

## Council Videoconferencing Policy

**Effective Date:**

2022-04-19

**Revision Date(s):**

2024.02.20

**Approved by Council:** April 19, 2022

Motion # 240220.08

### Purpose

While it is preferred that Council and Committee of the Whole meetings be conducted in person as much as possible, it is understood that circumstances exist where this may not be possible for everyone.

This policy enables the Town of Middleton to continue to offer virtual/hybrid meeting options to Councillors, staff and members of the public enabling full participation in Council and Committee of the Whole meetings, as well as maintaining transparency, accountability and increased accessibility options for all.

1. 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) the *Council Meetings and Proceedings Policy*.

### Definitions

2. In this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires,
  - (1) “Council” means the Council of the Town of Middleton
  - (2) “Committee of the Whole” means a committee comprised of all members of Council who fully participate in debate and forward recommendations to Council for final decision
  - (3) “meeting” means a regular or special meeting of Council or Committee of the Whole meeting.
  - (4) “Clerk” means a public officer in charge of the records of a town as appointed by the Town of Middleton Council.

### **Public Notice**

3. A Council meeting or Committee of the Whole 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.
4. The notice to the public referred to in section 3 must be given by:
  - (1) posting on the Town of Middleton’s publicly accessible Internet and social media sites, and
  - (2) in at least two conspicuous places in the Town;
5. Notwithstanding section 4, 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 Members Attend by Videoconference**

6. The Clerk may require all Council/Committee of the Whole members and staff to appear at a meeting by videoconference if each Council/Committee of the Whole member and the Town have videoconferencing equipment available that will:
  - (1) enable the public and other Council/Committee of the Whole members to see and hear the person participating by videoconference;
  - (2) enable the person participating by videoconference to see and hear other Council/Committee of the Whole members who are attending the meeting by videoconference.

### **One or More Members Attend by Videoconference**

7. Except as provided in section 6, 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.
8. Committee members may be preapproved to attend meetings by videoconferencing per

their appointment by Council or by written request to the Clerk.

9. Subject to the other provisions of this Policy, the Clerk shall grant permission to a Council/Committee of the Whole member to participate in a meeting, or part of a meeting, by videoconference if:
  - (1) twenty-four hours prior to the meeting, the Council/Committee of the Whole member provides written notice to the Clerk indicating that the Council/Committee of the Whole member wishes to attend the meeting by videoconference where an extenuating circumstance exists. These include but are not limited to:
    - (a) injury or illness preventing attendance in person
    - (b) inclement weather
    - (c) schedule conflict in the example of a meeting being arranged on short notice.
  - (2) the Council/Committee of the Whole member has not participated in more than two (2) meetings by videoconference in the preceding 12 months in addition to meetings in which all Council members participated by videoconference.
  - (3) Council has the right to grant an exception to section 9(2) to a Council member due to illness or injury that would prevent the Council member from attending the meeting in-person.
  - (4) the Council/Committee of the Whole member has videoconferencing equipment available that will:
    - (a) enable the public and other Council/Committee of the Whole members to see and hear the person participating by videoconference;
    - (b) enable the person participating by videoconference to see and hear the other Council/Committee of the Whole members who are attending the meeting by videoconference.
  - (5) the Town has videoconferencing equipment available that will:
    - (a) enable the public to see and hear the Council/Committee of the Whole member participating in the meeting by videoconference;

- (b) enable the Council/Committee of the Whole member to see and hear each of the Council/Committee of the Whole members who are attending the Council Meeting by videoconference or in person; and
  - (c) enable every Council/Committee of the Whole member who is attending the meeting by videoconference or in person to see and hear all other Council/Committee of the Whole members who are attending the meeting by videoconference or in person.
- 10. Any Council/Committee of the Whole member participating by videoconference in a meeting shall be deemed to be:
  - (1) present if approval has been granted for them to participate by videoconference under this Policy; and
  - (2) absent for any parts of the meeting in which a Council/Committee of the Whole member is not permitted to participate by videoconference under this Policy.
- 11. The Clerk shall not grant permission to a Council/Committee of the Whole 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.
- 12. Council members participating in a meeting by electronic videoconference shall notify the Chair of their departure (either temporary or permanent) from the meeting before absenting themselves.

### **Technological Problems - Failure to Connect or Disconnection**

- 13. If technological problems prevent a Council/Committee of the Whole member from participating in a meeting prior to the meeting commencing, the Council/Committee of the Whole member shall be marked absent from the meeting.
- 14. If a Council/Committee of the Whole member becomes disconnected from the meeting due to technical problems or other reasons, the minutes shall reflect that the Council/Committee of the Whole member left the meeting at the time of the



disconnection.

15. **THIS POLICY APPLIES TO COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, WITH SUCH CHANGES AS THE CONTEXT REQUIRES.**

**Town of Middleton Policies**  
**Code A – General Administration A 3.12**



I, **Ashley Crocker**, Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Middleton, do hereby certify that the Policy, of which the foregoing is a true copy, was duly passed at a duly called meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Middleton held on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

*Ashley Crocker*

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Ashley Crocker  
Chief Administrative Officer

Policy Adoption	
Date of 7-day notification to Council	April 11, 2022
Date of Approval	April 19, 2022
Policy Revision	
February 20, 2024	




# 3.12 - Council Videoconferencing Policy 2024

Final Audit Report

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