



Committee Handbook

Town of Tillsonburg
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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Definitions	4
4. Vision Statement.....	6
5. Appointment/Application Procedure.....	6
6. Council Member Appointees.....	6
7. Mayor as Ex-Officio	7
8. Roles and Responsibilities of a Committee Member	7
9. Chair of the Committee	8
10. Staff Liaisons.....	8
11. Agenda Processes	8
12. Minutes.....	9
13. List of current Committees of Council.....	9
14. Council Contact Information	10
15. Resources	10



1. Introduction

Welcome to Town of Tillsonburg as a committee member!

Committees and Boards are established by Council for the purpose of encouraging community participation in specified areas. Volunteers who choose to serve on these Committees are an essential part of running an effective and efficient local government. These bodies play an important role in the corporate decision-making process by providing advice and recommendations to the Town of Tillsonburg Council.

As you put your time and talent to work, it is critical that you keep the public interest in mind. The Town of Tillsonburg appreciates your efforts and Committee involvement to improve the Corporation. Our elected officials and staff are looking forward to working with you! In this handbook we have included some materials that may assist you along the way.

Your comments for revisions for future handbooks are always welcome.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to assist in guiding newly appointed citizens to Committees to be influential members of the community. This document outlines a fair and transparent approach and process for the establishment and operation of Committees.

This is an introductory handbook that contains basic information and should be used in conjunction with materials specific to your Committee such as a Terms of Reference.

Some Committees are legislated by the province, some have specific guidelines mandated by By-Law and others are created and organized through Council. You will find a complete list of current Committees included in this manual.

3. Definitions

3.1 “Advisory Committee” means a committee constituted by Council from time to time to act in an advisory capacity to Council and provide input on a discretionary basis on a particular matter or undertake special projects as assigned and in accordance with their terms of reference.

3.2 “Amendment to a Motion” means a motion to change the words of a pending motion. Amendments are debateable if the original motion is debateable. The amendment shall be germane (relevant) and not contrary to the main motion.

3.3 “Chair” shall mean the person presiding over a meeting, who is charged with the responsibility to decide questions and points of order or practice, preserve order and maintain decorum in the proceeding. The Chair (except when disqualified) shall vote on all questions.

3.4 “Clerk” shall mean the Town Clerk of The Corporation of the Town of Tillsonburg.

3.5 “Committee” shall mean a Committee established by Council.

3.6 “Council” shall mean the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Tillsonburg.

3.7 “Confidential Information” includes information in the possession of the Town that the Town is prohibited from disclosing under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O 1990, Chapter M.56, the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, S.O. 2004, Chapter 3, Schedule A, and other applicable legislation. Confidential Information also means any information that is of a personal nature to Town employees or clients or information that is not available to the public and that, if disclosed, could result in loss or damage to the Town or could give the person to whom it is disclosed an advantage. Confidential Information includes items disclosed or discussed at closed sessions of Council and Committee meetings.

3.8 “Debate” shall mean discussion on the merits of a question/motion and whether the proposed action should or should not be taken. A main motion must be introduced and if required seconded before debate begins.

3.9 “Deputation” shall mean a person/group making a verbal presentation to Council.

3.10 “Division of the Question” shall mean a request by a Member to have a motion divided into parts which are capable of standing alone, so that these parts may be considered separately.

3.11 “Gift” includes any cash or monetary equivalent fee, object of value, service, forbearance, preferential treatment or personal benefit received from a third party.

3.12 “Improper Conduct” shall mean conduct that obstructs in any way the deliberations and/or proper action of Committee or Council.

3.13 “Meeting” shall mean any regular, special, Committee or other meeting of Council and its Committees.

3.14 “Member” shall mean a member of the Council or a Committee of Council and shall include the Mayor.

3.15 “Minutes” shall mean a record of the proceedings of a meeting, and shall be made by the staff liaison without note or comment.

3.16 “Motion” shall mean a Resolution of Council or a Recommendation of a Committee that is under debate by Council or a Committee.

3.17 “Order of Business” shall mean the sequence of business under consideration at a meeting that has been duly called and constituted.

3.18 “Pecuniary Interest” includes a direct or indirect pecuniary interest of a member in accordance with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

3.19 “Quorum” shall mean a majority of the whole number of Members required to constitute a Council.

3.20 “Resolution” shall mean a motion that has been passed by Council.

4. Vision Statement

Tillsonburg is a family-friendly community known for its historic charm, thriving businesses and modern lifestyle amenities. It is a regional hub for employment, recreation and culture.

5. Appointment/Application Procedure

When there are vacant positions to be filled by Council appointment, the Clerk publishes a public notice inviting residents of Tillsonburg to apply. Vacancies for citizen appointments shall be publicly advertised in the local newspapers, through social media and on the Town website. It is not a requirement that applicants are a resident or municipal taxpayer in Tillsonburg.

6. Council Member Appointees

A Council Member is appointed to sit on each advisory committee. Council Appointees shall be active, participating Committee Members while having due regard to their role as a Councillor.

7. Mayor as Ex-Officio

The Mayor of the Council of the Town of Tillsonburg is an ex officio member of every Committee.

Where a Committee is established by reference to a particular number of members without specifically providing for the membership of the Mayor of the Council, such number is automatically increased by one, being the Mayor of the Council, and all members of the Committee are present.

If there is an absent member, the Mayor's attendance replaces the absent member and the membership number is not automatically increased by one.

The Mayor is able to participate in the business of the Committee without any restriction including voting. Members of Council are able to attend any meeting, however only members of Council who have been appointed to a Committee are entitled to vote.

8. Roles and Responsibilities of a Committee Member

As a member of a Committee of the Town of Tillsonburg, you are expected to represent the Town in a professional, mindful matter at all times. Although each individual Committee has their own specific mandate, it is your role to represent the interests of the community and to advise Council of such.

Following being appointed to a Committee, it is your responsibility to attend regular meetings and provide the necessary skills and knowledge that you were chosen for. If you are unable to attend a meeting, it is your responsibility to advise the Staff Liaison and the Chair of the Committee that you cannot attend. If you miss three (3) consecutive meetings, without justification, the Chair of the Committee, along with the Staff Liaison, will ask the member if they wish to remain on the Committee or if they wish to resign.

It is also the responsibility of each individual Board Member to make decisions that best reflect interests of the Town and be sure not to make decisions for personal gain. All Board and Committees are expected to obey and comply with all the requirements of any applicable laws, including municipal By-Laws.

9. Chair of the Committee

The leadership skills of the Chair of a Committee can be a critical factor in determining the overall effectiveness of the meeting. The Chair must maintain high levels of personal integrity and confidentiality at all times.

As the Chair of a Committee, your duties consist of (but are not limited to):

- Facilitate the meeting while following Policy for Committees;
- Participate as an active, voting member, encouraging participation by all Committee Members;
- Maintain decorum and ensure fairness and accountability;
- Be the point of contact with Council; and
- Attend any training sessions offered by the Town.

10. Staff Liaisons

Each Committee will be provided a Staff Liaison to assist the Committee with the administration of the Committee. The Staff Liaison will be required to work closely with the Chair to ensure effective meeting management.

Prior to Committee Meetings, the Staff Liaison shall prepare the Agendas and other relevant materials, distribute materials to all Committee Members, arrange for set up of meeting areas and determine if quorum is met. During the meeting the Staff Liaison is responsible for recording minutes and to offer procedural and process advice to the Chair and Committee members. Following the meeting the Staff Liaison will finalize meeting minutes, distribute to Committee members and follow-up with any resolutions of Committee that require action.

11. Agenda Processes

It is recommended that all Committees of Council of the Town of Tillsonburg are consistent and accountable. To achieve this we have created templates for Agenda's and Minutes that each Committee should follow. It is necessary to have consistency in order to capture all recommendations to Council in a formal manner by utilizing the templates.

As per the Policy for Boards and Committees of Council the following components are to be included in the Agenda, where specific subject items are described in each component:

1. Date, time, location of meeting
2. Members present (include office, i.e. Chair, Recording Secretary)
3. Members absent/regrets
4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
5. Approval of previous minutes
6. Presentations/Deputations
7. General Business and Reports
8. Correspondence
9. Other Business
10. Closed Session
11. Next meeting.
12. Adjournment.

12. Minutes

The minutes of all Town of Tillsonburg Committees must be recorded without note or comment and should be uniform for readability. The minutes must contain the date, the time, the location, members present and members absent. It is also recommended that the Board/Committee minutes briefly outline the substance of each of the agenda items discussed during the meeting, including actions taken and recommendations by motion. Staff will be required to prepare a report for any recommendation of a Board/Committee requiring action by Council.

13. List of current Committees of Council

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Cultural, Heritage and Special Awards Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Memorial Park Revitalization Advisory Committee
- Museum Advisory Committee
- Parks, Beautification and Cemeteries Advisory Committee
- Recreation and Sports Advisory Committee
- Tillsonburg Airport Advisory Committee
- Tillsonburg Transit Advisory Committee

14. Council Contact Information

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15. Resources

It is important for Committee members to understand each of the following documents as they outline the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all Town of Tillsonburg committee members.

- Terms of Reference
- Tillsonburg Procedural By-law
- Code of Conduct
- Policy for Boards and Committees
- Rules of Order Guideline