



# Welcome to A Citizen's Guide to Working with the Council of the Township of Bonfield.

This guide has been developed to help you understand the decision-making process used by Council and to identify opportunities for members of the community to become involved. Community involvement is a very important element for how we do business in Bonfield. We encourage you to get involved and have identified a variety of ways that you can - appearing as a delegation at a Council meeting, or joining one of the Committees, are just a couple of ways that are explained in this guide.

Your input counts, so take a moment to review the information provided and enjoy your involvement.

- How is my Municipality Governed?
- How do matters come before Council for decision?
- How do I bring forward any issues and concerns to Committee and Council?
- How should I prepare in order to appear before Committee or Council?
- How will I Know the Council or Committee Decision?
- How can I get involved in my community?

## How is my Municipality Governed?

Every four years, Bonfield residents/electors choose a Mayor (the Head of Council) and four Councillors, who in turn are responsible for making decisions related to the delivery of local services and programs. Examples are listed below:

- Administrative Services
- Development application process.
- Assessment, Tax information.
- Fire and emergency planning.
- Licensing and Inspection, building permits, animal control, by-law enforcement.
- Cemeteries.
- Policy development including land use.
- Recreation and culture.
- Roads and parks maintenance.
- Waste Management

For more information about the Municipal Departments and Services please call the Bonfield Township Office at 705-776-2641.

### How do matters come before Council for decision?

Council deals with a wide variety of issues. Generally, the business of the Municipality is dealt with through the agenda at meetings held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month. Items are received by the municipal staff and are placed on the agenda in the appropriate section for Council to consider. The Municipal Procedural Bylaw sets out the rules and regulations for Council and Committee meetings. Council votes to pass a resolution that becomes the decision of Council, which provides direction to staff on how to proceed. Sometimes, matters are referred to Standing Committees of Council. At the Committee level, staff reports, community issues and concerns are discussed and offered for further consideration.

Council is Chaired by the Mayor. When matters are considered and debated at one of the Standing Committees, recommendations are forwarded to Council for consideration. At Council the recommendations are either amended, adopted, defeated, or returned to Committee.

### How do I bring forward any issues and concerns to Council?

Contact the municipal office and speak to the appropriate department to determine if your concerns can be addressed within the Department's ongoing service plan.

If you are unable to resolve your issue or concern with staff, contact your Councillor and discuss your concerns directly with him or her. You may find that your Councillor may already be working to resolve the matter or can provide support and assistance.

Your next step may require a presentation at a Council meeting. Members of the public who wish to make presentations on their own behalf or on behalf of companies and organizations are called delegations.

At the delegation you will have an opportunity to present your concerns along with your proposed action for Council to consideration. Contact the Municipal Clerk's office 705-776-2641 and they will help you to determine which Committee meeting you will need to attend.

### Request to Address the Council:

If you wish to address the Council, you will need to provide the Clerk's office with a letter detailing your concerns and the actions you would like Council to consider. The Clerk will place that item on the next appropriate agenda and inform you of the date, time and location of the meeting. This must be confirmed by noon on the Thursday immediately prior to meeting.

Contact Information: You can contact the Clerk's office at 705-776-2641, [cao.clerk@bonfieldtownship.com](mailto:cao.clerk@bonfieldtownship.com) or in person to register your request to present.

### How should I prepare in order to appear before Committee or Council?

When you appear before Council, you have up to 10 minutes to present your position. Here are some helpful tips:

- Prepare yourself in advance of the presentation by making notes or writing out the text of your presentation. In addition, it helps the Committee/Council when they have the details of your concern in writing. Your written material presented at the meeting becomes part of the official public record. If you make the written presentation available to the Clerk's Office, they may copy and distribute the material in advance of the meeting for Council.
- If you are appearing on behalf of a larger group such as a neighbourhood group, let the Clerk know that you will be speaking on behalf of the group as their spokesperson. Larger groups are to select a spokesperson to make their presentation. The group may elect up to two members to speak to Council with each having 5 minutes to bring their presentation forward.
- The delegation portion of the agenda is dealt with at the beginning of the meeting. The Mayor will call out your name and identify the subject matter which you will be addressing.
- Once all delegations have been heard, the Mayor will place the item(s) of business before the Council for any questions or clarification. Councillors will have the opportunity to discuss and/or debate the matter and formulate a recommendation if it is appropriate.

### How will I Know the Council or Committee Decision?

If you appear before or Council, the Clerk's department will send correspondence to you advising of Council's decision once it is made. Call the Clerk's Department 705-776-2641 if you need further clarification.

### How can I get involved in my community?

There are a number of ways you can become involved in your community. Throughout the year volunteers are required for various Boards and Committees. Consider volunteering for one of the Committees or Boards. You can contact the Clerk's office for details regarding the mandate, meeting dates and times, and the need for volunteers.

While all Council Members are involved with the resolution of Municipal wide issues, councillors are directly responsible for ensuring that the issues concerning the residents are voiced. Council agendas are posted on the municipal website the Friday prior to the meeting. If you are interested in an agenda topic you may call a Council member prior to the meeting for discussion as well.

Council Members and volunteers are also actively involved in a number of Boards, Committees, Associations and Agencies such as:

- Corporate Services Committee
- Recreation & Fitness Committee
- Library Board
- Planning Advisory Committee

Once again, the Township of Bonfield wishes to reinforce the value of teamwork and civic loyalty as we provide essential services ensuring all citizens a secure environment in which to live, work and play.