet site and in at least five conspicuous places in the municipality; or
 - (3) such other method permitted by regulation.
6. Notwithstanding section 5, where the **Mayor** determines that there is an emergency, a meeting may be conducted by videoconference without notice or with such notice as is possible in the circumstances.

All Council members attend by videoconference

7. The Clerk may require all Council members to appear at a meeting by videoconference if each Council member and the **Town of Bridgewater** have videoconferencing equipment available that will:
 - (1) enable the public to see and hear each Council member participate in the meeting by videoconference;
 - (2) enable each Council member to see and hear every other Council member participate in the meeting by videoconference.

One or more Council members attend by videoconference

8. Except as provided in section 7, Council members must attend Council meetings in person or, if approved by the Clerk pursuant to section 9, one or more Council members may appear at a meeting by videoconference.
9. Subject to the other provisions of this Policy, the Clerk shall grant permission to a Council member to participate in a meeting, or part of a meeting, by videoconference if:
 - (1) prior to the meeting, the Council member provides written notice to the Clerk indicating that the Council member wishes to attend the meeting by videoconference;
 - (2) the Council member has not participated in more than three (3) meetings by videoconference in the preceding twelve (12) months in addition to meetings in which all Council members participated by videoconference. Notwithstanding this, the Clerk may grant permission to a Council member to participate virtually where the Council member has attended three (3) meetings by videoconference in the preceding 12 months if the Council member is unable to attend in person due to an illness.
 - (3) the Council member has videoconferencing equipment available that will:
 - (a) enable the public to see and hear the Council member participate in the meeting by videoconference; and
 - (b) enable the Council member to see and hear each of the Council members who are attending the Council Meeting by videoconference or in person.
 - (4) the **Town of Bridgewater** has videoconferencing equipment available that will:
 - (a) enable the public to see and hear the Council member participate in the meeting by videoconference.
 - (b) enable the Council member to see and hear each of the Council members who are attending the Council Meeting by

videoconference or in person; and

- (c) enable every Council member who is attending the meeting by videoconference or in person to see and hear all other Council members who are attending the meeting by videoconference or in person.

10. Any Council member participating by videoconference in a meeting shall be deemed to be:
 - (1) present at those parts of the meeting in which a Council member is permitted to participate by videoconference under this Policy; and
 - (2) absent for any parts of the meeting in which a Council member is not permitted to participate by videoconference under this Policy.
11. The Clerk shall not grant permission to a Council member to participate by videoconference in any of the following:
 - (1) any part of a meeting during which the issue under discussion will be decided by a vote held by secret ballot.
 - (2) a vote held by secret ballot.

Technological problems - failure to connect or disconnection

12. If technological problems prevent a Council member from participating in a meeting prior to the meeting commencing, the Council member shall be marked absent from the meeting.
13. If a Council member becomes disconnected from the meeting due to technical problems or other reasons, the minutes shall reflect that the Council member left the meeting at the time of the disconnection.
14. This Policy applies to committees established by Council.