



ENGINEERS &
GEOSCIENTISTS
BRITISH COLUMBIA

POLICY

POLICY	Guidelines for Council In-Camera Sessions after the Regular Closed and Open Council Meeting, CG-8
NUMBER OF POLICY	CO-21-83
DATE OF POLICY	June 25, 2021
APPROVED BY	Council

- Attendance is limited to all members of Council only except that the CEO will attend the initial portion of the meeting to participate in discussions pertaining to staff and/or to follow up on requests for information from Council members. The session may be attended by other staff, when deemed appropriate by the CEO and Chair.
- The primary purpose of these meetings is for Council reflection, to carry out a self-assessment of the overall effectiveness of Council during the previous closed and open Council meetings and to make recommendations for improvements.
- The Council Meeting Effectiveness Checklist is to be used as a guide to support Council's self-assessment of the Council Meeting.
- In-Camera sessions can also be used as information sharing amongst the members of Council.
- Items that should be dealt with as a closed or open Council meeting item should not have a substantive discussion at the In-Camera sessions. Any formal Council decisions that should be made at the closed or open Council meetings shall not be made at the In-Camera sessions.
- While no formal agenda is prepared for In-Camera sessions, the format includes a post-meeting brief with the CEO, meeting self-assessment and a general update/check in from the President.
- Minutes are not prepared for the In-Camera sessions, and any follow up requests should be noted by the Chair (usually the current President) and subsequently conveyed to the CEO at the earliest opportunity.
- In-Camera sessions are generally not longer than 30 minutes in duration but there may be times when more time is required due to the nature of the items being brought forward.

COUNCIL MEETING EFFECTIVENESS

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Agenda

1. Agenda topics are clear, focused, appropriate and reflect the annual work plan
2. There is a clear link between agenda items and the organization's strategic priorities
3. A consent agenda is used for items that do not require council discussion
4. Adequate discussion time is given to all agenda items with the most critical or strategic items being dealt with first

Materials

5. Meeting materials are provided with enough time to adequately prepare for the meeting
6. Meeting materials are clear, concise and help councillors focus on the issues that need to be considered at the meeting
7. Council members have a clear understanding of the objectives for the meeting and for each agenda item

Chair

8. The Chair guides the meeting efficiently and effectively, keeps discussions on track, and encourages participation

Meeting Participation

9. The meeting starts and ends on time
10. All councillors are prepared for the meeting
11. Discussions are focused primarily on strategic/governance matters as opposed to operational items
12. All councillors contribute to, or are encouraged to contribute to, discussions and decision-making
13. There is a robust discussion that is respectful and meaningful, and any disagreements are handled appropriately
14. There is a clear unity amongst councillors once decisions are made

Meeting Follow-Up & Effectiveness

15. Follow-up actions and responsibilities are clearly identified and assigned
16. The meeting is effective overall

MEETING EFFECTIVENESS CHECKLIST

1. The agenda was clear and realistic for the allotted meeting time.
2. Agenda topics were appropriate (reflected Council’s terms of reference and annual road map).
3. Appropriate information was available to support Council in making informed decisions.
4. Time was used effectively and discussions were focused.
5. Discussion was respectful and disagreements were handled appropriately.
6. We maintained a strategic perspective and avoided getting into administrative/operational details.
7. We held each other accountable for keeping discussions at the right level and practiced “smart trust”¹?
8. The chair guided the meeting effectively and encouraged Councillors to share opinions openly.

From your observations today, are there any items that should be considered as reminders to improve meeting effectiveness for the next meeting, or items that should be covered in a “Governance Moment” at the next Council meeting.

REVIEW DATES

June 25, 2021 (CO-21-83) – Updated and approved by Council

April 17, 2015 (CO-15-51) – Approved by Council

¹ *Maintaining a respectful balance between strategic oversight and operations, where Councillors ask tough questions and challenge assumptions while sending the message to Management that “we support and trust you”*

