

The Council of the Regional Municipality of York, at its meeting on September 24, 2015, considered Report No. 1 of the Regional Chair and adopted the following recommendation:

1. Council confirm and continue with the Committee of the Whole structure.

### Committee Structure

At its meeting on February 26, 2015 the Council of the Regional Municipality of York referred Report No. 1 of the Regional Chair to the Regional Council meeting scheduled for September 24, 2015.

#### 1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council determine whether to continue with the Committee of the Whole (Option 1) or re-establish Standing Committees (Option 2) for the remainder of the term of Council.

#### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to either continue with the Committee of the Whole or move to Standing Committees for the remainder of the term of Council.

#### 3. Background

Regional Council has used the Committee of the Whole structure since September 2013

At its meeting of June 27, 2013, Regional Council approved a recommendation that it pilot a Committee of the Whole process from September 2013 to September 2014, with a review in June 2014.

The pilot was generally considered a success. At its meeting of June 26, 2014, Regional Council adopted a recommendation that it continue with the Committee of the Whole.

Regional Council has met 23 times in Committee of the Whole from September 2013 to February 2015.

#### 4. Analysis and Options

The Committee of the Whole system offers various advantages

Committee of the Whole comprises all 21 Members of Council. All Members can participate fully, including hearing deputations and presentations, making motions and voting. Members of the public are able to have their deputations heard by all Members of Council.

The Committee of the Whole has been divided into sections that generally mirror the Region's Commissions. It has also been a forum where all Members – particularly those from the four local municipalities that have only one Regional representative – can attend and keep apprised of Committee deliberations.

Use of the Committee of the Whole is consistent with the practice in the nine local municipalities.

Option 1, which is the continued use of the Committee of the Whole, requires no membership or scheduling changes.

Standing Committees also offer various advantages

Standing Committees facilitate more focused presentations, deputations, and discussion by Committee members. They allow Committee members to develop specialized knowledge on issues that come before their Committees.

Standing Committees have traditionally also reflected the Region's Commissions. All Members can attend and participate in them. Only the Members of Standing Committees, however, have the right to make motions and vote.

The Region used Standing Committees successfully for almost 43 years from its inception in 1970 to September 2013. Standing Committees are used by the Cities of Toronto and Hamilton, Simcoe County and all regional municipalities except Peel.

Moving to Standing Committees would require some adjustments

There would need to be some adjustments if Regional Council moved back to the Standing Committee structure. These relate to naming the Standing Committees, their membership and the timing of meetings.

## Committee Structure

Firstly, Council would need to set up specific Standing Committees. The ones Council had before September 2013 worked well and could be re-established.

These are:

Community and Health Services

Environmental Services

Finance and Administration

Planning and Economic Development

Transportation Services

Secondly, Council would need to determine the membership for each of the Committees. Typically the Committees would have between five and nine Members. Members of Council would be asked to indicate their preferences within two weeks of a decision by Regional Council to go back to Standing Committees. The Regional Chair would then bring forward the recommended membership to the next meeting of Council. Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs would be elected at the first meeting of each Committee.

The third consideration is the timing of meetings. The 2015 calendar of meetings approved by Regional Council on September 11, 2014 provides for all meetings of the Committee of the Whole to occur on Thursdays. This has led to some of the local municipalities scheduling meetings on Wednesdays.

This would mean that to ensure quorum, Standing Committees would be scheduled only on Thursdays. Standing Committees would generally meet on the first two Thursdays of the month. Regional Council would meet on the third Thursday of the month. The fourth Thursday of the month would be reserved for Special Meetings or Council Education and Training sessions.

Standing Committees could meet at set times on Thursdays. For instance, Week 1 could have Transportation Services meet at 9:00 a.m., Environmental Services at 11:00 a.m., a short lunch break and then Community and Health Services at 1:30 p.m. Week 2 would have Planning and Economic Development meet at 9:00 a.m. with Finance and Administration at 11:00 a.m. See Table 1.

The Committee of the Whole has been an excellent forum for budget discussions as it allows all Members to participate fully in hearing the presentations and discussing the various budgets. It is therefore proposed that if Council determines to re-establish Standing Committees, it still meet in Committee of the Whole for budget considerations.

**Table 1  
Schedule for Standing Committees**

	Week 1	Week 2
9:00 to 10:45	Transportation Services	Planning and Economic Development
11:00 to 12:45	Environmental Services	Finance and Administration
	Lunch	
1:30 to 3:15	Community and Health Services	YRRTC Board

1. HYI to meet after Council (typically 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month)
2. Audit Committee to meet three times annually at 9:00 a.m. Wednesday in 2<sup>nd</sup> week (February, June, October only)

There would need to be a 15-minute setup period immediately prior to the beginning of the second and third meetings of each day.

Use of consent agendas would help to streamline the meetings.

Option 2 would require the following:

1. re-establishing the Community and Health Services, Environmental Services, Finance and Administration, Planning and Economic Development and Transportation Services Committees
2. Members of Council notifying the Regional Chair of their membership wishes within two weeks of Council's decision to go back to Standing Committees.
3. the Regional Chair bringing forward the recommended membership on the Standing Committees to the next Council meeting.
4. electing Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Standing Committees at the first meeting of each Committee.
5. the Committees meeting at set times on Thursdays in accordance with the schedule set out above.
6. Council meet in Committee of the Whole for budget considerations.
7. the Regional Clerk bringing forward the necessary Procedure Bylaw amendments prior to the Standing Committees meeting.

## Committee Structure

The change in Committee structure would be effective September 2015 in order ensure a smooth transition.

The Standing Committee structure would result in minor scheduling changes to some Committees and Boards

York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, Housing York Inc. and the Audit Committee will continue to meet separately. York Region Rapid Transit Corporation Board would meet on the Thursday of the second week of the cycle. This would be right after Committee of the Whole or at 1:30 p.m., depending on Council's decision relating to the Committee structure.

The Housing York Inc. Board could meet right after Council each month. The Audit Committee could meet on Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. in the second week of the cycle in February, June and October each year.

Regional Council would need a 2/3 majority vote to change to a Standing Committee structure at this time

Regional Council last made a decision on the Committee structure on June 26, 2014. Council's Procedure Bylaw provides that no question may be reconsidered within one year following Council's decision unless Council decides to do so by a 2/3 majority vote. Under the Bylaw, any motion for reconsideration would have to be moved by a Member who voted in the majority on June 26, 2014. The first Council meeting at which a 2/3 vote would not be required to change the Committee structure is September 24, 2015.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Regional Council's Committee structure responds to the Open and Responsive Governance goal in *Vision 2051*. Specifically it continues to ensure that the Region sets high standards for transparency and accountability. It also supports the Good Government goal of the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan to maintain the accessibility, transparency, accountability and reliability of Regional government.

### 5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications attached to the adoption of this report.

### 6. Local Municipal Impact

There is no local impact attached to the adoption of this report.

## 7. Conclusion

Both the Committee of the Whole and the Standing Committee systems have their own advantages. Regional Council has successfully used both systems in the past. Any decision to re-establish Standing Committees would take effect in September 2015.

Recommended by:

Wayne Emmerson  
Regional Chair

February 19, 2015

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

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