

Town of Hinton  
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Agenda

March 9, 2021 - 4:00 PM

Committee Room, Hinton Government Centre



**TOWN COUNCIL MISSION**

*Council serves the interests of our citizens  
to enable our community to reach full  
potential.*

All Council meetings are scent free.  
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Page

**ORDER**

1. Call to Order

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

1. Standing Committee Agenda - March 9, 2021

**CITIZENS "MINUTE WITH COUNCIL"**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- 3 - 8 1. Options for Future Town Hall and Engagement Events

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

- 9 - 10 1. Greenhouse Training Building

**REPORTING**

1. Council
  - Reporting
  - Urgent Matters
2. Chief Administrative Officer
  - Reporting
  - Status Report
3. Legislative Services Update
4. Executive Assistant Logistics Information

**CLOSED SESSION**

1. CAO Quarterly Performance Review Brief (Section 24(1)(b) of FOIP)
2. Personnel - Organizational Update - Verbal (Section 24(1)(b) of FOIP)

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Agenda

March 9, 2021

**ADJOURNMENT**

1. Adjournment



# TOWN OF HINTON Administrative Report

DIRECTION REQUEST     REQUEST FOR DECISION     INFORMATION ITEM

**DATE:** Standing Committee Meeting of Council of March 9, 2021  
**FROM:** Emily Olsen, Chief Administrative Officer  
**RE:** **OPTIONS FOR FUTURE TOWN HALL AND ENGAGEMENT EVENTS**

## Recommended Action

*That Committee direct Administration to bring the Future Town Hall Options report to the April 6, 2021 Regular Council Meeting for approval of Option 1 for future virtual Town Halls and other online organizational engagement events.*

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## Background

On October 13, 2020, a report outlining options for a virtual Town Hall Meeting ahead of the 2021 Budget Cycle. The following motion was postponed until after a simplified Town Hall Meeting was held:

*That Council direct Administration to prepare a report detailing recommendations on Options 2 and 3 in preparation for a future Town Hall and other organizational engagement events before end of Quarter 2, 2021.*

At the March 2, 2021 Regular Council Meeting, Council addressed the postponed direction, passing the motion.

The options within the approved direction refer to “Option 2: Zoom Webinar Configuration w/ World Café Engagement Session”, and “Option 3: New Digital/Tele-Town Hall Configuration” which were presented in the previous report.

In late August 2020, following discussion regarding methods of public engagement in advance of the 2021 Budget Cycle, Council sought information from Administration regarding a hybrid online and in-person Town Hall event. The 2020 Town Hall of the Council was held using the existing zoom software and livestreamed via YouTube. While a hardware issue did impair the efficacy of the final video, this was an audio issue unrelated to the format and software used— rather a misconfiguration in audio settings. This meeting was viewed 277 times so far.

Administration continued investigating better options for future Town Halls and other engagement events since Council’s direction in October 2020. While the current configuration is workable for our needs, there are options to deliver a higher quality product by upgrading to a higher-level software package. The increased package would offer administration better meeting management tools, wider audience/participant numbers, and enable organization wide access to the Zoom Web Conference or Seminar tools.

Three distinct options are provided in this report. While option 2 and 3 do specify named software providers, there are other software that could be engaged in a competitive bidding process, although it

will require significant time commitment from the Town staff. Option 1 presented with Zoom webinar level package, however, does not have a competitor at scale with the amount of integrations and benefits offered, and with the current level of familiarity with the software existent in the organization.

The recommended action of the Town of Hinton Strategic Services in consultation with the Information Technology unit is to proceed with acquiring Zoom webinar licensing and to formulate a strategy for its use internally and externally.

Encapsulated in this report are three options previously researched and further evaluated; Zoom Webinar, Nationbuilder, and a traditional TeleTownHall. These three options are all distinct routes to the originally stated objective of a more engaging virtual Town Hall and similar online engagement events.

## Analysis

In this section, the options, their cost, pros and cons are presented for consideration.

### Option 1: Zoom Webinar Configuration

Administration recommends expanding Zoom subscription to webinar level and enable improved virtual hosting capacity for events both within and external to the organization.

Currently the town of Hinton has a pro account with multiple sub licenses. The upgrade to webinar level would offer benefits organization wide. As an example, this would enable panelists – controlled attendees that could prevent risks in scenarios like Zoom bombing, on screen polling for vote logging, and the ability to add Q&A sessions that can also be voted on via attendees. This option's expanded technical ability also enables a seminar breakout session style opportunity, using the world café model to encourage small powerful conversations. The conversations would be structured around prompts solicited from the public in advance via social media and a print Ad campaign. The opening address and following questions would be livestreamed for all to see; the breakout sessions would be held without livestreaming, but following the conclusion of the sessions the live stream would be resumed and session leaders would be responsible for sharing the conversations learning and understandings.

These are the core offerings of the webinar level: (<https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar>)

- Reporting & analytics: Get reports on registrants, attendees, polling, attendee engagement and Q&A for follow up.
- Full-featured host controls: Mute/unmute panelists, and promote attendee to panelist, giving them audio and video capabilities for enhanced engagement.
- Event assistance: Host large-scale events with help from our team, including planning, rehearsal, and live support. It also offers branding front and centre, and the ability to use PayPal to charge attendees.

#### Cost:

Zoom video Webinar [subscription package costs](#) differ according to maximum number of attendees.

100 attendees: CAD 530/year (recommended)

500 attendees: CAD 1860/year

1000 attendees: CAD 4520/year

#### Pros:

The Town of Hinton staff are already familiar with this software, as are Council. Zoom is also best in its class for data hosting transparency and security. Furthermore, with 100 attendees enables, Administration can invite people to be part of the engagement sessions directly in zoom, besides the

YouTube livestream. This service is also the only of the options to have full scale community benefit; the Town of Hinton could act as a hosting service digitally for conferences occurring in our community, enabling the ability to relieve a cost of hosting events for our community. Tickets could be monetized for additional level of engagement in events in the future.

Cons:

The delivery of this new software will come at a higher price point compared to the status quo.

**Option 2: Broad Engagement Platform (Nationbuilder)**

Nationbuilder is an example of a broad engagement platform (If this option is preferred by Council, we can solicit other software with similar capacity). Its price tag is higher comparatively because instead of simply adding a web software or holding an event, it would mean establishing a brand-new web site, and related suite of tools including community and email blast management. This would earn a solution, branding, and location for hosting public engagement initiatives. This is commonly used by many American political and lobbying organizations, as well as in larger political venues.

The Pro level of this software has:

- Website with standard templates built for action
- Email blast functionality
- Payment and donation processing
- Events and ticketing
- Custom fields and permissions
- Membership management
- Drip email automations and a/b testing

Cost:

Nationbuilder Pro level package costs differ according to 'contact' capacity:

0-500 contacts: \$139/month

500-1000 contacts: \$159/month

Additional funding may be required with each event customization and support.

Pros:

The broader website will provide for more cohesive engagement strategy and platform. This would be the start of an engagement branding initiative, web presence, and web frontage for all engagement efforts, while the existing channels could be maintained for one-way communication/information efforts.

Cons:

A new website, email blast software, database, listing, and so on all amount to significant additional time commitments, training needs, and other service changes. This is a less efficient, very indirect way to achieve the town hall like engagement goal.

**Option 3: Tele-Town Hall Configuration**

There are numerous options available on the market for tele-townhall events. TeleTownHall ([www.teletownhall.com](http://www.teletownhall.com)) is an example of this kind of software and it is the traditional choice of many American governments and organizations with its phoneline driven technology. It is considered to be associated with the 1990's conception of the teletownhall – a mass phone call with one core speaker, or group of speakers, and the ability to add questions and interactions if configured via phone digit entry. However, there are many other service providers who could be engaged in a competitive bid process to attain best value and most useful solution for our community. TeleTown hall claims to have had 500+ American Capitol Hill Offices Worked With.

The way it works according to its website: (<https://teletownhall.com/how-it-works/>)

- Tele-Town Hall® rapidly dials out to a list of phone numbers provided by your business.
- The targeted audience receives your personalized, pre-recorded message inviting them to remain on the line if they wish to be transferred automatically to your live Tele-Town Hall® event.
- When joining the meeting, participants have the opportunity to ask you – the “Star Speaker” – questions live, as well as to respond to integrated Survey Questions using their phone keypads.
- Using a customized Tele-Town Hall® Web Interface, you control which participants ask their questions live on the conference as well as when to pose Survey Questions to your audience.
- Participants, who are unable to ask their questions live, have the option to leave a personal message with a Call Screener or a Tele-Town Hall® voicemail for the “Star Speaker” at the conclusion of the meeting.
- Following your Tele-Town Hall® event, you will receive a detailed report complete with participant statistics as well as a digital recording of your event that may be posted to your website.

#### Cost:

Teletownhall is quoted at \$3,549.76 per year, plus addons for support, training, streaming and transcription.

#### Pros:

This requires providing the details to the service provider; all that would be required of the organization above the software commitment would be engaging in the setup process and holding the town hall being broadcast. This is a perhaps more familiar experience in the minds of more senior community members.

#### Cons:

This option is presented for information and planning purposes, as administration cautions that they will require significant time and training of both staff and external users to understand access and interactions on new platforms. It is unclear whether this service would only be available to residential lines or cell lines as well. In addition, younger community members are unlikely to participate in this format. The ability to add a video stream, or simultaneously stream from a central location, is available but may be a less direct solution than an all in one solution.

#### **Note: In Person Events**

This report is intended to build upon the options for virtual engagement, as the opportunity to gather in larger groups is limited, and may continue to be through the engagement timeframes for Strategic Planning and the 2022 Budget Cycle.

Once gathering in person is supported through the lifting of Provincial Health Order restrictions, Strategic Services can layer in those methods with the virtual option. In previous engagement plans, in-person participation has been conducted through pop-up open houses in the community (Green Square, Rotary Spray and Play Park, Parks West Mall) or in Town facilities. As well, surveys, polls, focus groups, and targeted engagement with stakeholders, have been used in the past with positive involvement.

All engagement activities are supported with communications planning to inform the community of the opportunity for feedback or input.

## Implications of Decision

Financial Implications	
Items	Comments
Operating Cost/Implications	All options necessitate facility rental and staff time; please review individual options for costing information.
Capital Cost	\$0
Budget Available	Amounts can be addressed under the approved Communications Budget
Source of Funds	\$0
Unbudgeted Costs	\$0

**Level of Service Implications:** The recommendation would see slightly increased level of service with higher engagement opportunities in the future and provides Administration better webinar/digital town hall management tools.

**Public Engagement:** The Town Hall itself is a public engagement activity. In years past, we have incorporated other tools into the event; with the public health restrictions, digital engagement softwares have become paramount for public engagement.

**Communications:** Communications is tasked with facilitating a communications plan using mixed medias to entice viewers/participants.

**Risk / Liability:** With any live event, risks are numerous (technology challenges, random acts of chance or humanity, and that is not reduced in a COVID-19 environment). Moreover, options outside the recommended software package would involve significant time commitment from several staff, decreasing their services elsewhere.

Legislative Implications		
Conforms with:	Yes/No/Partial	Comments
Council's Strategic Plan	Yes	3.1: Improve service delivery.
Community Sustainability Plan	Yes	3.10.1: Encourage all local authorities to develop effective models and strategies for interacting with and engaging citizens in policy/program decisions and elections.
Municipal Policies or Bylaws	Yes	AD #1209: Public participation policy
Provincial Laws or MGA	No	
Other Plans or Policies	No	

## Options / Alternatives

1. That Committee direct Administration to bring this report to the April 6, 2021 Regular Council Meeting for approval to carry out Option 1 for Future Town Hall and other organizational engagement events.

2. That Committee direct administration to bring this report back to a standing committee meeting with amendments or further information.
3. That Council accept this report for information and direct Administration to continue the current configuration for virtual engagement.

**Attachment(s)**

None



# TOWN OF HINTON Administrative Report

DIRECTION REQUEST     REQUEST FOR DECISION     INFORMATION ITEM

**DATE:** Standing Committee Meeting of Council on March 9, 2021

**PRESENTED BY:** Emily Olsen, Chief Administrative Officer

**RE:** **GREENHOUSE TRAINING BUILDING**

## Recommended Action

*That Committee accepts the Greenhouse Training Building report for information.*

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## Background

During the 2021 budget deliberations, Council requested additional information from administration be brought forward on the future capital funding requests for the Greenhouse Training Building.

This report is being brought forward with reference to the motion from the Special Meeting of Council held on November 20 and 21, 2020, whereby Council unanimously approved, “that the Greenhouse training building capital amounts for 2022 and 2023 come to Council for a decision before the third quarter of 2021 (Action Item MD-2127)”.

## Analysis

During budget preparations in the fall of 2020, Administration had followed a long-standing practice of conducting an internal needs assessment prior to renewal of a property lease agreement, whereby, proposals were received from a number of Town departments who had identified additional spatial requirements once the existing lease for the Greenhouse training building expired in June of 2020.

With this premise in mind, Administration identified funds for the design/study, retrofit and relocation in the budget cycle for years 2021 through 2023, of the Greenhouse training building to accommodate several Town programs, once the current lease had expired.

Prior to the expiration of the lease, Administration renegotiated an extension with the existing Lessee, until June 30, 2023.

At this time, budget funds are not required until the 2023-2024 budget cycle, where Administration will conduct another needs assessment of the Town priorities, which may or may not impact this site.

This item will be moved to years 2023 and 2024 in the 5 Year Capital Plan. This project was not included in the 2021 Capital Budget, and no direction is required to delay or defer this item during the current budget year.

## Implications of Decision

Financial Implications	
Items	Comments
Operating Cost/Implications	This building is under a lease agreement until June 30, 2023.
Capital Cost	Capital funds are not required at this time.
Budget Available	N/A
Source of Funds	Revenues are budgeted per the Lease agreement.
Unbudgeted Costs	N/A

Legislative Implications		
Conforms with:	Yes/No/Partial	Comments
<b>Council's Strategic Plan</b>	Yes	KS 3.1.3: Develop a more consultative approach to operational planning. KS 4.1.5: Fully realize and resource Town of Hinton Infrastructure asset management program.
<b>Community Sustainability Plan</b>	Yes	Strategy 10: 3.10.8 Maintain a strong facility and infrastructure maintenance and management program that supports service delivery by employing life-cycle planning.
<b>Municipal Policies or Bylaws</b>	No	N/A
<b>Provincial Laws or MGA</b>	No	N/A
<b>Other plans or policies</b>	No	N/A

## Options / Alternatives

1. That Committee accepts the Greenhouse Training Building report for information.
2. That Committee refers this matter to a Standing Committee Meeting for further review and discussion.

## Attachment(s)

1. None.