



February 22, 2023

Governing Board Communication

Agenda Item B-2

TO: MERA Governing Board

FROM: Heather Plamondon, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: MERA Meeting Changes to Return to In Person

Background:

Governor Newsom has announced that he will lift the COVID-19 State of Emergency on February 28, 2023, which affects relaxed teleconferencing provisions for public meetings subject to the Brown Act. During the pandemic, public agencies have operated under relaxed teleconferencing rules, which facilitated remote attendance of public meetings during a time when public gatherings presented personal and public health risks. Effective March 1, 2023, the traditional rules for teleconferencing, which predate the pandemic, will apply to public meetings. This will create significant changes with respect to Governing Board members' ability to attend public meetings remotely by teleconference (including videoconference platforms like Zoom). Therefore, MERA is prepared for a return to in-person Governing Board Meetings.

Should a Board Member have a need to exercise the Teleconferencing Option, it will now be under the rules as described below, unless there are special circumstances that are covered in the FAQ (Attachment A).

Traditional Teleconferencing Under the Brown Act:

The Brown Act requires that all meetings of a local agency legislative body be open and public and that all persons be permitted to attend and participate.¹ The Brown Act allows for meetings to occur via teleconferencing subject to certain requirements:

- The agency must **identify the teleconference location of each legislative body member** that will be participating in the meeting;
- each teleconference location must be **accessible to the public**;
- Members of the public must be allowed to **address the legislative body at each teleconference location**;
- The meeting **agenda must be posted at each teleconference location**; and
- At least a **quorum** of the legislative body must participate from locations within the boundaries of the agency's jurisdiction.²

¹ Gov. Code § 54953(a).

² Gov. Code § 54953(b).

Staff will continue to provide the meeting reminder, the agenda packet and a Zoom Link for staff and public participation in compliance with The Brown Act.

The Governing Board will be meeting in the Council Chambers of the Corte Madera Interim Town Hall located at 240 Tamal Vista Blvd. Ste.108, Corte Madera. This site was chosen as it can accommodate both the in person and remote capabilities to support a hybrid option for staff and public participation.

We will continue to use a Roll Call voting procedure to accurately capture the votes of Members and to allow for the public to hear the votes and for them to be captured in the recording of the meeting.

Below is a map view of where the meetings will be held. The meeting schedule will still be the fourth Wednesday of the month beginning at 3:30pm, except for the Holiday schedule or unless changed by an action of the Board.



Attachment:

- 1) B-2A – Teleconferencing FAQ and Checklist