

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: October 13, 2022

From: City Manager Department

Subject: Consider Adopting Proposed Resolution Allowing for the Continuation of Teleconferencing

Recommended Action: 1) Make the determination that all hazards related to the worldwide spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) as detailed in Resolution No. 4168 adopted by the City Council on March 12, 2020, still exist and there is a need to continue action; and 2) Adopt the proposed resolution authorizing the City Council (along with the Planning Commission and all advisory bodies) to continue to conduct teleconferencing meetings.

Background: In December 2019, an outbreak of a respiratory illness linked to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was first identified. In March 2020, the State of California, the County of Santa Cruz, and the City of Capitola each declared a state of emergency due to the virus. Also in March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. State and local health officers issued health orders to stop the spread of COVID-19; in Santa Cruz County this included March, April, and May 2020 Shelter-In-Place orders that were more restrictive than statewide guidance. Since then, the County Health Officer has incorporated all Orders of the State Public Health Officer, which set baseline statewide restrictions on travel and business activities. Currently (and since February 2022), there are no State required COVID-19 restrictions, other than minimal masking requirements in certain settings. COVID-19 public safety economic restrictions were mostly removed in June 2021 when the state met the criteria to fully reopen the economy and moved beyond the Blueprint for a Safer Economy.

Discussion: The Governor signed Assembly Bill 361 on September 16, 2021. The Bill allows cities to continue virtual meetings (much as Capitola City Council Meetings function now) as long as the state is under a proclaimed state of emergency; through 2024 when the bill will sunset. The Bill requires legislative bodies to comply with the requirements set forth in Government Code section 54953(e)(2) to ensure the public can safely participate and observe local government meetings. One of the requirements is for Council to adopt findings every thirty days.

Attached is a resolution that makes the following findings:

- 1) Find that current conditions authorize teleconference public meetings, based on the Governor's state of emergency regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2) Authorize legislative bodies to conduct teleconference meetings, allowing Capitola City Council, Planning Commission, and other advisory bodies to continue to meet using Zoom.

Council will need to adopt resolutions making findings required by AB361 as long as Hybrid Meetings (with Council Members attending remotely) continue.

Fiscal Impact: City Council has maintained \$385,000 in a resiliency fund to help ensure the City has available resources should the pandemic result in further unforeseen impacts, which remains in the approved FY 2022-23 Budget.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Teleconferencing resolution

Report Prepared By: Chloé Woodmansee, Assistant to the City Manager

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager