

Memorandum to the Council of Corporation of the Municipality of Temagami

Subject: Transition to Zoom Webinar for Council and Public Meetings

Memo No: 2025-M-108

Date: May 8, 2025

Attachment: None

Prepared By: Laala Jahanshahloo – CAO/ Treasurer

Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Memo 2025-M-108 as presented.

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1. Executive Summary

Effective April 17, 2025, the Municipality transitioned from Zoom Meeting to Zoom Webinar for virtual Council and Public Meetings. This change was made to enhance security, increase administrative control, and provide a more professional experience. While the new platform represents a modest annual cost increase, it has already resulted in smoother operations, reduced disruptions, and positive feedback from participants.

2. Background

Since 2020, the Municipality has used Zoom Meeting for virtual governance. Over time, however, challenges emerged, including:

- Unwanted disruptions (“Zoom bombing”);
- Accidental or unauthorized microphone/camera use;
- Limited control over participant interaction and content sharing.

A review of available options concluded that Zoom Webinar better meets the Municipality’s needs for secure, orderly, and compliant public meetings.

3. Rationale for Transition

Zoom Webinar offers the following key advantages:

- Enhanced Security: Only designated panelists (Council and staff) are visible and audible.
- Controlled Public Input: Members of the public engage through moderated Q&A or chat, reducing interruptions.
- Improved Presentation: A cleaner interface keeps the focus on speakers and content.
- Device Compatibility: Works across all major platforms and operating systems.

4. Cost Comparison

Platform	Annual Cost	Notes
Zoom Meeting (Pro)	\$215	Basic controls; higher risk of disruptions.
Zoom Webinar (Add-on)	\$918	Advanced host tools and secure participant access.

5. Legislative Alignment and Justification

The transition directly supports requirements under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, including:

- Section 5.1 – Accountability and transparency;
- Section 9 – General governance tools;
- Section 239 – Public access to meetings.

Zoom Webinar enhances compliance while improving the experience for Council, staff, and the public.

6. Sector Trends

According to 2024 benchmarking data, over 60% of Ontario municipalities have adopted Zoom Webinar or similar platforms for public meetings, citing similar advantages in professionalism, accessibility, and control.

7. Implementation

The transition was implemented on April 17, 2025, with the first meeting being the Land Use By-law Public Input Session. Staff training was completed in advance, and no disruptions were reported. Early feedback from participants has been positive, highlighting improved clarity and ease of use.

8. Conclusion

Zoom Webinar has proven to be a secure, accessible, and well-suited platform for the Municipality's public meetings. The modest additional cost is justified by the significant improvements in meeting management and public confidence.