

1110-30 Council Procedure
Bylaw Amend.

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Angela Hawkshaw

From: Kevin Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 11:13 AM
To: Council
Subject: (External Email) Council agenda 28 October 2024, Item 4, Council procedure bylaw amendment

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To Mayor and Council

RE Council agenda 28 October 2024, Item 4, Council procedure bylaw amendment

I strongly oppose the elimination of monthly open forums and their replacement with much less frequent "Town Halls". I, along with many other community members, previously submitted detailed comments as to why the Council proposal was not a well thought out way to enhance input and communication from the broader community on important issues that might otherwise be ignored or overlooked by Council. You should refer to that earlier input before voting tonight. In contrast to this feedback, no one from the broader community advocated to eliminate open forum, at least on the public record.

Many of us suggested retaining and supplementing open forum with the infrequent (and longer) Town Halls, rather than eliminating open forum. The approaches are complementary; one does not adequately replace the other. Reports on the initial Town Hall suggest there was more community interest and input than staff and Council anticipated. That is good to know. Of course, for those of us unable to physically attend, we have to rely on second-hand reports of who said what and how councilors responded in public. That highlights a major flaw of the Town Hall-only approach; if one can't or doesn't physically attend, one has no real idea who said what and in what context. We in the broader community appreciate hearing what our fellow community members are thinking- it broadens our own horizons. But a Town Hall with no capacity for virtual participation fails at that.

The previous proposal stated that the Town Hall meetings would not be enabled for virtual attendance, in contrast to Council and COW meetings held at Saanich Hall. Instead, they would be "minuted" as a way of providing a public record. You have had the initial Town Hall. When and where will those "minutes" become available? Hopefully, not just before the next Town Hall in 4 or 6 months (or more)!

The amended bylaw does not specify a minimum number of Town Halls to be held per year. Councilors previously discussed the merits of two per year as recommended in the staff report, or maybe three. As this bylaw is written, Saanich might have zero or one Town Hall per year! Furthermore, the bylaw does not specify the actual timing of meetings, in contrast to what Saanich does for Council and advisory committee meetings. Why is that? Answer those questions and fix the bylaw before passing it!

As an aside, if Council is really interested in getting community input on issues to be on the next meeting agenda, consider amending the meeting bylaw to give the community more advance notice and opportunity to review proposed policies, staff reports etc. Posting only 2.5(?) business days in advance on complicated policies does not enhance community input.

In short, I strongly oppose eliminating monthly open forum as a regular and predictable COW agenda item and replacing it with Town Halls of unspecified frequency and scheduling. The two approaches



compliment, but do not replace, each other as they currently exist. Instead, the net effect seems to be an attempt to suppress, not enhance, dialogue between the broader community and Council.

Finally, specify how often and when the Town Hall meetings will occur.

Kevin Brown

█ Zinnia Road

Saanich

Tara DaSilva

From: K Whitworth [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 9:47 AM
To: Council
Subject: (External Email) 2024.10.28 - Agenda Item - E. 4. - Council Procedural Bylaw Amendment - RESENDING

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2024.10.28 - Agenda Item - E. 4. - Council Procedural Bylaw Amendment



K Whitworth <[REDACTED]>

To 'Council'

Cc 'clerksec@saanich.ca'



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Dear Council:

My comments on the changes to Bylaw 9660.

1. Proposed: 11. (d) – “Where reasonably practicable by means of the electronic or other communication facilities in use, any person who has an interest in a matter being considered by Council at a meeting conducted by electronic or other communication facilities **may be** afforded an opportunity to provide written or verbal input.

Comment – “may be afforded” suggests that the person is still being screened and does not define what the criteria is for screening. If you are referring to s. 41, then I suggest you say “s. 41 applies”. As well, in s. 43, you “shall be afforded”. Why the difference?

2. Proposed: 39. – Any person who has an interest in any of the following matters being considered by Council at a regular Council meeting **may be afforded** an opportunity to be heard in person or through electronic or other communication facilities, subject to section 11(d) provided they identify themselves by first providing their name:

Comment – Same as above in #1.

3. Proposed: 43. – All persons who believe their interest in property is affected by the proposed bylaw shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard in person or by a representative in matters contained in the bylaw provided they first identify themselves by sharing their name and the name of the person or persons they represent. Subject to section 11(d), such person or representatives may be heard through electronic or other communication facilities.

Comment – I am baffled why in s. 43 a property owner or their representative “shall be afforded”, when in s. 11(d) and s. 39, speakers “may be afforded”. Be consistent, go with “shall” in all 3 cases.

Yours truly,

Katherine Whitworth
Royal Oak Resident

Sent from [Outlook](#)