

Letter to Advisory Committees

RE: Clarifying the Committee Structure and the Streamlining of Advisory Committee Processes

One of the Clerk's Office goals for 2020 was to clarify the Committee structure and to streamline some of the Advisory Committees processes.

This process began with a reorganization of the Committee Listing Page on the City of Hamilton's website. Originally the webpage listed all Committees alphabetically which did not illustrate the reporting structure of Committees. The Clerk's Office received feedback from the community that the listing was confusing, and have therefore, reorganized to show the different levels of Committees, how they are classified, and to which Committee the Committee reports to. The reorganized webpage can found at the following link: <https://www.hamilton.ca/council-committee/council-committee-meetings/committee-listing>.

Another task that the Clerk's Office is working on with the Advisory Committee Staff Liaisons is the format of Advisory Committee agendas and minutes to be in a similar form to those of Committees of Council. Advisory Committee minutes are now being reviewed by one designated Legislative Coordinator, to ensure that all Advisory Committees are following a standard format.

Like all Committees of Council, Advisory Committee minutes are approved at their next Committee meeting, and then sent up to their respective Standing Committee to be received. Staff Liaisons are to send their draft minutes to the designated Legislative Coordinator prior to the minutes being approved at their next Advisory Committee meeting, in order to ensure that the final version of the minutes are in the proper format being approved at their respective Standing Committee. Staff Liaisons are to forward the approved minutes of their Advisory Committee meetings to their respective Standing Committee Legislative Coordinator in a timely fashion.

Additionally, like all Committees of Council, if the Advisory Committee wishes to move a motion that requires approval, a Citizen Committee Report is required. A Citizen Committee Report should contain some background information and the motion that was approved by the Advisory Committee and are prepared by the Staff Liaison. Once completed, they should be sent to the designated Legislative Coordinator for review. Once reviewed the Citizen Committee Report is signed by the Chair and forwarded to their respective Standing Committee in a timely fashion, as these requests are usually time-sensitive requests.

Please find below a list of examples of when a Citizen Committee Report would be required:

WHEN A CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT IS REQUIRED:

- Use of budget funds on expenditures outside of approved expenditures
- Changes to the Terms of Reference (i.e. membership; mandate; etc.)
- Delegations to other Advisory Committees, Sub-Committees and Standing Committees on behalf of the Advisory Committee

- Recommendations outside the purview of the Advisory Committee involving City infrastructure (i.e. roads, sidewalks, processes, etc.)
- Correspondence to any outside agencies, including other Levels of Government and the media
- Events or Actions that the Committee wishes to take, that fall outside of the Committee's Terms of Reference

WHEN A CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT IS NOT REQUIRED:

- Delegations to an Advisory Committee's respective Standing Committee
- Approved budgetary items
- Formation of Working Groups
- Holding community events to gain insight or feedback from the community group the Committee represents (e.g. a speakers event)
- Providing feedback to staff on city services and programs
- Inviting members of the community to speak at Advisory Committee meetings

The Clerk's Office is also currently working on updating the Volunteer Advisory Committee Handbook to incorporate amendments respecting virtual meetings, etc. Advisory Committees can expect to be contacted by the Clerks Office for feedback on the changes to the Handbook prior to going to Governance Committee for adoption.

The Office of the City Clerk is committed to working with all members and staff liaisons to provide procedural advice and clarification on City processes and policies.

Sincerely,

Clerk's Department

City of Hamilton