

Corporation of the Town of Hawkesbury

Recommendation to Council

N° : 2022_REC_64

File N°:

Date of meeting: September 12, 2022

Subject: Hybrid Council Meetings: Update and Future Considerations

Recommendation

Whereas Council adopted, on April 11, 2022, By-Law N° 22-2022 amending By-Law N° 20-2005 to include a section governing hybrid meetings, and;

Whereas the purchase of equipment required to allow hybrid meetings was not provided for in the 2022 budget, and;

Whereas with a small budget, the communications coordinator was able to install a hybrid meeting system, altogether rudimentary, but functional, and;

Whereas the hybrid meetings held in the council chambers have experienced some unforeseen events, and;

Whereas the Council wished to suspend hybrid meetings in order to reflect on its meeting model.

Be it resolved to suspend Subsection 67(4) i. of By-law N° 20-2005 which provides that Council meetings and Public consultations related to zoning shall be held in the Council Chambers and by electronic means from September 12th, 2022 until November 30th 2022 as recommended in document 2022_REC_64.

Explanation, history, context

On April 11, 2022, the Council adopted by-law N° 22-2022 amending by-law N° 20-2005 to include a section governing hybrid meetings. Although the purchase of equipment required to allow hybrid meetings was not provided for in the 2022 budget, Yvan Ruel, the communications coordinator, was able to install a hybrid meeting system, rudimentary but functional. However, the few hybrid council meetings that have been held in the council chambers have experienced some unforeseen events and the council has chosen to temporarily suspend the hybrid meeting model.

This report aims to reflect on how to proceed for the next council meetings. The Clerk and the Communications Coordinator discussed in order to present all the possible options available to Council regarding meeting models. Here are the possible options:

Options 1 – Council meetings are held in the council chamber, face-to-face only with no option to join remotely or record (like pre-pandemic council meetings).

Options 2 – Council meetings are held virtually only, through Microsoft Teams (similar to council meetings during the pandemic).

Options 3 – Council meetings take place in the council chambers, face-to-face, with the option to record the meeting and put it on our YouTube channel the next day, with no option to join the meeting via Teams. This option does not include a hybrid option, but would allow citizens to view the recording the day after the meeting.

Options 4 – Council meetings take place in 100% hybrid mode, i.e. in the council chambers and with participants on Microsoft Teams. This way of doing things, which was implemented in the spring of 2022 with a limited budget, but which involves the direct collaboration of all the participants of the meeting, meaning:

- a. The arrival of council members in the council chamber one hour in advance;
- b. That council members be able to log on to their computer and perform the necessary updates as needed;
- c. That council members can log into Microsoft Teams from the same computer;
- d. That council members check the operation of their headsets and microphones.

Options 5 – Council meetings are held in 100% hybrid mode, as mentioned in option 4, but with the integration of eSCRIBE's Webcasting Plus. Please refer to the attached document for more details. The fees for this option are \$12,040 per year for the PLUS version. eSCRIBE's Webcasting Plus would combine meeting recordings with minutes.

Options 6 – Council meetings take place in semi-hybrid mode, i.e. in the council chambers and with participants on Microsoft Teams without the possibility of other participants (people present in the council chamber as well as on the final film (Youtube) to see the participants of the Teams portion.

From these options, the Clerk recommends **Option 2**, with council meetings to be held virtually only, through Microsoft Teams until the end of November, where the next Council will be able to choose how they want to proceed with council meetings. Thus, the resolution is worded to suspend the hybrid meeting provision for By-law N° 20-2005 until a report is submitted to the new council at the end of November 2022.

Impact on budget

Depending on the option chosen, some options have no impact on the budget, while other options have a cost attached to their implementation. If the council chooses to explore the option of eSCRIBE Webcasting Plus, at a cost of \$12,040 for one year, this expense could be taken into consideration when planning the budget for 2023

Relevant studies

None.

Supporting document

- eSCRIBE Webcasting Plus Proposal

Communication plan

None.

Department(s) involved

- Clerk
- Communications
- Municipal Council

Submitted and recommended by

Myriam Longtin, Clerk, September 2, 2022

Comments of the Chief Administrative Officer

Samuel Cardarelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2022_REC_64_Réunions hybrides_ANG.docx
Attachments:	- eSCRIBE Webcasting Proposal - City of Hawkesbury.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 7, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cardarelli', with a large, stylized initial 'C'.

Samuel Cardarelli - Sep 7, 2022 - 1:48 PM