

City of Fernie Communications Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION:

The City of Fernie *Communications Committee* is a select committee of the City and functions primarily in an advisory capacity to City Council.

The *Committee* is responsible for reviewing the *Communications Audit* (the *Audit*): and

1. making recommendations respecting implementation of internal and external communication initiatives identified in the *Audit* and otherwise; and
2. pursuing goals and objectives that support Council's strategic priorities including enhanced civic literacy, greater public participation in decision-making, accountability, and organizational effectiveness.

In formulating its recommendations the *Committee* shall consider the importance of each of the goals or strategies in the *Audit* and other identified initiatives and prioritize them within the following framework:

- Priority:** The importance of the policy or goal to the City;
Support: The support from the community and staff for implementation;
Efficiency: The cost and related human resource requirements; and
Results: The outcomes and benefits to the City.

APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP:

The members of the *Committee* shall be appointed at pleasure by City Council from interested applicants that demonstrate an understanding and support for the policies, goals and objectives articulated in the *Audit*.

The *Committee* shall be comprised of:

- Two (2) members of City Council;
- Three (3) members from the community-at-large (ideally representing a cross-section of community interests).

The Mayor is an "ex-officio" member of the *Committee* and possesses all the rights, powers, privileges and duties of the other members when present at a meeting of the *Committee*. The Mayor is not included for the purposes of determining quorum.

Staff (non-voting) resources to the *Committee* shall be comprised of:

- The Chief Administrative Officer; and

- The Director of Corporate Administration Services.

MEETING SCHEDULE, CONDUCT AND NOTICE:

Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Community Charter* and *Council Procedure Bylaw*, including, but not limited to, the requirements for notice of meetings, the establishment of a meeting schedule, minute-taking, quorum, conduct and debate and voting.

The *Committee* shall select one of its members to serve as *Committee chair*.

All *Committee* meetings shall be open to the public except when closure of the meeting is authorized under section 90 of the *Community Charter* and the *Committee* adopts a resolution in accordance with section 92 of the *Charter* to close the meeting.

Recommendations made at *Committee* meetings must be approved by a majority vote of the members present at a duly constituted *Committee* meeting. If the votes of the members at a meeting are equal for and against a motion, the motion is defeated.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Committee Members are to avoid conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest exists where:

- a. A *Committee* member is a director, member or employee of an organization seeking a benefit from the City upon which the *Committee* will make a recommendation; or
- b. The *Committee* member has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the outcome of *Committee* deliberations.

A conflict of interest does not exist if:

- a. The pecuniary interest of the *Committee* member is a pecuniary interest in common with members of the municipality generally; or
- b. The pecuniary interest is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the member in relation to the matter.

If a *Committee* member considers that he or she is not entitled to participate in the discussion of a matter or to vote on a question in respect of the matter, the member must declare this and state the general nature of why the member considers this to be the case.

Where a conflict of interest exists, a *Committee* member:

1. Must not take part in the discussion of the matter and is not entitled to vote on any question in respect of the matter;

2. Must immediately leave the meeting or that part of the meeting during which the matter is under consideration; and
3. Must not attempt in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any question in respect of the matter.

When a declaration of a conflict of interest is made by a *Committee* member:

1. The *Committee secretary* recording the minutes of the meeting must record the member's declaration, the reasons given for it and the times of the member's departure from the meeting room and, if applicable, of the member's return; and
2. The person presiding at the meeting must ensure that the member is not present at the meeting at the time of any vote on the matter.

Perceived Conflict of Interest

Where a perceived conflict of interest might exist, the member may note that a perception of conflict might exist, but need not declare a conflict and exit the meeting if in the member's view there is no actual conflict of interest.

Council Review

Where in the opinion of a *Committee* a member is in a conflict of interest and has not so declared, the *Committee* may ask for a review of the matter by the Director of Corporate Administration Services. The matter, if unresolved, may then be referred to Council for review.

AUTHORITY AND REPORTING:

The *Committee* and its members will not represent themselves as having any authority beyond that delegated by Council.

The *Committee* shall forward a copy of their adopted meeting minutes to the Director of Corporate Administration Services for certification and inclusion on a Council Agenda for information purposes.

At least once each year, the *Committee* shall prepare an Annual Report to Council that summarizes its activities, achievements and recommendations for the preceding year and its goals and objectives for the coming year.

The *Committee* is authorized to communicate with external organizations and agencies to collect information and make inquiries. Where the *Committee* wishes to express opinions or make recommendations to external organizations and agencies, it must first obtain authorization from City Council in that regard.

COMMITTEE MEETING GUIDELINES:

Committee meeting guidelines are appended to these Terms of Reference for the information of the *Committee* as Appendix A.