

May 7, 2020

TOWN OF CONCORD

UPDATED POLICY DIRECTIVE AND GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION DUE TO COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY

On April 1, 2020, the Town issued Temporary Policy Directive and Guidelines for Public Meeting and Public Hearings Conducted via Remote Participation Due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency. This is an update to the policy directive and guidelines. This updated policy directive and guidelines shall remain in place until suspended or terminated by the Town Manager.

On April 28, 2020, Governor Baker extended the essential services emergency order to May 18 and announced that the stay at home advisory remained in effect and gatherings of 10 or more people remained prohibited until May 18. The Town issued its original directive to provide guidance to active committees/boards/commissions during the pandemic. This updated policy directive provides guidance to the Town's committees/boards/commissions contemplating meeting once the emergency order expires on May 18.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Executive Committees, Regulatory Boards/Committees, and Non-Regulatory Boards and Committees may resume meetings only virtually using the Town's Zoom account. Each committee chair shall be responsible for requesting zoom services from the Town Manager's Office. Agenda items should continue to be essential business and minimize the need for Town staff support as Town departments remained closed to the public and most employees are working remotely.

II. PUBLIC BODY REMOTE PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Minuteman Media Network will simulcast executive committee meetings when requested. All other meetings will be recorded and posted on the web for viewing or rebroadcast on Channel 9.

Public comment during committee meetings will be recognized only by the chair of the committee/board/commission. For virtual meetings incorporating public participation, the Town will post instructions in the meeting agenda to access and participate remotely in the meeting or meetings in advance on the Town's website. Each meeting attendee is expected to adhere to a standard of respect and courtesy towards the committee members and Town staff. The committee/board/commission chair reserves the right to recognize members of the public during the meeting and, if necessary, mute or remove an attendee, or disable the attendee's audio/visual functionality if an attendee fails to meet the basic meeting standards of courtesy and respect. These standards include but are not limited to waiting to be recognized by the chair, not

interrupting another speaker, and not yelling or harassing the chair, committee members, or town staff.

All board and committee members, and relevant staff shall participate in the meeting remotely. At the start of the meeting, all present will announce their presence by name. When speaking, each member will state their name before speaking. During the course of the meeting, all votes will be conducted by roll call.

Participants in the Zoom meeting should use the video option whenever possible. Additionally, they should be in a well-lit room so their face is clearly visible, sitting close enough to the microphone to be heard, and use their real full name in the “name” box. To check if you are close enough to the microphone, please use the “test microphone” feature through Zoom before you enter the meeting.

Other Open Meeting Law requirements including those regarding the posting of meeting notices, keeping of minutes, identifying and maintaining documents used at the meeting, and going into executive session continue to apply.

If an executive session is convened for a valid purpose under the Open Meeting Law, it will be held by web/video conferencing using one meeting number and password and then enter into executive session using a meeting number and password made known only to the members of the public body, and to Town staff and other individuals invited to the executive session by the public body consistent with the purpose of the executive session. At the conclusion of the executive session, the public body will return to open session to the web/video conferencing bridge for the public meeting to conduct further business or to adjourn.