



Making Electronic Participation for the TTC Permanent - Update

Date: April 11, 2024
To: TTC Board
From: Director - Commission Services

Summary

At its meeting on May 8, 2023, the TTC Board authorized amendments to the Toronto Transit Commission By-law to Govern Board Proceedings (Procedures By-law) to permit electronic participation for a one-year period and directed that staff report back with recommendations for consideration of permanent electronic participation in Q1 2024. This report responds to that direction and seeks approval to permit electronic participation on a permanent basis.

The TTC has updated language in the Procedures By-law to make the document gender-inclusive; these changes are described in the report.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the TTC Board:

1. Amend the Toronto Transit Commission By-law to Govern Board Proceedings to permit electronic participation in all meetings and provide that:
 - a. Any member participating in the meeting electronically is to be deemed present for the purposes of determining whether a quorum is present under Section 23 and for the purposes of voting on any matter put to a vote under Section 25 and for all other purposes; and
 - b. Any member participating in the meeting electronically is entitled to participate in any portion of the meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 29.
2. Repeal Section 22.1 – Electronic Participation of the Toronto Transit Commission By-law to Govern Proceedings.
3. Subject to the approval of Recommendation 1, and despite any procedural rules permitting electronic participation, encourage TTC Board Members to attend meetings in person except where there is a rationale to participate electronically.

Implementation Points

Upon adoption of the report recommendations by the TTC Board, a consolidated version of the Procedures By-law will be posted on the TTC's website, <http://www.ttc.ca>, and shared with Board Members.

Financial Summary

There are no financial impacts as a result of adopting the recommendations.

The 2024 Operating Budget, approved by the TTC Board on December 20, 2023 and City Council on February 14, 2024 includes funding of \$25,000 for broadcasting services required to support hybrid meetings.

The Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial summary information.

Equity/Accessibility Matters

TTC Board and Committee meetings are currently being conducted using a hybrid approach, whereby they are held at Toronto City Hall or at TTC Head Office (1900 Yonge Street) and simultaneously by video conference. City and TTC administrative facilities are accessible, and attendant support services are on-hand to assist members of the public with personal care needs. Hybrid meetings provide greater accessibility to Board Members and the public who may have accessibility needs.

As part of this review, TTC staff have updated language in the Procedures By-law to make the document gender-inclusive. This approach is intended to ensure that all persons, regardless of gender or sex identity, are included in the Board decision-making processes, as established by the Procedures By-law.

Decision History

The TTC Board, at its meeting in May 8, 2023, considered a report entitled Making Electronic Participation for the TTC Board Permanent and adopted amendments to the Procedures By-law to permit electronic participation for a one-year period, with members encouraged to attend in person, regardless of electronic participation rules. [Making Electronic Participation for the TTC Board Permanent](#)

Comments

The TTC transitioned from fully electronic to hybrid meetings

Beginning in May 2020, meetings of the TTC Board and its Committees were conducted with members of the Board, staff, and the public connecting using electronic means. This approach enabled the TTC Board to meet in an open and accessible way utilizing

video conference technology and online livestreams when City and TTC administrative facilities were closed to the public as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In July 2022, meetings of the TTC Board moved to a hybrid model, providing Board members, staff, and the public the option to participate in person in a meeting room or remotely via video conference. The hybrid meeting model ensures that meeting participants have an equitable experience regardless of their method of participation.

The public has expressed that having the option to participate remotely allows for improved access and limits issues around childcare, time off work, and other factors that may have previously limited their ability to attend a meeting in person. The hybrid meeting model allows the public to choose how they wish to address the Board, encouraging participation and increasing accessibility. It is an option that the TTC will continue to provide, regardless of the Board's decision with respect to member participation.

Proposed amendments to permit electronic participation on a permanent basis

In 2020, Section 22.1 – Electronic Participation was added to the Procedures By-law in order to respond to the emergency declaration and provide for electronic participation, as a subordinate section to the Emergency Meetings provisions contained within the By-law. Should the Board proceed with making electronic participation permanent, this section is no longer required, as the provisions contained within it will be included in the relevant sections of the by-law (Sections 23 and 29).

The recommendations in this report remain unchanged from what was before the Board for its consideration in May 2023.

Approach taken by other City Boards and Agencies

In March 2023, the City Council amended its procedures to permit electronic participation at City Council and its Committees on a permanent basis, and authorized local boards to amend their rules of procedure to permit electronic participation by board members and the public. TTC staff reviewed the procedures of other City of Toronto local boards and found that many had adopted amendments to permit electronic participation on a permanent basis. These include:

- Board of Governors of Exhibition Place
- CreateTO
- TO Live
- Toronto Parking Authority
- Toronto Police Services Board
- Toronto Public Library Board
- Toronto Zoo

Potential limitations on electronic participation

If the Board chooses not to permit electronic participation on a permanent basis, it should continue to permit electronic participation for the Board and its Committees during a declared emergency in order to ensure that the TTC Board can meet in an emergency without having to amend the Procedures By-law. The language in the by-law

currently permits electronic participation during any period in which an emergency has been declared in all or part of the City under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act or for such additional period of time as determined by City Council after the termination of an emergency in all or part of the City under Section 4 or 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

Updated language to effect gender neutrality

The TTC is committed to supporting and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in all policies, procedures, processes, programs, and services. In order to make the Procedures By-law inclusive of all, staff have removed gender references contained within and replaced with gender neutral language (they/them).

Meeting modernization and next steps

Electronic and hybrid meetings rely on technology, and as a result, meeting processes and procedures need to consider the tools required to operate successfully. Hybrid meetings rely on physical in-room infrastructure and technology, as well as video conference software and livestreams. All elements need to function for the meeting to operate smoothly. TTC and City of Toronto staff are working collaboratively to explore implementing new meeting management processes and tools for the TTC, and will update the Board on any significant changes.

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Signature

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