

NEWS RELEASE

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Updated changes to Council meeting processes due to COVID-19

Summary

At their meeting on July 13, 2020, Council endorsed recommendations to continue to facilitate public participation in Council and committee meetings, while following the rules of public health requirements. Effective July 20, 2020, a number of measures will be in place for all open Council and Committee meetings in response to a ministerial order regarding public access and participation in local government decision making.

Delegation requests by members of the public for related or unrelated Council or committee matters, as outlined in Council's Procedure Bylaw, will be permitted. To make sure that physical distancing can be maintained, members of the public who are not registered delegations will not be permitted to attend meetings in person (other than public hearings). Public hearings will be livestreamed on the City website; all Council and Council-related committee meetings will be livestreamed, recorded and made available on the City website. Question Period will continue to be suspended during this order.

To view agendas, minutes, the livestream of a meeting in progress and recordings of past meetings visit www.nanaimo.ca/meetings.

Strategic Link: Ensuring access for public participation in Council's decision-making process supports a priority of providing good governance.

Key Points

- Public hearings will be livestreamed on the City website; all Council and Council-related committee meetings will be live-streamed and recorded on the City's website. Members of the public are asked to observe meetings virtually and not attend in person.
- Electronic conferencing software, such as Zoom, will continue to be utilized by members of Council and committees to allow for participation without attending in person.
- Registered delegations regarding topics unrelated to agenda items, as outlined in the Procedure Bylaw, will now be permitted.
- Question period will continue to be suspended during the duration of this order being in effect.

Quotes

"As local governments transition towards more normal operations, new policies and procedures are being developed to support elected officials, local government staff and the public. Permitting pre-registered delegations for topics unrelated to Council's agenda items encourages enhanced public participation in a safe and thoughtful way."

Sheila Gurrie
Director, Legislative Services
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Ministerial Order No. M192, issued on June 17, 2020 which supersedes Ministerial Order Nos. M083 and M139 require local governments to make "best efforts" to allow the public to participate and understand local

government decision making in a way that is meaningful for them, while abiding by any of the public health requirements or recommendations made under the Public Health Act.

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