

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA**

**REPORT NO. LS-2025-0001**

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF  
COUNCIL**

April 16, 2025

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING FORMAT**

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**1. RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That Council receive Report No. LS-2025-0001 prepared by the Clerk's Division, Legislative Services Department, dated April 2, 2025, respecting the Proposed Advisory Committee Meeting Format;
2. That Council express its appreciation to all of the volunteers who continue to dedicate their time participating as Members of the Town's Advisory Committees;
3. That Council provide direction regarding the preferred format for conducting Advisory Committee meetings, with the following options presented for consideration.

Option 1 - Virtual Meetings;

Option 2 - Structured Hybrid Meetings; or

Option 3 - Each Advisory Committee shall determine its preferred meeting format, either Virtual or Structured Hybrid, at the first scheduled meeting of each Council term, and shall remain with this format for the duration of the term.

**2. PURPOSE:**

Staff are seeking direction from Council to establish the preferred meeting format for Advisory Committees.

**3. BACKGROUND:**

Advisory Committee Meetings went to a fully virtual format at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

At the August 14, 2024 Council Meeting, Council considered a resolution from the Georgina Agricultural Advisory Committee requesting that it consider a hybrid meeting format for Committees of Council. Accordingly, Council directed staff to investigate and consider the meeting format for Committees of Council and for the Georgina Public Library Board.

As directed by Council, staff have reviewed and considered relevant options for a preferred meeting format for the following Council Appointed Committees:

- Georgina Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Georgina Appeals Committee
- Georgina Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Georgina Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee
- Georgina Environmental Advisory Committee
- Georgina Heritage Advisory Committee
- Georgina Safe and Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Committee of Adjustment

Currently, the Georgina Public Library Board mirrors the format of the advisory committees for its meetings; however, under the *Public Libraries Act*, the Board is authorized to determine the mode of calling and conducting its meetings. Historically, the Georgina Public Library Board has always employed the same meeting format as the other advisory committees.

#### **4. ANALYSIS:**

##### **4.1 Meeting Formats**

Currently, the Town of Georgina has two meeting formats in place for its meetings.

##### **Virtual Meetings**

The Virtual meeting format consists of a meeting held from a remote location by electronic means. This method allows the meeting to be conducted through digital platforms or communication tools, where Committee members, staff, and members of the public, engage remotely via video conferencing. This format allows individuals to interact, share information, and collaborate in real-time, regardless of their physical location, using internet-based technologies to facilitate meetings.

##### **Structured Hybrid Meetings**

The Structured Hybrid meeting format refers to a meeting that combines both in-person and virtual participation. In this format, Committee members and staff attend the Council Chambers in-person for each meeting, while allowing the public to join the meeting either remotely or in-person. Committee members have the opportunity to participate virtually in exceptional circumstances. Council meetings are currently held using the structured hybrid format.

##### **4.2 Options For Conducting Advisory Committee Meetings**

### **Option 1 - Virtual Meetings**

Through Virtual meetings, Committee members gain the ability to access meetings from remote locations, allowing them to volunteer their time to support Georgina's Advisory Committees through flexible means. The continuation of virtual meetings is seamless, as all Advisory Committees have been conducting them since the beginning of the term and are operating efficiently. One (1) staff member is required to successfully operate all necessary applications and effectively manage meetings. IT staff and Staff Liaisons are also available for assistance through virtual participation at remote locations. Virtual meetings are easily accessible and have increased citizen engagement, while also providing environmental benefits such as reduced emissions, as staff, Committee members, and the public no longer need to use transportation to meet at the Civic Centre to participate in-person. The Clerk's Division has also received positive feedback from Committee members, a majority preferring to continue virtual meetings, as they provide added flexibility. Additionally, attending virtually has increased the number of prospective candidates interested in joining the Committees.

### **Option 2 - Structured Hybrid Meetings**

The Structured Hybrid meeting format requires both Committee members and staff to attend in-person at the Council Chambers for each meeting. Committee members may participate virtually under exceptional circumstances. This format aligns with the format of Council meetings, ensuring that if the public attends in-person, the Committee will also be present in the Council Chambers. Implementing Structured Hybrid meetings will necessitate additional staffing to manage both in-person and virtual participation, as well as to oversee the technological setup. IT staff and Staff Liaisons will be required to attend meetings in-person at the Council Chambers to support the execution of these meetings. Given that Advisory Committee meetings occur multiple evenings per week, IT staff will be required to be available on-site during these times and days, as will the various staff members required to ensure the efficient operation of the Structured Hybrid meetings.

### **Option 3 - Each Advisory Committee shall determine its preferred meeting format, either Virtual or Structured Hybrid, at the first scheduled meeting of each Council term, and shall remain with this format for the duration of the term.**

This option provides the most flexibility, as each Advisory Committee has the opportunity to determine its preferred meeting format during the first scheduled meeting of each Council term. At their first meeting, members of each Advisory Committee will vote on their preferred meeting format: Virtual or Structured Hybrid. Once a majority vote has been reached, the chosen meeting format shall remain in effect for the duration of the term. The first scheduled meeting of the Council term will be conducted using the meeting format that was in place during the previous Council term for each respective Advisory Committee.

With regard to the current 2022-2026 Term of Council, Committee members would decide on their preferred meeting format at their next scheduled meeting.

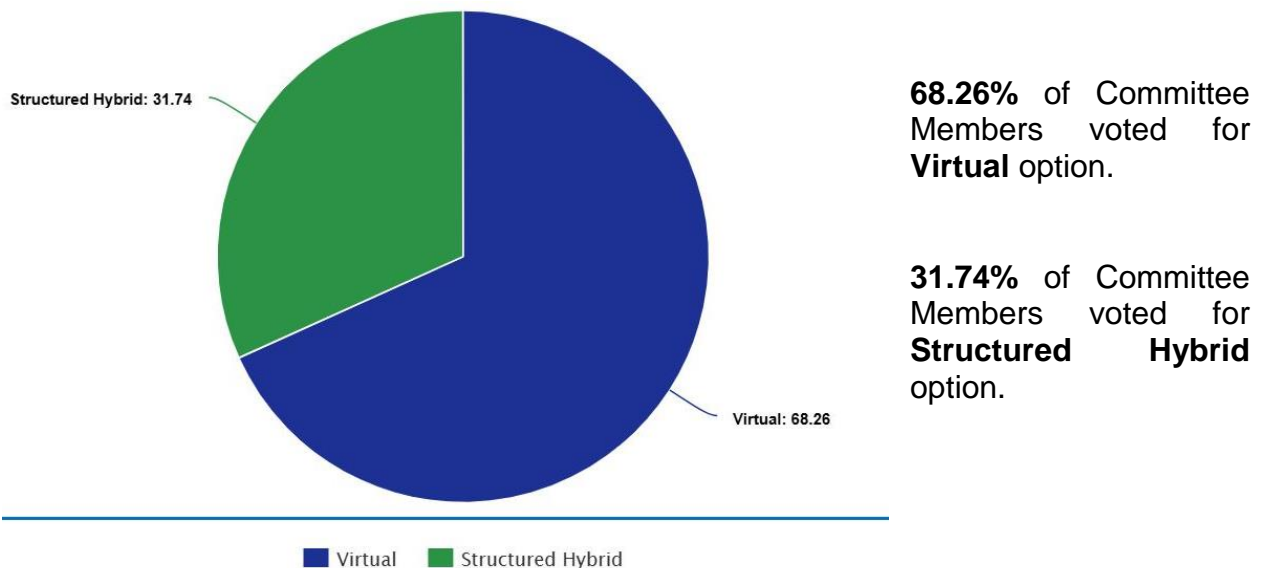
### 4.3 Survey

On February 7, 2025, a survey was emailed to each Advisory Committee seeking input from members on their preferred meeting format for the remainder of the 2022-2026 Term of Council. The options presented included Virtual Meetings and Structured Hybrid Meetings. Committee members were provided with the opportunity to select the meeting format they would prefer to participate in. The following descriptions were provided within the survey:

**Virtual:** Committee Members and Staff would participate in a Meeting from a remote location by electronic means, continuing with the current Committee meeting structure.

**Structured Hybrid:** Committee Members and Staff would be required to attend the Council Chambers in-person for each meeting, while allowing the public to participate virtually or in-person. Members will have the opportunity to participate virtually in exceptional circumstances. Structured Hybrid Meetings align with the structure of Council Meetings.

Overall Survey Results:



### 5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Delivering service excellence

Creating a vibrant, healthy, and safe community for all

### 6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

Budgetary impacts will be dependent on the option chosen by Council. The budgetary impact has been calculated as a range, as the number of staff involved in each type of committee meeting may vary. The approximate per-meeting cost for a virtual committee meeting ranges from \$286.43 to \$492.79. The approximate per-meeting cost for a hybrid meeting ranges from \$583.23 to \$1,649.28.

The total annual budgetary impact will be dependent on the number of meetings scheduled for each committee, which could range from 8 to 20 meetings per year. We have a total of 9 committees (excluding Georgina Public Library Board). The annual budgetary impact for virtual meetings for individual committee ranges from \$2,291.44 to \$9,855.8 and for Hybrid meetings ranges from \$4,665.84 to \$39,582.72. Hybrid meeting costs are higher due to the increased number of staff involved in administering the meeting, as well as the additional time required for technology setup and testing.

**7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:**

There are no notice requirements or public consultation necessary in this determination.

**8. CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, staff are seeking Council's direction on the preferred format for conducting Advisory Committee meetings through consideration of the following options:

Option 1 - Virtual Meetings

Option 2 - Structured Hybrid Meetings

Option 3 - Each Advisory Committee shall determine its preferred meeting format, either Virtual or Structured Hybrid, at the first scheduled meeting of each Council term, and shall continue with this format for the duration of the term.

**APPROVALS**

Prepared By:	Samantha Naumoski, Committee Services Coordinator
Reviewed By:	Mamata Baykar, Deputy Clerk
Reviewed By:	Rachel Dillabough, Town Clerk
Recommended By:	Michael Bigioni, Director of Legislative Services
Approved By:	Ryan Cronsberry, CAO