



Ruling of the Chair

June 4, 2025

Subject: Ruling on Question of Order Raised by Shannon Dunfield, Secretary of Records – April 16, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Citizens' Council - AMENDED

1.) QUESTION OF ORDER SUMMARY

The Secretary of Records at the April 16, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Citizens' Council, rose on a Question of Order: "questioning whether or not President can call a point of order in a council meeting".¹ The Question of Order was restated a second time: "if the President can make a point of order"² and the Secretary of Records requested a written ruling from the Chair.

The Question of Order was raised in the context of a previous Question of Order from the President, which was echoed by a second Representative, and which was accepted by the Chair, for the purpose of requesting additional information on a topic of discussion during a Council meeting.

The Chair agreed to provide a written ruling to Council based on the authorities set out in both the Constitution and the Self-Government Act in respect to the ability of the President to raise Questions of Order in Council proceedings.³

2.) RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE SELF-GOVERNMENT ACT

President's Role (Section 75):

The President is responsible for providing leadership, serving as the chief spokesperson, and leading discussions of the Citizens' Council.

The President is explicitly prohibited from voting on motions unless required to break a tie (Section 48(2)).

¹ Recording of Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Council Regular Meeting, April 16, 2025; at timestamp 1:42:14.

² Recording of Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Council Regular Meeting, April 16, 2025; at timestamp 2:27:51.

³ Recording of Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Council Regular Meeting, April 16, 2025; at timestamp 2:29:03.

Chair's Authority (Section 59):

The Chair has the authority to make decisions on questions of order, practice, and procedure during Council meetings.

If procedural rules are silent, authority to make determinations in respect to the rules of procedure on that matter.

Participation in Meetings (Section 44):

Only Representatives or persons approved by the Chair may speak during Council meetings.

The President, as a Representative, retains the right to participate in discussions unless otherwise restricted.

3.) ANALYSIS

President's Right to Raise Questions of Order:

While the President does not have voting rights (except to break ties), their role as the leader of Council discussions (Section 75) implies a responsibility to ensure clarity and informed deliberation.

A Question of Order is a procedural tool to maintain the integrity of meetings, not a substantive vote. The Act does not restrict the President from participating in procedural matters.

Scope of the Chair's Authority:

Section 59 grants the Chair broad discretion to rule on procedural questions, including requests for additional information, to ensure orderly conduct.

The Chair may permit or deny such requests based on relevance, necessity, and alignment with the Council's rules.

Precedent and Intent:

The Act emphasizes consensus-building and efficient decision-making (Section 47). Allowing the President to seek clarification, as is afforded to all other Representatives, aligns with this intent, as it fosters informed debate without infringing on voting rights.

4.) RULING

The President, as the leader of the Citizens' Council with an obligation to seek consensus, has the authority to raise a Question of Order to request additional information on a topic under discussion, provided the request is:

- 1.) Related to the agenda item;
- 2.) Made in good faith to aid deliberation; and
- 3.) Not an attempt to circumvent voting restrictions.

The Chair will rule on such questions in accordance with Sections 59 and 44, ensuring procedural fairness and adherence to the Self-Government Act. In making such a ruling, the Chair shall apply the same test which has been applied to Questions of Order of this nature raised by Representatives of Council to date.

For clarity, the information requested in a Question of Order, which has the effect of tabling a decision or discussion on a matter must:

- 1.) Be relevant to the matter being deliberated;
- 2.) Exist objectively, requests cannot be theoretical; and
- 3.) Be produceable; administration or other subject matter experts or authorities must have reasonable access to the information requested, such that it may be produced before Council.

Signed,



Garrett Tomlinson
Chair, Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Distribution: President
Citizens' Council
Clerk of the Citizens' Council
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Self-Government Department
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