

FORSYTH COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ADDED ITEM

MEETING DATE: MARCH 19, 2020 AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 17

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION AMENDING THE REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR MEETINGS OF THE FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION OR COMMENTS:

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION: See Attached

ATTACHMENTS: YES NO

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: March 17, 2020
COUNTY MANAGER

**RESOLUTION AMENDING THE REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY
FOR MEETINGS OF THE
FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

WHEREAS the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners desires to allow remote participation by Commissioners in briefings and meetings where appropriate;

WHEREAS on September 12, 2016, the Board adopted the Remote Participation Policy for Meetings of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners (“Remote Policy”) to allow remote participation by County Commissioners in briefings and meetings of the Board under limited circumstances, and amended such Remote Policy on March 28, 2019;

WHEREAS the Board has successfully developed and implemented technology to ensure the identity of the remote participant and real-time participation in discussion and voting by the remote participant, and the Board has successfully used the Remote Policy without any problems or challenges since 2016;

WHEREAS the Remote Policy requires the physical presence of four Commissioners, a quorum of the Board, for any Commissioner to be able to participate remotely; and

WHEREAS in the event of a state of emergency, it may not be possible or advisable for Commissioners to be physically present in the Government Center at Board meetings or briefings, and the Remote Policy should allow for remote participation during a state of emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the attached amended Remote Participation Policy for Meetings of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, which is incorporated herein by reference and which supersedes the Remote Policy as adopted in 2019, in order to allow remote participation by any number of Commissioners during a declared Forsyth County state of emergency, if the Chairman of the Board approves such remote participation.

Adopted this 19th day of March 2020.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR MEETINGS OF THE FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Members of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners (Board) may remotely participate in briefings and official meetings of the Board, subject to the following rules and procedures:

1. Remote participation may be used only in limited circumstances. A Commissioner desiring to participate in a meeting remotely must assert one or more of the following four reasons for being physically unable to attend the meeting:
 - i. Personal illness or disability;
 - ii. Employment purposes;
 - iii. Family or other emergency, including a state of emergency; or
 - iv. To participate in other scheduled County related meetings which make it logistically impossible to attend the Board meeting.
2. Unless Forsyth County has declared a state of emergency, remote participation may be allowed only during open sessions when a quorum of the Board is physically present at the meeting and the Commissioner participating remotely is not necessary to establish a quorum.
3. Remote participation shall not be allowed, unless there is a declared state of emergency, during the following:
 - a. Quasi-judicial hearings; and
 - b. Closed sessions.
4. A Commissioner desiring to participate in a meeting remotely must notify the Clerk to the Board of the need for remote participation and request approval by the Chairman of his/her remote participation at least 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting, unless advance notice is impractical. Remote participation may occur only if approved by the Chairman.
5. At the start of the official meeting and prior to participating in deliberations, the Chairman of the Board shall announce that a Commissioner is participating remotely. Such Commissioner shall identify himself or herself and state the reason that he/she is participating remotely.
6. A Commissioner participating remotely shall be allowed to participate in all open session Board briefing discussions and open session official Board meeting discussions with the exception of quasi-judicial hearings when there is no state of emergency. A Commissioner participating remotely shall be able to vote on matters allowed under the policy.
7. A Commissioner participating remotely shall be provided with all documents to be considered during the briefing session and the official meeting.
8. A Commissioner participating remotely shall participate via simultaneous and/or electronic communication and must be fully heard and if possible seen by other members of the Board and any other individuals in attendance at the official meeting. Use of telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other technology that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another is necessary. If clear audio is not available, the Chairman may elect to disallow or discontinue the remote participation.
9. A Commissioner participating remotely shall provide a voice vote which can be heard and recorded if participating by telephone and shall provide a voice and hand vote if participating by video.

Adopted this 19th day of March 2020.

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