



## REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

Meeting Date: April 21, 2020

AGENDA ITEM	ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:	PRESENTED BY:
NO. 5.b.	City Clerk	Erin Kelley

### **ITEM:**

Public Comment and Participation Policy

### **BACKGROUND:**

In an effort to continue to provide continuity of access to local government processes while protecting the integrity of City Council and other public meetings, staff has been working to create a policy for public comment and participation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, communities across the state have struggled with how to implement these policies. Resolution 2020-11, which was approved at the last City Council meeting, allows for the City to adopt an electronic participation policy in times of a local emergency declaration.

In order to better inform the public, and to invite individuals to participate in both public comment and public hearings, staff has prepared the attached Public Comment and Participation Policy to provide citizens clear guidance and some recommended best practices for participating. This includes reading comments into the public record and encouraging emailed messages to convey ideas, thoughts and opinions for the City Council's consideration. We have operated the past two City Council meetings with these protocols informally.

### **FISCAL NOTE:**

None.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the attached Public Comment and Participation Policy.

### **SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

A City Councilperson should make a motion to approve the Public Comment and Participation Policy, followed by a second and a roll call vote.

# **CITY OF SALIDA – PUBLIC COMMENT AND PARTICIPATION POLICY**

## **HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUAL CITY OF SALIDA MEETINGS**

On March 17, 2020, the Salida City Council adopted an “Electronic Participation Policy” to help control the spread of the COVID-19 virus, while allowing the City government to continue operating in a safe manner during the local state of emergency. This includes conducting City Council, Planning Commission and other board and commission meetings virtually, while still encouraging public participation.

The instructions below serve to further describe the various ways in which the public may participate in virtual public meetings.

### **TO COMMENT DURING THE LIVE MEETING BY WEB OR PHONE:**

- Join the live meeting through the web link or phone number (with access code) provided at the top of all meeting agendas.
- You will be joined into the meeting and automatically muted.
- If you would like to provide Public Comment, via smartphone, please type in the question box indicating you would like to speak. After all smartphone requests have been addressed, all participants will be unmuted and we will reach out by last names. (For example, the Mayor or meeting Chair may say: “Now is the time for public comment. All members of the public will be unmuted. Please mute yourself or keep background noise to a minimum. If your last name begins with A through F you may now speak.”)
- Please only join via Go to Meeting or phone meeting if you intend to participate. If you wish to simply view the meeting, see below.

### **TO VIEW THE MEETING LIVE OR LATER:**

- The meeting will be live streamed and archived for viewing at:
  - City of [Salida's YouTube Channel](#)
  - Channel 191 on Charter Cable

### **HELPFUL TIPS FOR A GOOD VIRTUAL MEETING EXPERIENCE:**

- If joining through the web, log on 5 minutes before the start of the meeting, since some online products require downloads and installation.
- State your name when you speak.
- Turn off nearby cell phones, if you are using a computer to connect.
- Please use a headset or earbuds.
- Have **Only** the virtual meeting application open on your computer. If you are running other programs like email or have additional websites open in your browser, it will interfere with your ability to hear or see the information. Close all other applications and windows when participating.
- Please limit distractions when possible. Be aware of background noise.
- Video streaming is a relatively new technology. Therefore, keep in mind the following, when connecting with your computer/tablet or smart phone:

- If your computer/tablet or smart phone is older than 2015 it is recommended that you use a landline/standard telephone to dial into the virtual meeting number to ensure that you can hear the meeting clearly.
- Internet service minimum needs to be 40-50 Mbps for best results with a virtual meeting.
- Depending on the Internet speed and service in your neighborhood, the most reliable way to participate in the meeting is to call the phone number provided, rather than joining the meeting through the web link.

**TO COMMENT IN ADVANCE OF A LIVE MEETING:**

- Visit [www.cityofsalida.com](http://www.cityofsalida.com) or <https://cityofsalida.com/library/meetings/> to review agendas and packets.
- For City Council and Planning Commission Meetings:
  - You may submit comments any time until noon on the day of the meeting by sending an email to [publiccomment@cityofsalida.com](mailto:publiccomment@cityofsalida.com).

Please only submit one email for Public Comment, limited to roughly 400 words, with your full name and indicate if it is for the Public Comment section or for a Hearing. It will be read at the council meeting and entered into the public record. You may send more than one email if you want your message read during Public Comment and you have a separate message related to a Hearing.