

VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING / RÉUNION VIRTUELLE PAR ZOOM

AGENDA / ORDRE DU JOUR

- A) Declaration of Pecuniary Interest / Déclaration d'intérêts pécuniaires
- B) Agenda / Ordre du jour
B-1 Approve the Agenda
- C) Delegations & Petitions / Délégations et pétitions
C-1 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) (Presenter: Kathy Horgan)
- D) Adjournment / Ajournement
D-1 Resolution to adopt By-law 2022/01 confirming proceedings of meeting
D-2 Resolution to adjourn the meeting

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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**Ministère des
Affaires municipales
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Ontario

234-2022-27

January 4, 2022

Your Worship
Mayor Joanne Savage
Municipality of West Nipissing
jsavage@westnipissing.ca

Dear Mayor Savage and council members:

I am writing to express my concern about council cancelling several meetings since at least September 2021, as well as council's failure to fill a council vacancy after a seat was declared vacant on July 21, 2020. I further understand that council has failed to hold a council meeting since November 29, 2021 due to lack of quorum.

As Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I wish to remind you that I expect you to fulfill your duties and responsibilities to ensure that the business of the municipality can move forward, and services continue for residents. That expectation includes you attending council meetings and filling the vacancy on council as soon as possible.

A key responsibility for council is to support the municipality and its operations, while ensuring that the public and municipality's well-being and interests are maintained. Central parts of council decision making, including deliberation and voting, takes place at council meetings. The residents in the Municipality of West Nipissing deserve a council that is willing to work together in their best interests and move the business of the municipality forward.

I am aware that a councillor's seat in the Municipality of West Nipissing has remained vacant since it was declared vacant by council on July 21, 2020. Failing to decide on how to fill this vacancy has left the residents in the ward without proper representation at the council table for the past 18 months. It also risks council contravening the requirements of the *Municipal Act*. The *Municipal Act* requires a municipality to appoint a person to fill the vacancy or require a by-election to be held within 60 days of council declaring a seat vacant in most circumstances.

Further cancellation of meetings or delaying of decisions could seriously impact the services the municipality provides to its residents, and ultimately risks the municipality's ability to meet its financial and legal obligations. For instance, the 2022 budget preparation decisions could, if delayed, seriously impact the municipality's cash flow and ability to provide services.

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I have asked staff in the Ministry's Northern Municipal Services Office in Sudbury to be ready to assist you. Ministry staff can provide information and guidance on council and staff roles and responsibilities, council/staff relationships, accountability and transparency, and meeting requirements and procedures. Ministry staff will also be keeping me apprised of your progress.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Kathy Horgan, Manager, Local Government and Housing at 705-677-8167 or Kathy.horgan@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark
Minister

c. The Honourable Victor Fedeli, MPP Nipissing