

Video Conference Best Practices for Mayor and Council

I spoke with several Clerks from around the state to get a handle on what the challenges were to virtual meetings. I am sure we will have our own, but for starters, let's try these basics.

Be sure to test your internet connection, video, and microphone in advance

Connect from a quiet space or use headphones if around others

If needed, use Zoom to mute yourself when you are not speaking to avoid extra noise or echo/feedback

VIDEO CAMERA TIPS

- Don't use a window as a backdrop; This impacts visual quality to the viewers on the video conference
- Make sure the room you are in has proper lighting
- Remember to not turn your back to the screen(s) or block the view of the camera
- if you need to step away from the video conference; Announce that you have to step away, then select the "Hide Video Camera" icon at the bottom of your screen
- Dress appropriately
- Be mindful of your background items when video conferencing
- Please do not use zoom virtual backgrounds as they can be problematic

STILL ACT PROFESSIONAL

- Just like talking face to face, the "Zoom Meetings" video conferencing tool is like our everyday workday settings
- Speak professionally and respectfully to one another as you would in any other communication setting
- Announce who you are prior to speaking
- Resist the urge to multitask; Do not work on or look at any other material other than what is being discussed during the scheduled meeting
- Overall, be aware of your behavior; People can see and hear what you are doing at all times

TECH TIPS

- Turn off notifications from programs on the computer to avoid beeps
- Turn off backup software, automatic updates, Dropbox, or anything that could take a lot of bandwidth
- Remind other people in the house about high bandwidth use, including streaming video. Less important if you have a large Internet plan.

- Use ethernet (wired connection) over WiFi if possible
- Carefully consider how any equipment upgrades or setting changes may affect your ability to use Zoom in a manner you are accustomed to
- Unplug the landline phone and silence cellphones

PROCEDURE

- I (August) will be the host for the meeting and will manage the meeting participants. I will have the ability to mute and unmute participants.
- The Zoom virtual meeting will start at 6:30 p.m., 30 minutes before the posted meeting start time, so that everyone can get into the meeting and make sure audio and video are working correctly before the start of the meeting at 7 p.m.
- When the meeting starts, we will have all 6 Council Members, The Mayor, Kathy and Myself unmuted.

Please note... non-host participants can mute themselves in Zoom, however, they will NOT be able to unmute themselves. So, if you mute yourself in Zoom during the meeting, the host/co-host will un-mute you if you raise your hand to talk in Zoom.

- Other staff will only be unmuted when the Mayor or Kathy recognizes/calls on them.
- Reminder - multiple people will be able to talk at the same time. The Mayor and I will do our best to ensure people are recognized for speaking in order to ensure we don't talk over each other.
- Please remember to utilize the "Raise your hand" feature in Zoom for the Mayor to recognize you before you speak.

During the meeting, click on the icon labeled "Participants" at the bottom center of your screen. At the bottom of the window on the right side of the screen, click the button labeled "Raise Hand." Your digital hand is now raised. You can also use the Alt+Y keys to raise or lower your hand. The host will be notified that you've raised your hand.

- Voting – The Mayor will call for a verbal roll call vote for each item requiring a vote. All Council Members should verbally vote "yes" or "no" when the I call your name during the roll call vote.
- The zoom meeting will be ended as soon as it is adjourned so that no additional conversations can be heard/seen on the virtual meeting.
- The meeting will be broadcast live to both YouTube and Comcast Channel 12 as well as recorded and saved in Zoom. Hopefully we will be on Facebook Live as well.