

Cambridge City Council establishes advisory committees, which are comprised of volunteer members from the community, to address a specific issue. As part of the Business Plan for the City of Cambridge, Goal #2 – Governance and Leadership demonstrates a strong corporate focus ensuring the governance of the City is open, transparent, accountable and provides innovative leadership. Advisory Committees are an important resource for supporting local governance and service delivery in support of this Goal.

## Advisory Committees

Some advisory committees are provincially legislated (i.e. Heritage and Accessibility Advisory Committee), while others are created by Council to address specific subject matter and have no defined end date. Other advisory committees may be created on an ad hoc basis with a specific end date (usually the completion of their mandate). Each advisory committee must adhere to a clearly defined mandate and Terms of Reference approved by Council. Advisory Committees are held accountable through reports to Council at a minimum of once per term and by posting its agendas and minutes online. Advisory Committee agendas and minutes are posted on line and an annual report is submitted to Council by the staff liaison highlighting the actions and decisions made over the past year.

## Terms of Reference

All committees have a Terms of Reference which provide the mandate and purpose of the goals and visions for the committee. The Terms of Reference must be reviewed to ensure relevancy once per term.

## Role of Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair's role is to facilitate and chair meetings. In order to achieve the best results with the committee, the Chair will need to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in contributing to the meeting. The Chair should refrain from personal views and facilitate the discussion to encourage and engage the views of the committee members. The Chair shall preside over the meetings and assist the committee in attempting to reach consensus on fundamental policy issues of concern.

The Vice-Chair shall assume the authority and perform all the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

Both the Chair and Vice-Chair are each entitled to one vote, just like the other members appointed to the Committee.

## Responsibilities of the Chair

1. Attend Advisory Committee meetings.
2. Be knowledgeable of the aims and objectives of the Advisory Committee and the Corporation of The City of Cambridge's role in the community.
3. Provide input into the monthly agendas in co-operation with the city staff liaison.
4. Call the meeting to order on time and ensure it proceeds according with Council Policy
5. Present each item on the agenda for discussion/decision.
6. Guide the discussion so that it does not deviate from the agenda and the order of business.
7. Ensure that all members have equal opportunity to enter into discussions at meetings.
8. Ensure the Advisory Committee Terms of Reference is followed.
9. Rephrase and clarify expressed opinions, if necessary.
10. Call for motions when recommendations or actions are expressed and to ensure that all members understand the motion before calling the vote.

11. State the wording of the motion clearly and to allow for adequate discussion before the vote
12. Ensure a vote on the motion and announce if the motion is carried or defeated.
13. Ensure that the Vice-Chairperson assumes the duties of the Chair when required.
14. Support Advisory Committee decisions.
15. Accept work assignments willingly and follow through with assigned tasks.
16. Understand the role of both staff and volunteers.
17. Participate in all advisory committee meetings when called.

When discussion is underway, it is the chairperson's responsibility to ensure that it continues to flow smoothly by involving all members present and by not permitting one or two people to dominate the meeting. Summarizing by the chairperson during meetings can:

- Indicate progress, or lack of.
- Refocus discussion that has wandered off the point.
- Conclude one point and lead into the next.
- Highlight important points.
- Assist the secretary if necessary.
- Clarify any misunderstanding.



The chairperson should pace the meeting, ensuring it runs to time. If the planning has been properly executed, this should not prove to be a problem.



At the end of a meeting, the chairperson should remind members what they have achieved and thank them for their contributions. Finally, the time and date of the next meeting should be arranged. Again this is one common model for effective meetings, successful outcomes can be achieved in different ways with different strategies for different purposes, so adapt as appropriate to specific situations.

The roles of Chair and Vice-Chair can be done on a rotating basis during the term which enables for the majority of members to have the opportunity to take on these roles and this is encouraged.

## Quorum:

Quorum is 50% +1 of the number of members. Quorum Defined. A “quorum” of the committee is the required minimum of number of committee members who must be present before the committee may conduct business. In the absence of a quorum, any business transacted is null and void.

## Motions

A recommendation will be in the form of a formal motion.

Each motion shall be decided by a majority vote of the full members present, provided there is a quorum present at the meeting.

Each motion requires a mover and a seconder.

Each member has the opportunity to debate the merits of the motion once it has been moved and seconded, prior to the taking of a vote.

The mover and/or seconder may call a motion and do not have to support the recommendation put on the floor.

## Code of Conduct

Council passed a Code of Conduct for Committee Members in 2016. The Code is applicable to all individuals who are appointed by Council to sit on a committee/board and the main purpose of the Code of Conduct is to show respect for one another in a meeting setting.

All individuals appointed must read through the Code of Conduct which provides an overview of their obligations.

## Conflict of Interest

A situation where a full committee member has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her responsibilities as a committee member, or a situation in which a full committee member, directly or indirectly, competes with or aids another, or engages in a business or practice contrary to the interests, goals and objectives of the committee.

## Role of Staff Liaison

Each committee is assigned a staff liaison from the City to help provide secretariat duties and procedural advice, some of the other tasks includes:

- Attend meetings;
- Create agenda with input from Chair;
- Complete minutes and distribute to Chair for input, distribute to committee members prior to following meeting;
- Complete annual report to Council and share content with Chair;
- Ensure agenda and minutes are posted to the City of Cambridge website.

Members are encouraged to work with their staff liaisons and ask any questions as it relates to the business of the Committee/ Board.



# Advisory Committee Information

