

**Town of Annapolis Royal  
POLICY**

<b>TITLE:</b> <b>Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy</b>	
<b>POLICY NO.:</b> <b>2023-04</b>	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b> <b>none</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> <b>March 1, 2023</b>	<b>APPROVED BY COUNCIL MOTION</b> <b>#C2023-02-15-08</b>

**1.0 PURPOSE:**

This Policy aims to improve accessibility and community participation in relation to decision making processes. It is predicted that live streaming Council meetings on the Town of Annapolis Royal’s YouTube Channel will provide more flexible and convenient access of Council debate and decisions to a wider audience.

Live streaming Council meetings, which also allows for recording, can eliminate geographic and time barriers which may prevent the public from attending meetings in person. It also makes the meetings accessible through live captioning. The result being greater community confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision-making process.

The Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy provides policy direction and guidelines for Councillors, Staff, and the community. This policy reflects Council’s commitment to transparent and accessible decision-making processes, with the introduction of live streaming of Regular and Special Meetings of Council. Any parts of Council’s meetings that are closed to members of the public under Section 239 of the Municipal Act are regarded as confidential and will not be aired or recorded.

**2.0 SCOPE:**

This Policy applies to:

- Regular and Special Meetings of Council;
- Councillors and staff of the Town of Annapolis Royal; and
- Members of the public, both as visitors in the gallery and when invited to speak in the Meeting.

**3.0 DEFINITIONS:**

**Chair** - the person who chairs a meeting of the Council, predominantly, the Mayor

**Closed Section of a Council Meeting** - A meeting of the council which has been closed to members of the public under Section 239 of the Municipal Act, commonly referred to as ‘in-camera’

**Controls** - Any process, policy, device, practice, or other action which impacts on the consequence or likelihood of a particular risk occurring, that is currently in place

**Council Meetings** – refers to Committee of the Whole, Council, and Special Council meetings

**Defamation** - Intentional false communication which damages the reputation of another individual

**Streaming (Webcasting)** The process of delivering multimedia content via the internet, in audio and/or video format from a single content source to multiple listeners/viewers

## **4.0 POLICY CONTENT:**

### **4.1 Operating Guidelines**

Council meetings held in the Town of Annapolis Royal's Council Chamber will be streamed live, on the Town of Annapolis Royal's YouTube channel in accordance with this Policy and will be able to be accessed from the Town's website: [www.annapolisroyal.com](http://www.annapolisroyal.com).

Any parts of Council's meetings that are closed to members of the public under Section 239 of the Municipal Act are regarded as confidential and will not be aired or recorded.

The Chair and/or the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances when deemed relevant. Circumstances include, but are not limited to instances:

- where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or infringing on copyright
- that breach the privacy of an individual or unauthorized disclosure of the personal information of an individual
- that constitute discrimination, hatred or vilification of an individual or group of individuals based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion or other protected human right
- which disclose confidential or privileged information, pose a threat to Town infrastructure, personnel, or the security of Town systems
- other as deemed necessary

Council will make every effort to ensure that live streaming is available, it takes no responsibility for, and cannot be held liable for technical issues beyond its control. Technical issues may include, but are not limited to, the availability of the internet connection, device failure or malfunction, unavailability of social media platforms, or power outages.

The official record of all Council meetings shall be the written minutes in accordance with the Municipal Act Section 239(1). The live stream file will be archived to the Town's YouTube channel. Files will be hosted on the Town's YouTube Channel during the current year and for four years thereafter (five years in total).

Video files from live streaming on the internet are part of the public realm and as such, are subject to alteration by a member of the public with no municipal control over such alterations. The Town assumes no liability associated with any alterations that may be made by a member of the public on the internet.

Viewing live or recorded audio and video over the internet consumes data. The user is responsible for any data charges they may incur.

Opinions expressed and statements made during Council meetings are those of the individual making them. Unless set out in a resolution of Council, Council does not support or endorse the views, opinions, statements, or information that may be expressed by an individual at a Council meeting.

Council does not accept any responsibility for any oral statements made by the public during Council meetings which may be inaccurate, incorrect, or defamatory, and does not warrant nor represent that the material or statements made by the public during live streamed meetings are complete, reliable, accurate, or free from error.

#### **4.2 Publication of Notices – Informing Attendees**

It is not the intention of live streaming to capture those attending the meeting in the gallery, however this may occur due to camera angles and seating arrangements. By attending the public meeting, attendees are consenting to their image, voice, or comments being recorded.

There will be several notices informing attendees that live streaming will be taking place. At the commencement of each meeting, the Chair will read a statement included in the Council agenda notifying those present that the meeting will be live streamed on the internet and that a link to the YouTube Channel can be found on the Town's website. [Attachment 1]

Signage communicating a similar message will be visibly displayed in the foyer of the Council Chambers. [Attachment 2]

#### **4.3 Public Interaction in Council Meetings**

##### **4.3.1 Public Forum**

Council's Code of Meeting Practice sets out the requirements for Public Forum guidelines with regards to a Council Meeting. Any attendee who is invited to speak will be recorded and their voice and image will form part of the live stream.

Should an attendee invited to speak not wish to be recorded, they are required to make this request known to Council staff prior to the meeting commencing. This request can be made either

by emailing the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) a minimum of two hours prior to the meeting or in person no later than 30 minutes prior to the meeting.

#### **4.3.2 Presentation of Awards / Public Acknowledgements**

The Meetings, Procedures, and Presentations Policy sets out the expected behaviours for participation in Council Meetings. Any attendee who is invited to make or receive a presentation or acknowledgement from Council will be recorded and their voice and image will form part of the live stream.

In circumstances where time permits, correspondence to the attendee shall be made to include the public notice information that Council undertakes live streaming of its Council meetings. (Attachment 2]

#### **5.0 POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

The Chief Administrative Officer will be responsible for:

- Communicating the relevant public notices in Attachments 1 and 2 to be included in:
  - (a) Public Notice in the Council agenda
  - (b) Public Notice Signage at the meeting
- Publishing Council meeting live stream recording links, to the Town's website.
- Setting up, positioning, and testing the video equipment for each Council meeting.
- Provide ongoing support to ensure the live stream is operational for each meeting.

#### **6.0 POLICY REVIEW:**

This policy will be reviewed once per Council term or more often as needed.

#### **7.0 COMPLIANCE:**

In cases of policy violation, the Town may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that this policy was duly passed

by a majority vote of the whole Council at a duly called

Council meeting held on the 15 day of February 2023.

GIVEN under the hand of the CAO and under the seal of

The Town of Annapolis Royal the 16 day of February 2023.

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Sandi Millett-Campbell Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment 1**

**Public Notice to be included in the Council Agenda and to be read out by the meeting Chair**

Live Streaming of Council Meetings

Today's meeting is being streamed live on the Town of Annapolis Royal YouTube Channel. To those present in the gallery today, by attending a public meeting of the Council you are consenting to having your image, voice and comments recorded. Anyone who is invited to speak will be recorded and their voice, image and comments will form part of the live stream.

The Chair and/or the CAO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances when deemed relevant.

## **Attachment 2**

### **Public Notice to be displayed as signage at the entrance of the Council Meeting**

This Council meeting is being streamed live in accordance with Council's Live Streaming in Council Meetings Policy. A copy of the Policy can be viewed on the Town's website.

By attending a public meeting of the Council, you are consenting to your image, voice and comments being recorded. Should you wish to attend and/or speak without being recorded you must make this request to Council staff prior to the meeting commencing. This request can be made either by emailing the CAO a minimum of two hours prior to the meeting or in person no later than 30 minutes prior to the meeting.

The Chair and/or the CAO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances when deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, discriminatory, defamatory, or potentially inappropriate to be published.

Attendees are advised that they may be subject to legal action if their actions result in inappropriate and/or unacceptable behaviour and/or comments.

Whilst Council will make every effort to ensure that live streaming is available, it takes no responsibility for, and cannot be held liable for technical issues beyond its control. Technical issues may include but are not limited to the availability of the internet connection, device failure or malfunction, unavailability of social media platforms or power outages. It should be noted that no protection is afforded to Councillors, Council employees or the public for comments made during Meetings which are subsequently challenged in a court of law and/or determined to be defamatory.