

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARINA RECOGNIZING A LOCAL EMERGENCY PERSISTS, RE-RATIFYING THE PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM ON MARCH 4, 2020, AND RE-AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARINA AND ITS CONSTITUENT BODIES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 20, 2023, THROUGH FEBRUARY 19, 2023, PURSUANT TO BROWN ACT PROVISIONS.

WHEREAS, the City of Marina is committed to preserving and nurturing public access and participation in meetings of the City Council and its constituent bodies; and

WHEREAS, all meetings of City of Marina's legislative bodies are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code 54950 – 54963), so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and watch the City's legislative bodies conduct their business; and

WHEREAS, the Brown Act, Government Code section 54953(e), makes provision for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings by members of a legislative body, without compliance with the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3), subject to the existence of certain conditions; and

WHEREAS, a required condition is that a state of emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to Government Code section 8625, proclaiming the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state caused by conditions as described in Government Code section 8558; and

WHEREAS, a proclamation is made when there is an actual incident, threat of disaster, or extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the jurisdictions that are within the City's boundaries, caused by natural, technological or human-caused disasters; and

WHEREAS, it is further required that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, or, the legislative body meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health and safety of attendees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council previously adopted Resolution No. 2021-104 on October 5, 2021, Resolution 2021-113 on November 2, 2021, Resolution 2021-118 on November 16, 2021, Resolution 2021-134 on December 14, 2021, Resolution 2022-02 on January 11, 2022, Resolution 2022-13 on February 1, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-13 on March 1, 2022, Resolution 2022-32, on March 15, 2022 Resolution 2022-34; April 19, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-48, and on May 17, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-54; on June 21, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-78; on July 19, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-94; on August 16, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-105; Resolution No. 2022-110 on September 7, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-123 on October 18, 2022,, , Resolution No. 2022-134 on November 15, 2022; on December 6, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-140, extending the period during which remote teleconferenced public meetings of the City Council and its constituent bodies might be held without compliance with Government Code §54953(b)(3) to January 19, 2023; and

WHEREAS, as a condition of extending the use of the provisions found in section 54953(e), the City Council must reconsider the circumstances of the state of emergency that exists in the City, and the City Council has done so; and

WHEREAS, emergency conditions persist in the City, specifically, the March 4, 2020, proclamation by the Governor of a state of emergency in the State of California due to COVID-19 and the March 13, 2020, proclamation of a state of emergency in the City of Marina by the City Manager, as the City's Director of Emergency Services, due to COVID-19 which was subsequently ratified by the City Council on March 17, 2020, and after having been supplemented twice, and both proclamations of states of emergency remain in effect; and

WHEREAS, on September 22, 2021, the County of Monterey Health Department issued a Recommendation Regarding Social Distancing Including Remote Meetings of Legislative Bodies, attached hereto as **Attachment 1**; and

WHEREAS, the City Council does hereby find that California and Monterey County are presently continuing to experience cases of the rapidly-spreading COVID-19 Omicron variant and as of June 13, 2022, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rated the risk level for community transmission of COVID-19 in Monterey County as medium with a case rate of 29.9 individuals per 100,000 persons, as of June 13, 2022, a total of 750 persons have died of COVID-19 and 367 persons are reported as new cases currently suffering from COVID-19 with 27 persons reported hospitalized in Monterey County by the County Health Department; this situation has and will continue to cause, conditions of peril to the safety of persons within the City that are likely to be beyond the control of services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the City, and desires to recognize and affirm a local emergency exists and re-ratify the proclamation of state of emergency by the Governor of the State of California and to recognize the County of Monterey Health Department's recommendation regarding social distancing; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence of the local emergency persisting, the City Council does hereby find that the City Council and its constituent bodies shall continue to conduct their meetings without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Government Code section 54953, as authorized by subdivision (e) of section 54953, and that such legislative bodies shall continue to comply with the requirements to provide the public with access to the meetings as prescribed in paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of section 54953; and

WHEREAS, the City of Marina will continue to implement the following measures for meetings of its City Council and its constituent bodies:

- Allow the public to access the meeting and require that the agenda provide an opportunity for the public to directly address the legislative body pursuant to the Brown Act's other teleconferencing provisions.
- In each instance when the local agency provides notice of the teleconferenced meeting or posts its agenda, give notice for how the public can access the meeting and provide public comment.
- Identify and include in the agenda an opportunity for all persons to attend via a call-in or an internet-based service option; the legislative body need not provide a physical location for the public to attend or provide comments.
- Conduct teleconference meetings in a manner that protects the statutory and constitutional rights of the public.
- Stop the meeting until public access is restored in the event of a service disruption that either prevents the local agency from broadcasting the meeting to the public using the call-in or internet-based service option or is within the local agency's control and prevents the public from submitting public comments (any action taken during such a service disruption could be challenged under the Brown Act's existing challenger provisions).
- Not require comments be submitted in advance (though the legislative body may provide that as an option) and provide the opportunity to comment in real time.
- Provide adequate time for public comment, either by establishing a timed public comment period or by allowing a reasonable amount of time to comment.
- If the legislative body uses a third-party website or platform to host the teleconference, and the third-party service requires users to register to participate, the legislative body must provide adequate time during the comment period for users to register and may not close the registration comment period until the comment period has elapsed.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARINA DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals. The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

Section 2. Affirmation that Local Emergency Persists. The City Council hereby reconsiders the conditions of the state of emergency in the City and proclaims that a local emergency persists throughout the City, and:

(a) On September 22, 2021, the County of Monterey Health Department issued a Recommendation Regarding Social Distancing Including Remote Meetings of Legislative Bodies; and

(b) California and Monterey County are presently continuing to experience cases of the rapidly-spreading COVID-19 Omicron variant and as of June 13, 2022, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rated the risk level for community transmission of COVID-19 in Monterey County as medium with a case rate of 29.9 individuals per 100,000 persons, as of June 13, 2022, a total of 750 persons have died of COVID-19 and 367 persons are reported as new cases currently suffering from COVID-19 with 27 persons reported hospitalized in Monterey County by the County Health Department; and this has caused, and will continue to cause, conditions of peril to the safety of persons within the City that are likely to be beyond the control of services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the City.

Section 3. Re-ratification of Governor's Proclamation of a State of Emergency. The City Council hereby reconsiders and re-ratifies the Governor of the State of California's Proclamation of State of Emergency, effective as of its issuance date of March 4, 2020.

Section 4. Remote Teleconference Meetings. The City Manager and legislative bodies of the City of Marina, the City Council and its constituent bodies, are hereby authorized and directed to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution including, continuing to conduct open and public meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) and other applicable provisions of the Brown Act.

Section 5. Effective Date of Resolution. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and shall be effective until the earlier of (i) February 19, 2023, or such time the City Council adopts a subsequent resolution in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to extend the time during which the City Council of the City of Marina and its constituent bodies may continue to teleconference without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of section 54953.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Marina at a regular meeting held this 18th day of January 2023, by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCIL MEMBERS: Visscher, McCarthy, Biala, Medina Dirksen

NOES, COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ABSENT, COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ABSTAIN, COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

Bruce C. Delgado, Mayor

ATTEST:

Anita Sharp, Deputy City Clerk



COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Elsa Mendoza Jimenez, Director of Health

Administration Animal Services Behavioral Health Clinic Services
Emergency Medical Services Environmental Health Public Administrator/Public Guardian Public Health

Recommendation Regarding Social Distancing Including Remote Meetings of Legislative Bodies

Issued: September 22, 2021

The Monterey County Health Department continues to recommend that physical and social distancing strategies be practiced in Monterey County, which includes remote meetings of legislative bodies of local agencies, to the extent possible.

Monterey County continues to experience transmission of COVID-19 locally. Physical and social distancing is still an effective measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially when combined with use of face coverings, frequent hand washing, staying home when ill, testing, and vaccination with U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved or authorized COVID-19 vaccines.

Remote meetings of legislative bodies allow for the virtual participation of agency staff, presenters, and community members in safer environments, with less risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The Monterey County Health Officer will continue to monitor local metrics and the necessity of this recommendation.

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the Marina City Council

City Council Meeting
of November 15, 2022

CITY COUNCIL CONSIDER ADOPTING RESOLUTION 2023-, RECOGNIZING A LOCAL EMERGENCY PERSISTS, RE-RATIFYING THE PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM ON MARCH 4, 2020, AND RE-AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARINA AND ITS CONSTITUENT BODIES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 20, 2023, THROUGH FEBRUARY 19, 2023, PURSUANT TO BROWN ACT PROVISIONS.

REQUEST:

It is requested that the City Council consider:

1. Adopting Resolution No. 2023-, regarding the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code §§54950-54963, hereinafter the “Brown Act”) making certain findings; and authorizing the City to continue to implement remote teleconferenced public meetings of the City Council and its constituent bodies for the period January 20, 2022, through February 19, 2023.

BACKGROUND:

Government Code §54953(e) allows cities to continue to meet remotely during states of emergency proclaimed by the Governor under modified Brown Act requirements that are similar to but not identical to the rules and procedures established by the prior Executive Orders of Governor Newsom relating to the relaxation of certain Brown Act requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government Code §54953(e) authorizes local agencies to use teleconferencing without complying with teleconferencing requirement imposed by the Brown Act during a declared state of emergency when state or local health officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing during the proclaimed state of emergency or when the legislative body had determined by majority vote that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

At a special meeting held on October 5, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-104 regarding the Brown Act making certain findings, and authorizing the City to implement remote teleconferenced public meetings of the City Council and its constituent bodies might be held without compliance with Government Code §54953(b)(3) for the period October 5, 2021 through November 4, 2021; subsequently on November 2, 2021, the Council adopted Resolution 2021-113 extending that period until December 2, 2021; on November 16, 2021, the Council adopted Resolution 2021-118 extending that period until December 16, 2021; on December 14, 2021, the Council adopted Resolution 2021-134 extending that period until January 13, 2022; and on January 11, 2022, the Council adopted Resolution 2022-02 extending that period to February 10, 2022; and on February 1, 2022, the Council adopted Resolution No. 2022-13, extending that period until March 3, 2022; on March 1, 2022 Council adopted Resolution No. 2022-32, extending that period to March 31, 2022, on March 15, 2022 Resolution 2022-34; April 19, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-48, and on May 17, 2022 adopted Resolution No. 2022-54; on June 21, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-78; on July 19, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-94 on August 16, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-105, on September 7, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-110; on October 18, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-123; on November 15, 2022 Resolution No. 2022-134; on December 6, 2022, Resolution No. 2022-140, extending the period during which remote teleconferenced public meetings of the City Council and its constituent bodies might be held without compliance with Government Code §54953(b)(3) to January 19, 2023.

ANALYSIS:

On June 11, 2021, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-08-21 which among other things rescinded his prior Executive Order N-29-20 and set the date of October 1, 2021, for public agencies to transition back to public meetings held in full compliance with the Brown Act.

As the Delta variants surged in California, the legislature took action to extend the COVID-19 exemptions to the Brown Act's teleconference requirements, subject to some additional requirements. California and Monterey County are presently continuing to experience cases of the rapidly-spreading Omicron variant. Assembly Bill 361 amended Government Code §54953 and allowed a local agency to use teleconferencing in any of the following circumstances without complying with certain Brown Act provisions:

1. The legislative body holds a meeting during a proclaimed state of emergency, and state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing.
2. The legislative body holds a meeting during a proclaimed state of emergency for the purpose of determining, by majority vote, whether as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.
3. The legislative body holds a meeting during a proclaimed state of emergency and has determined, by majority vote taken at a meeting held for the purpose described in 2 above, that as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

A local agency that holds a meeting under any of these circumstances would be required to follow certain requirements listed in the attached Resolution, in addition to giving notice of the meeting and posting agendas as required under the Brown Act. These additional requirements are intended to protect the public's right to participate in the meetings of local agency legislative bodies. The City of Marina adheres to the listed requirements.

Government Code §54953(e)(3) provides that if the state of emergency remains active for more than 30 days, a local agency must make the following findings by majority vote every 30 days to continue using the exemption to the Brown Act teleconferencing requirements:

- The legislative body has reconsidered the circumstances of the emergency; and
- Either of the following circumstances exist: the state of emergency continue to directly impact the ability of members to meet safely in person or State or local officials continue to impose or recommend social distancing measures.

The goal of Government Code §54953 as revised by AB 361 is to improve and enhance public access to local agency meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic and future applicable emergencies by allowing broader access through teleconferencing options. The current version of Government Code §54953 became effective on September 16, 2021, with a sunset of the present version on January 1, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None identified.

CONCLUSION:

This request is submitted for City Council consideration and possible adoption of a resolution proclaiming a local emergency persists, re-ratifying the proclamation of a state of emergency by Governor Newsom on March 4, 2020, and re-authorizing remote teleconference meetings of the City Council of the City of Marina and its constituent bodies for the period January 20, 2023, through February 19, 2023, pursuant to Brown Act provisions.

Respectfully submitted,

Layne Long
City Manager
City of Marina