



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: November 21, 2023

Agenda Item: Virtual Meeting Policy for City Council & Committee Meetings

Staff Contact (name, email, phone): Sara Marquardt, smarquardt@whitewater-wi.gov, 262-473-1387

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

Council member Allen requested a review of the virtual meeting policy.

1. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Common Council and other City committees adopted a hybrid meeting format allowing members, staff and the public to be present in the building and broadcast through "GoTo Meeting" so that individuals could participate virtually.
2. Hybrid options were made available for Plan Commission, CDA and Common Council meetings with the City Manager indicating that staff was not available, at that time, to provide hybrid options for all committees (5/18/21). The City Manager also noted that since moving to Zoom, participation increased.
3. The hybrid meeting option has been revisited at various times since including but not limited to August 17, 2021 where a request was made for a POLCO question regarding the public view of the hybrid option and a request that staff be required to have cameras on during hybrid meetings.
4. Currently, the Equal Opportunity Commission meets completely virtual and the Common Council, Community Development Authority Board, Landmarks Commission, Plan & Architectural Review Board, Parks & Recreation Board, Library Board and Police & Fire Commission offer the virtual meeting option.
5. Council and committee members, consultants and the public continue to utilize the virtual meeting option.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

March 18, 2020 – City Manager declared an emergency in the City of Whitewater.

May 18, 2021 – Hybrid meeting options approved by Common Council.

September 5, 2023 – Hybrid meeting discussion requested but subsequently pulled from the agenda

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends maintaining the hybrid meeting option due to the observed increase in participation and the enhanced convenience it provides for consultants, vendors, and others to engage in meetings.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

1. September 5, 2023 Staff Report
2. May 18, 2021, Common Council minutes