



PARK BOARD PROCEDURE BY-LAW

Report Back

Park Board Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 2021
(reconvened from March 8, 2021)



The purpose of this presentation is to:

- report back with procedural options for member motions to be considered and addressed by the public;
- propose potential criteria for a regulation to hold electronic meetings;
- seek approval of the proposed Park Board Procedure By-law revisions presented in December 2020.



Background

- Park Board Procedure By-law proposed revisions presented Dec 2020 to:
 - reflect current practices;
 - address gaps;
 - clarify procedures.
- Included recommendations to seek Vancouver Charter changes regarding electronic and special meetings.
- Recommendations were referred back to staff to report back with procedural options that would allow the public to speak to member motions.



Public Feedback on Member Motions

- Member motions allow any Commissioner to introduce a topic for consideration at a Regular Board meeting:
 - Requires advance notice and one Commissioner to second;
 - Public can submit written feedback (cannot speak in person);
 - Board can refer to a future meeting to hear from speakers;
 - Supports effective meeting management;
 - Ensures business processed at meetings aligns with Board priorities set by the majority.

- Any two Commissioners can request the Chair call a Special Meeting to consider a Member motion:
 - Requires a minimum of 48hrs advance notice;
 - Public can submit written feedback & speak in person;
 - Short notice can result in reduced public participation and/or Commissioner availability;
 - May require reprioritization of work commitments and staff resources.

Alternative procedural options that would allow the public to speak to member motions include:

- 1) Defer to Committee if Speaker Requests Received
- 2) Consider Member's Motions at Committee
- 3) Suspend Rules to Hear from Speakers at a Regular Board meeting
- 4) Dissolve Committee & Allow Speakers at Regular Board meetings

1) Defer to Committee if Speaker Requests Received

- Board defers to next Committee meeting if multiple speaking requests received;
- Consistent with Council practice;
- Advance notice can increase public participation;
- Delays consideration by 2 weeks or more; may not be possible for time sensitive matters;
- Does not provide opportunity for staff to address any missing, unclear, or inaccurate information prior to hearing from speakers.

2) Consider Member's Motions at Committee

- Reflects past Park Board practices;
- Public is permitted to speak on Committee agenda items;
- Advance notice can increase public participation;
- Reduces delays (vs. being deferred to Committee);
- Reduces ability of Committee majority to ensure only Committee priorities and business items are addressed during meetings;
- Does not provide opportunity for staff to address any missing, unclear, or inaccurate information prior to hearing from speakers.

3) Suspend Rules to Hear from Speakers at a Regular Board

- Aligns with current Park Board procedures;
- Reduces delays that would result with deferral to Committee;
- Limited advance notice to speakers; may decrease participation;
- Reduces ability of Board majority to ensure only Board priorities and business items are addressed during meetings;
- Does not provide opportunity for staff to address any missing, unclear, or inaccurate information prior to hearing from speakers.

4) Dissolve Committee & Allow Speakers at Regular Board

- Public can speak to any report recommendations or member's motions on the agenda;
- Streamlines the current process of holding separate Committee and Board meetings;
- Reduces ability of Board majority to ensure only Board priorities and business items are addressed at meetings;
- Does not provide opportunity for staff to address any missing, unclear, or inaccurate information prior to hearing from speakers.

- Receiving public feedback is a vital component of the Board's decision-making process;
 - input can be provided in writing; via engagement activities; through advisory committees & working groups; and by speaking at Committee & Special meetings;
- Current Procedure By-law offers the tools needed to:
 - effectively manage business handled at meetings;
 - support alignment with Board priorities, capacity & resources;
 - ensure public input can be received;
 - provide the information needed to make informed decisions.

Electronic Meeting Regulations

- Park Board Commissioners have been able to hold and attend meetings electronically since May 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- provide flexibility to safely conduct business during pandemic while supporting public access to the decision-making process;
- allowing Speakers to participate remotely reduces barriers for those unable to attend in person; a by-law change has been proposed to continue to support this option;
- allowing Commissioners the option to hold and attend meetings remotely post pandemic requires a Vancouver Charter regulation.

- Staff propose seeking a regulation to allow Commissioners to hold and attend meetings electronically post pandemic, with the following criteria:
 - In-person attendance expected for regularly scheduled meetings, except under extenuating circumstances
 - Requests to attend meetings electronically to be submitted in advance at a Regular Board meeting;
 - Unforeseen/urgent requests to be submitted through the Chair for Board consideration at the beginning of the meeting;
- Greater flexibility suggested for In Camera and Special meetings, with notice provided to General Manager.

Recommendations

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve, in principle, the repeal and replacement of the Park Board Procedure By-law, as set out in Appendix A of this report;
- B. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward a by-law for enactment by the Board, generally in accordance with Appendix A;
- C. THAT staff be directed to seek an amendment to the *Vancouver Charter* to require Special meetings be called by the Chair, or upon the request of a majority of Commissioners;
- D. THAT staff be directed to seek a regulation, pursuant to the *Vancouver Charter*, to permit the Park Board to hold electronic meetings, as per the criteria outlined in this report.

