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RESOLUTION NO. RES-22-0166

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH MAKING FINDINGS PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(e)(3) TO AUTHORIZE CITY LEGISLATIVE BODIES TO FOLLOW THE TELECONFERENCE MEETING PROVISIONS OF GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(e)(1)-(2)

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, the Governor of California issued Executive Order N-25-20 which, among other things, took the unprecedented action of temporarily suspending certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act ("Brown Act") in light of the spread of COVID-19, an ongoing public health state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order N-25-20 still required legislative bodies to provide a publicly accessible location from which members of the public would be able to observe a public meeting and offer public comment during a meeting; and

WHEREAS, as such, on March 17, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order N-29-20, which further suspended various requirements of the Brown Act for public meetings, and replaced the Brown Act portion of Executive Order N-25-20 in its entirety; most notably, legislative bodies were no longer required to provide a physical location for the public to observe or provide public comment during a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2021, the Governor issued Executive Order N-08-21, which, among other things, replaced the Brown Act portion of Executive Order N-29-20, but still allowed for certain Brown Act temporary suspensions, such as not having to provide a physical location for the public to observe or provide public comment during a public meeting and allowing all legislative body members to participate from outside the body's jurisdictional boundaries, and stated that such suspensions would expire on September 30, 2021; and

1                   WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, the Governor signed into law  
2 Assembly Bill 361 (“AB 361”), which allows for similar “waivers” of teleconference  
3 meetings under the Brown Act during declared states of emergency where certain  
4 conditions are met, and which took effect immediately as an urgency bill; and

5                   WHEREAS, on September 20, 2021, the Governor issued Executive Order  
6 N-15-21 to temporarily suspend the teleconferencing provisions of AB 361 until October  
7 1, 2021; and

8                   WHEREAS, AB 361 includes key “waivers” of normal teleconferencing  
9 requirements including, but not limited to, the ability of a legislative body to allow public  
10 access and comment via phone or internet only and to allow even a quorum of the  
11 legislative body to take meetings from locations outside the body’s jurisdictional  
12 boundaries without specifying the location or posting agendas at each teleconference  
13 location; and

14                   WHEREAS, AB 361 provides public participation safeguards, such as  
15 requiring the legislative body to conduct teleconference meetings in a way that protects  
16 the statutory and constitutional rights of the parties and public appearing before the  
17 legislative body; requiring that the legislative body take no further action if there is a  
18 disruption that prevents the agency from broadcasting the meeting to the public using the  
19 call-in or internet-based service option, or if there’s a disruption within the agency’s  
20 control which prevents members of the public from offering public comment using the  
21 call-in or internet-based service option; not requiring public comments to be submitted in  
22 advance of the meeting and providing the public opportunity to address the legislative  
23 body and offer comment in real time; and the like; and

24                   WHEREAS, in order to apply the teleconferencing standards with “waivers”  
25 under AB 361, there are certain conditions which must be met; and

26                   WHEREAS, first, AB 361 requires one of the following three conditions to  
27 be met by the legislative body: (1) the legislative body holds a meeting during a  
28 proclaimed state of emergency, and state or local officials have imposed or

1 recommended measures to promote social distancing; (2) the legislative body holds a  
2 meeting during a proclaimed state of emergency for the purpose of determining, by a  
3 majority vote, whether as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present  
4 imminent risks of health or safety of attendees; or (3) the legislative body holds a meeting  
5 during a proclaimed state of emergency and has determined, by a majority vote, that as a  
6 result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or  
7 safety of attendees; and

8 WHEREAS, currently, there is a continuing state of emergency concerning  
9 the COVID-19 pandemic at both the State and City of Long Beach levels, and, on  
10 September 30, 2021, the City of Long Beach Health Officer issued an initial  
11 recommendation for the continuation of virtual public meetings, to the extent possible, in  
12 order to promote social distancing measures for the protection of the community, staff,  
13 presenters, and legislative body members; and

14 WHEREAS, the City's Health Officer has since issued a revised  
15 recommendation(s) continuing to recommend virtual public meetings, to the extent  
16 possible, in order to promote social distancing measures due to COVID-19, and such  
17 recommendation currently remains in place; and

18 WHEREAS, second, a legislative body must also make the following  
19 findings every 30 days, starting with no later than 30 days after teleconferencing for the  
20 first time under AB 361, by a majority vote: (1) the legislative body has reconsidered the  
21 circumstances of the state of emergency; and (2) either the state of emergency continues  
22 to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person, or state or local  
23 officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

24 WHEREAS, the City Council now desires to, again, make the required  
25 monthly findings as specified in Government Code section 54953(e)(3) in order to allow  
26 the City Council, and all City commissions, committees, boards, or other bodies subject  
27 to the Brown Act, to continue to hold meetings pursuant to the teleconference  
28 requirements of Government Code section 54953(e)(1)-(2); and

1           WHEREAS, the City Council also desires to authorize the City Council, and  
2 City commissions, committees, boards, or other bodies subject to the Brown Act, to opt  
3 for in-person and/or hybrid (a combination of virtual and in-person) meetings to the extent  
4 possible based on varying circumstances, including but not limited to meetings that may  
5 be of a quasi-judicial nature or those bodies that have already been meeting in person as  
6 circumstances have allowed, and to do so while complying with the City Health Officer's  
7 recommended protocols, wherever feasible;

8           NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as  
9 follows:

10           Section 1. Pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e)(3), the City  
11 Council hereby reconsiders the state of emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic and finds  
12 that the City Health Officer continues to recommend measures to promote social  
13 distancing such as remote meetings of legislative bodies. The City Health Officer's  
14 current recommendation is attached hereto as Attachment "A".

15           Section 2. The City Council authorizes the Council and all City of Long  
16 Beach legislative bodies, including all City commissions, committees, and boards, to  
17 continue to hold teleconference meetings in accordance with Government Code section  
18 54953(e)(1)-(2).

19           Section 3. The City Council recognizes that City legislative bodies may  
20 have varying circumstances and considerations and, as such, hereby authorizes the  
21 Council, and City commissions, committees, boards, or other bodies subject to the Brown  
22 Act, to opt for in-person and/or hybrid (a combination of virtual and in-person) meetings to  
23 the extent possible, including but not limited to meetings that may be of a quasi-judicial  
24 nature or those bodies that have already been meeting in person as circumstances have  
25 allowed. Such meetings must comply (wherever feasible) with the Health Officer's  
26 recommendation with respect to any protocols for in-person meetings.

27           Section 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption  
28 by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of October 4, 2022, by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers: Zendejas, Allen, Price, Supernaw,  
Mungo, Saro, Austin, Richardson.

Noes: Councilmembers: None.

Absent: Councilmembers: Uranga.


Recusal(s): Councilmembers: None.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY  
CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney  
411 W. Ocean Boulevard, 9th Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Date: September 23, 2022

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager

From: Dr. Anissa Davis, Long Beach Health Officer 

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council and all Boards and Commissions

Subject: **Recommendation Regarding Physical Distancing, Optional Virtual/Hybrid Meetings, and In-Person Meeting Practices**

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Assembly Bill 361 (AB 361), which became effective on October 1, 2021, allows for certain waivers of Brown Act teleconference requirements during declared states of emergency when certain conditions have been met. These “waivers” promote physical distancing to minimize the spread of COVID-19 by allowing legislative body members to take meetings from outside the body’s jurisdictional boundaries, as well as allowing public access and comment through phone and/or internet services only, among other things which seek to protect the community and staff. One condition to authorize such virtual meetings of legislative bodies is that state or local health officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote physical distancing during a proclaimed state of emergency.

I am issuing these revised recommendations for the City’s legislative bodies to continue to meet virtually, if feasible, under the relevant provisions of AB 361. I have further included recommended practices during in-person meetings of legislative bodies. These recommendations should be forwarded to those bodies.

I strongly recommend that physical distancing measures continue to be practiced throughout Long Beach communities, including at meetings of the City’s various legislative bodies, to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing, masking, staying home when sick, and frequent handwashing remain crucial infection control measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including its variants.

To the extent possible, virtual meetings are recommended as they allow for the participation of the community, City staff, presenters, Councilmembers, commissioners, committee members, and board members with no risk of contagion. As an alternative, a legislative body may hold a hybrid meeting (i.e., a meeting that are both in-person and virtual) with infection control measures outlined below to minimize the spread of COVID-19 while partially operating in-person.

Where legislative bodies hold in-person meetings based on varying circumstances, I strongly recommend that infection control measures are implemented, if possible or where mandated, including: (1) where feasible, maintaining at least six-foot physical distance from other individuals, even when wearing a face mask; (2) washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, as frequently as possible; (3) covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve, elbow, or tissue, not hands); (4)

Recommendation Regarding Physical Distancing, Optional Virtual/Hybrid Meetings, and  
In-Person Meeting Practices

September 23, 2022

Page 2 of 2

regularly cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces; (5) avoiding physically intimate forms of greeting such as shaking hands, hugging, and kissing; (6) staying home when sick; (7) to the extent feasible, avoiding eating and drinking in public places; and (8) wearing a face mask securely over one's mouth and nose.

I will continue to evaluate this recommendation on an ongoing basis and this recommendation will remain in place until amended, replaced, or repealed. If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY  
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
REBECCA G. GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK  
DEPARTMENT HEADS