



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF  
ASHFIELD-COLBORNE-WAWANOSH

**BY-LAW NUMBER 27-2022**

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**BEING A BY-LAW** to adopt a Live Streaming and Virtual Participation at Meetings Policy for the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh.

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**WHEREAS** Section 5(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, C.25, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, C.25, as amended, provides a municipality with the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of The Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh deems it appropriate to adopt the "Live Streaming and Virtual Participation at Meetings Policy" to provide expectations and requirements surrounding participation at Council meetings;

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh enacts as follows:

1. The "Live Streaming and Virtual Participation at Meetings Policy" attached hereto as Schedule A is hereby adopted.
2. This by-law shall come into force and take effect immediately upon final passing thereof.

**Read a first and second time this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2022.**

**Read a third time and finally passed this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2022.**

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Mayor, Glen McNeil

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Clerk, Florence Witherspoon



TOWNSHIP OF  
ASHFIELD-COLBORNE-WAWANOSH

# Live Streaming & Virtual Participation at Meetings

**DATE:** March 22, 2022  
**BY-LAW NO.:** 27-2022

## 1. Policy Statement

This Policy aims to improve accessibility and community participation in relation to decision making processes. It is predicted that Live Streaming Council Meetings on the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh “the Municipality” website will provide more flexible and convenient access of Council debate and decisions to a wider audience. Live Streaming Council Meetings also eliminates geographic and time barriers which may prevent the public from attending meetings in person; thereby resulting in greater community confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision-making process.

The Live Streaming & Virtual Participation at Meetings Policy provides the policy direction and guidelines for Councillors, Staff, and members of the public. This Council Policy reflects Council’s commitment to transparent and accessible decision-making processes, with the introduction of Live Streaming of Regular and Special Meetings of Council. Any parts of Council’s Meetings that are closed to members of the public under Section 239 of the Municipal Act are regarded as confidential and will not be recorded or streamed live.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Regular and Special Meetings of Council.
- Councillors and Staff of the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh.
- Members of the public, both as Attendees and Participants.

## 3. Definitions

**ACW’s Website-** The official web page of the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh  
[www.acwtownship.ca](http://www.acwtownship.ca)

**Attendee** - a person either present in the Council Chambers, or virtually observe the meeting.

**Closed Meeting** - a meeting of the council which has been closed to members of the public under Section 239 of the Municipal Act.

**Chair** - the person who chairs a meeting of the Council, predominantly, the Mayor.

**Delegate** – any person, group of persons, firm, or organization, who is neither a Member of Council or Staff, and is speaking to Council.

**Live Streaming** - the process of delivering multimedia content via the internet, in audio and/or video format from a single content source to multiple listeners/viewers.

**Participant** - a Delegate, Staff, or Member of Council.

## 4. Live Streaming Procedure

Regular and Special Meetings held in the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh (ACW) Council Chamber will be streamed live, on ACW's Website in accordance with this Policy.

Closed Meetings are regarded as confidential and will not be recorded or streamed live.

The Chair and/or the Clerk have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of Live Streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory, or potentially inappropriate to be published.

Council will make every effort to ensure that Live Streaming is available, and takes no responsibility for, and cannot be held liable for technical issues beyond its control. Technical issues may include, but are not limited to, the availability of the internet connection, device failure or malfunction, unavailability of social media platforms or power outages.

The official record of all Council Meetings shall be the written minutes in accordance with the Municipal Act Section 239(1). The live stream file will be archived to ACW's YouTube channel. Files will be hosted on the Municipality's YouTube Channel during the current year and for one year thereafter.

Video files from Live Streaming on the internet are part of the public realm and as such, are subject to alteration by a member of the public with no municipal control over such alterations. The Municipality assumes no liability associated with any alterations that may be made by a member of the public on the internet.

By attending a Council meeting, all Participants and Attendees are consenting to their image, voice, comments, and presentations being recorded. Notices will be posted in the Council Chambers advising Attendees that Live Streaming will be taking place. Notice will also be published on ACW's website. Notice specific to Delegates will be provided prior to the meeting.

### **Participants Procedure:**

All Participants in a meeting where there is a virtual platform must adhere to the Procedural By-Law and all other relevant policies.

Where a member of Council chooses to participate virtually, they shall mute their audio when they are not speaking. They may also be asked to mute and/or turn off their video, at any point during the meeting, to improve bandwidth.

To provide for a smoothly run meeting, the Chair & Clerk shall be present, where possible, in the Council Chambers. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances may determine meetings to be completely virtual.

Staff may participate virtually, subject to the pre-approval of the CAO.

Virtual Participants who wish to move or second a motion or raise their hand to speak will use the 'raised hand' function.

## **Virtual Delegations and Presentations:**

Delegates wishing to participate virtually will be offered the option at the time they register with the Clerk as a delegation. A link to participate virtually will be sent in advance of the meeting, with the link or telephone number to connect.

The Chair shall call upon the Delegate as the item appears in the agenda.

For Public Meetings, the Clerk shall monitor the Participant List in the electronic meeting system. Those wishing to speak can utilize the 'raised hand' function when called upon by the Mayor, and staff will bring them into the meeting one at a time, and the Mayor will grant them the floor.

The Chair shall remind the speaker that they have 10 minutes to address Council, as per the Procedural By-Law.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chair shall advise the Delegate that they may leave the virtual meeting and they can watch the remainder of the meeting via the livestreamed feed on the municipal website.

## **5. Responsibility**

The Clerk, or designate, will 'host' the meeting and shall have the ability to mute Members of Council, Staff and any other Participants who do not have the floor and/or where the background noise is interfering with the meeting.

The Chair will make the following remarks to all Participants:

- Remind those in attendance virtually to remain muted unless it is time to speak.
- Explain that the meeting is being hosted both in person and virtually, and some Participants will be participating via electronic means.
- Remind electronic Participants that their name and/or phone number will appear on the screen and form part of the livestream and archived video.
- Livestreaming is available at [www.acwtownship.ca/agendas-minutes](http://www.acwtownship.ca/agendas-minutes)