



Township of Dawn-Euphemia

POLICY FOR BROADCASTING AND ELECTRONIC RECORDING OF MEETINGS

POLICY STATEMENT

To provide guidelines for the live streaming (broadcasting), audio/video recording and management of recordings of Council Meetings for the Township of Dawn-Euphemia.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following terms have the following meaning:

- a) **"Broadcasting"** is the *live* audio or video content.
- b) **"Chair"** means the Mayor or Chair of the meeting.
- c) **"Closed-Session"** means a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 239 of the *Municipal Act*.
- d) **"Council Meeting"** means any scheduled meetings of Council and any Public Hearings held in conjunction with a Council Meeting.
- e) **"Council Member"** means an elected member of Council.
- f) **"Council"** means the body of elected Council Members whom together form the elected council of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia.
- g) **"Open Meeting"** means any meeting of Council or Committee Meeting of Council that is open to the public in accordance with the *Municipal Act, 2001*.
- h) **"Staff"** means the officers and employees of The Corporation of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia including individuals providing services to the Township under contracts for services.
- i) **"Mayor"** means the head of Council.
- j) **"Township"** means the Township of Dawn-Euphemia.

POLICY

Open Meetings may be held virtually through electronic means, in person, or in a hybrid format with some participants attending in person and some participants attending virtually from a remote location through electronic means. Open Meetings of any format may be broadcast and/or video recorded to enhance transparency and accessibility and to encourage public participation.

Any Council Meeting or portion of a Council Meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 239 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* will not be broadcast or video recorded for public use. Closed-Session meetings may be video recorded and stored for municipal purposes only. To ensure confidentiality of Closed-Session meetings, any recorded audio/video will be stored on a hard-drive drive in a secure location as determined by the Clerk.

PROCEDURE

The Township may use an acceptable video conferencing platform to facilitate electronic meetings and electronic participation at in-person meetings.

The Townships meeting organizer, upon request, will send an electronic meeting invite to any member of Council, Committee members, and any required staff, when unable to attend the meeting in-person. All individuals including applicants, proponents, delegates, public, media wishing to participate in an

Open Meeting through electronic means must request to participate no later than 1:00pm on the day of the Meeting, whereupon the Township will provide a meeting invite to the participant through electronic means. Virtual participants will be admitted to the Open Meeting, once their invite is acknowledged by the meeting organizer and can remain until the meeting is adjourned. It will be recorded in the minutes, any Council Member, staff member or delegate that is attending the meeting by electronic means. Virtual participants will not be permitted into the meeting unless identified by name or other appropriate means.

Staff will be responsible for setting up the electronic meeting, issuing the meeting invitations, testing meeting links, providing information on how to join a meeting, and fulfilling the hosting duties of the meeting.

Please be advised that electronic participation is dependent upon the use of compatible equipment and consistent internet connection, which is outside of the control of the Township staff members. Meeting locations and available technology may hinder full participation of those joining remotely; therefore, it is strongly recommended that you attend meetings in person, where possible. Every effort will be made to accommodate those that cannot.

MEETING RECORDINGS

The official record of an Open Meeting shall be the written minutes as required by the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The keeping of a video recording of an Open Meeting shall not undermine the position of the approved minutes as the official record of Council and Committee decisions, motions and/or resolutions.

The official Council Agenda and public documents attached thereto, shall be what is published on the Township's Website and shall not be replaced with the audio or video recording of the Open Meeting. The Township will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the public can participate in the livestreaming of Open Meetings. However, on occasion due to technical difficulties, broadcasting and video recording may be unavailable or delayed. Any public meeting, where participants are attending virtually may be cancelled, delayed or postponed at the discretion of the Chair. At the discretion of the Chair, meetings where there are no virtual participants may not be cancelled, postponed, or delayed due to technical issues with broadcasting or recording of the meeting.

The Meeting Owl will make a statement at the beginning of the meeting informing all present that the meeting is being recorded. A sign will be placed at the entrance to the Council Chambers that "Council Meetings are Recorded".

All Council Meetings are recorded live via Zoom. By attending or speaking at a public meeting of Council you are consenting to your image, voice and comments being recorded and forming part of the live stream and public record.

RETENTION

The Town's general practice will be to retain the audio and video recordings for a minimum of two years + current year, or as long as required for meetings that are the subject of an investigation.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDINGS

Open Meeting audio/video recordings *will not* be made available on the internet; however, recordings will be accessible to the public as a retained record in accordance with the *Municipal Act, 2001* and subject to *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. By participating in an Open Meeting, all attendees and participants consent to the utilization, storage and availability of recordings as set out in this Policy.

Committee of Adjustments Meetings will not be recorded due to property owner privacy concerns; however all planning applications are subject to public inspection during regular business hours.

Any exceptions to this policy may be considered by Council.

RISK MITIGATION

Open Meetings are a public forum of statements, questions, and answers. Opinions expressed and statements made during an Open Meeting are those of the individual making them and not necessarily those of Council or the Township committee. Unless set out in a resolution, Council or a Township committee does not endorse or support the views, opinions, statements, or information expressed by an individual at an Open Meeting.

Statements which may be regarded as offensive, defamatory, incorrect, or contrary to law, and which may be the subject of potential liability, may be made at meetings. As the broadcasting and publishing of recordings of meetings increases the potential audience and permanence of such records, risks increase. Accordingly, the Chair has the discretion and authority to direct the termination or interruption of the broadcasting and recording of an Open Meeting if they consider it prudent or advisable to do so. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

The Chair may:

- a) Direct the Clerk to direct Staff to terminate or interrupt the recording of a meeting if they consider it advisable to do so due to conduct that is deemed inappropriate.
- b) Suspend a video recording for suspected material considered inappropriate as outlined below until Council or the Committee can review as a whole and determine whether the recording should remain public, or respectively deleted.

Material considered to be inappropriate includes, but is not limited to, material that may:

- a) Be false or misleading communication which damages the reputation of another individual or organization.
- b) Infringe on copyright.
- c) Breach the privacy of an individual or unauthorized disclosure of the personal information of an individual.
- d) Be offensive.
- e) Constitute discrimination.
- f) Constitute hatred of a person or group of people and is likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate.
- g) Disclose confidential or privileged information.

DISCLAIMER

Council Members, staff, guests and members of the public are advised that Council Meetings are being video/audio recorded, and will be live streamed. Comments and opinions expressed may be published and any comments expressed by individual Council Members, guests and the general public are their own, and do not necessarily represent the opinions or comments of the Dawn-Euphemia Council. The recorded video of the Council Meeting is not considered the official record of the meeting. The official record of the Council Meeting shall consist solely of the Minutes approved by Council.

USE OF RECORDING

No person may use the recorded meeting for any activity or may be reproduced except in accordance with the provisions of the *Copyright Act*, or with the express written permission of the Township.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council is responsible for approving this Policy and any amendments. The Clerk is responsible for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating this Policy.

CONSULTATION

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Commission
Ontario Ombudsman's Office

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy comes into force on October 7, 2024.
Resolution: 2024-170