June 17, 2021

# C3: Addendum Staff Report

**Amendment to Commission Meeting Procedures**

**Notice of Motion Requirements**

## Context

At the March 2021 Commission Meeting a request was made for an amendment to the Meeting Procedures to facilitate advance notification when a motion is being brought forward that is unrelated to an agenda item.

The meeting procedures utilized by the Commission is based on Benoit’s Rules of Order, which is the basis for Canadian parliamentary procedures. The following is derived from the Notice of Motion procedures in place for federal parliament, with modifications to better align with the less formal needs of Niagara Escarpment Commission meetings.

A report addressing changes to the NEC’s Meeting Procedures was discussed at the May 20, 2021 Commission meeting. The Commission deferred the item and requested consideration of the following.

* Development of criteria to aid in determining situations that may require a Notice of Motion
* Whether there could be a ‘waiver’ for requiring a Notice of Motion (e.g.; time sensitive items)
* Clarification that the Chair ultimately decides whether a matter necessitates a Notice of Motion.

## Addition to Commission Meeting Procedures

The following is recommended for inclusion in the Commission’s Meeting Procedures:

Notice of Motion

When a member wishes to bring forward a motion that is not associated with an agenda item, a Notice of Motion must generally be given. This is to provide Commissioners with prior notification so that they are not called upon to consider a matter unexpectedly, and to allow background/context to be shared in advance.

In most cases, Notices of Motions are required to be submitted in writing to the Chair, who will then provide it to the Commissioners no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. However, there are situations where more than 48 hours notice may be necessary depending on the scope, complexity and ramifications of the motion.

Notices of motion are to include the following information:

* Name of Commissioner bringing the Notice of Motion forward
* Background, context and rationale for the motion
* Proposed wording of the motion

As a general rule, there are no Notice requires for motions (called “subsidiary” motions) associated with business of the Commission related to items already on the meeting agenda. Where there is ambiguity, Commissioners are encouraged to seek the Chair’s direction regarding whether Notice of Motion is required. The Chair will decide whether a Notice is required, considering the following:

1. Whether the Motion is time sensitive, and unable to meet the requirement for providing Notice 48 hours prior to the meeting.
2. The nature of the Notice, and whether it is minor in nature and can easily be dealt with without requiring Notice. In these cases, the Chair may waive the Notice requirement.

It is recognized that these Notice of Motions procedures cannot anticipate every situation. In light of this, if a motion is brought forward at a Commission meeting unrelated to an item on the agenda which Commissioners believe warrants a Notice of Motion, they may vote to defer the matter to a future Meeting.

## Recommendation

That the Commission approve amending the Commission Meeting Procedures to include direction for Notices of Motion, as identified in this staff report.

Prepared by:

Original signed by:

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Debbie Ramsay, MCIP RPP

Director (A)