

Meeting Protocol

Efficient meetings/effective decision making

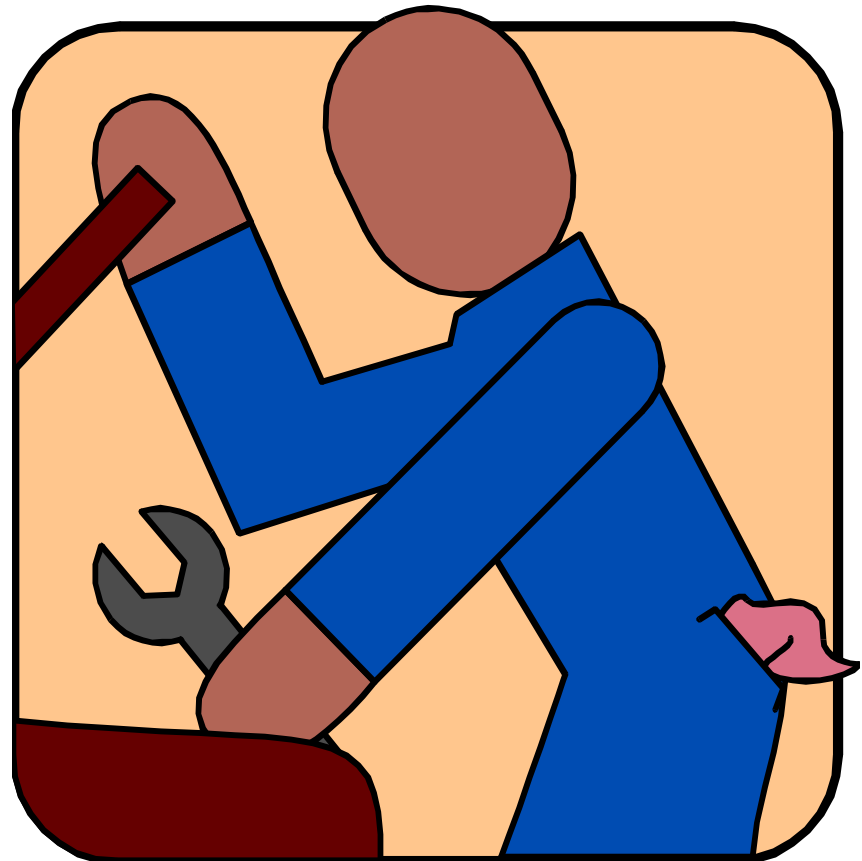
Session Outline

- Procedural Tools
- Roles - The key to efficient meetings
- Common Procedural Pitfalls



Procedural Tools

- ❑ The Municipal Act
- ❑ Organizational By-Law
- ❑ Procedures By-Law





The Municipal Act

- By-laws are required where stated in the legislation for matters of broad application or continuing, long-term effect
- Council may act by by-law or resolution only
- Resolutions give effect to all other decisions under council's jurisdiction
- Resolution decisions may be done by by-law, but not the reverse



Organizational By-Law

- Council must adopt organization by-law and review it at least once a term
- By-law establishes the organizational structure and provides for the manner and method of appointing deputy head of council
- Also outlines the duties, functions and reporting obligations of council committees



Procedures By-Law

- ❑ Council must adopt procedures by-law and review at least once a term
- ❑ By-law establishes standardized procedures, conduct and place for meetings; method for scheduling special meetings
- ❑ Should also provide for the order of business and distribution of agenda in advance of the meeting



The Agenda

- Sets the goals and objectives
- Guides your decisions
- Enables Council to capitalize on its vision

The role of Council members at meetings



- The Head of Council
- The Deputy Head
- Councillors
- Committee Chair



Head of Council - Mayor or Reeve

- Consult with CAO in development of agenda
- Lead the Meeting/attention to process, rules of conduct
- Facilitate closure/summarize main discussion points, request motions be formulated



Deputy Head of Council

- Opportunity for councillors to gain experience if chairing role is shared
- If Head of Council is absent or wishes an active role in debating an issue, opportunity to turn meeting over to Deputy Head
- Provides additional support to Head, shared responsibility and mutual feedback



Councillors

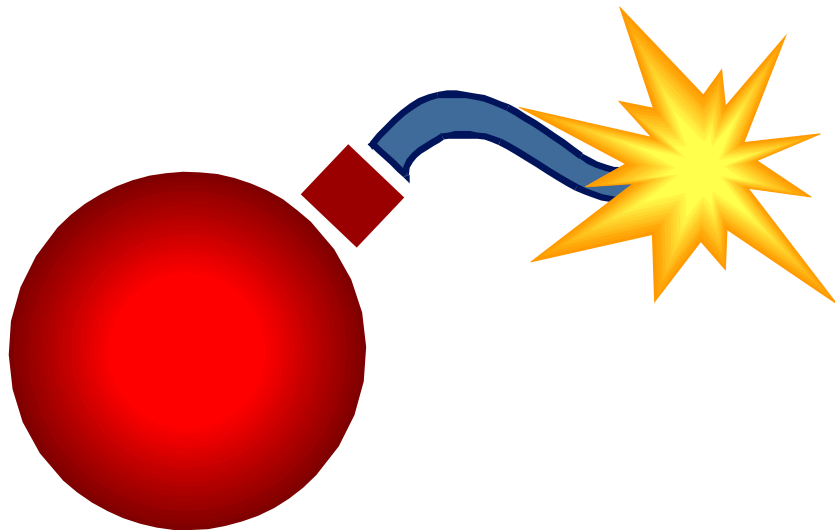
- ❑ Duty to consider the interests of the municipality in its entirety
- ❑ Responsibility to prepare for the meeting by reviewing the agenda, supporting material and asking questions in advance
- ❑ Understand personal learning style and that of other members of council
- ❑ Respect council process and decisions



Committee Chairs/members

- Prepare and Participate
- Responsibility to report to council on the progress of committees
- Request that committee recommendations be formalized by council resolution as appropriate
- Be concise and clear as to decisions required by council to facilitate committee progress

Some Common Procedural Pitfalls



- Recorded Votes
- Abstentions
- Voting by Head
- Decisions Against
- Reconsideration
- Petitions
- Closed Meetings



Quorum

- ❑ Quorum is majority of council members comprising council
- ❑ If position is vacant, quorum is majority of remaining members of council
- ❑ Minimum number for quorum is 3
- ❑ Abstention does not impact quorum



Recorded Vote

- ❑ Each member of council has one vote each time a vote is held
- ❑ Requirement for recorded vote at third reading of every by-law; must include the vote of each member and reason for abstention
- ❑ Members of council can request recorded vote in accordance with procedures by-law



Abstention from Voting

- ❑ council member decides not to vote either in favour or against a motion
- ❑ may occur if member of council has been absent and/or feels insufficient information has been received on an issue
- ❑ abstention not to be confused with voting against a matter
- ❑ council members not abstaining carry the vote



Participation by Head of Council

- Head of Council must vote and participate in balance with responsibilities as chair of the meeting
- Procedures By-law should govern Head of Council's participation in debate of an issue
- All members of council including the Head should vote.



Council decision not to take action

- A decision not to take action/not to approve is a decision of council, e.g. not changing a ward system, not grading a road, not approving a rezoning
- Such decisions must be formalized by resolution so as to provide direction to staff and public



Reconsideration of a Motion

- Council may reconsider or reverse a decision within one year after being made, only if:
- Reconsideration occurs at the same meeting
OR
- by providing written notice from one regular meeting to the next regular meeting of a proposal to review and reverse the decision



Responding to Petitions

- Petitions under MA that require formal response from council:
 - formation/dissolution of a Local Urban District
 - request for a local improvement or special service
- Any other petition treated like correspondence from a citizen/action or receipt



Meeting Closed to the Public

- S. 152(3) MA limits circumstances under which a meeting may be closed
- CAO would ordinarily attend meetings
- Duty for member to keep matter confidential until agreement to make public
- resolution, if required, must be public for council to act/balance with privacy



PROCEDURE FOR WARD DISSOLUTION

- ❑ Same process required to dissolve wards as to form wards
- ❑ Council gives first and second reading to ward dissolution by-law
- ❑ Public Notice required after second reading
- ❑ If by-law challenged by at least 25 voters, Municipal Board must hold a hearing



Additional Information:

A Reference Guide for
Elected Municipal Officials
2006 - 2010