

City of Boiling Spring Lakes

Remote Participation Policy

Overview- The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, which will allow Board Commissioners and members of appointed committees/boards who are unable to physically attend a meeting to participate remotely via electronic, simultaneous methods. This policy is not intended to allow or encourage physical absence from a Council meeting simply as a means of convenience. Remote participation should only be utilized in the case of a bona fide emergency or other such circumstance as described below. For the purpose of this policy, the presiding officer is defined as the Mayor or the person serving as presiding officer in the Mayor's absence and a duly appointed committee chairperson.

Remote Participation

1. Remote participation is defined as participation in an official meeting by a member who is not physically present at the meeting via means of electronic and simultaneous methods such as audio and/or video.
2. Remote participation shall not be allowed during the following:
 - a. Quasi-judicial proceedings
 - b. Closed sessions
3. Remote participation is allowed only for the following reasons:
 - a. Personal illness
 - b. Employment related issues
 - c. Family or other emergency
 - d. Participation in other City related meetings
 - e. Vacation
 - f. Other reasons as approved by the Board of Commissioners
4. When possible, any member who desires to participate remotely shall notify the Mayor, City Manager, City Clerk or committee Chairperson at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to allow for set-up of any necessary equipment to accommodate remote participation. The member shall also provide the telephone number at which they can be contacted to participate remotely.
5. During the call to order, the presiding officer shall announce that a member has requested to participate remotely and then they shall call the number provided by the member. In an effort to minimize disruption of the meeting, if after two attempts, clear contact cannot be established with an absent member, the option of remote participation for that member during any part of that meeting will

not be allowed. Once contact has been established, the remotely participating member shall identify himself and state the reason for participating remotely. If due to technical difficulties, contact with the remotely participating member is lost entirely or if contact becomes unclear, the presiding officer may end remote participation for that member for the balance of the meeting. If remote participation is established but is then interrupted or ends, the member will be considered as excused from the meeting and any votes post interruption shall not be recorded for the excused member.

6. The presiding officer must be physically present at the meeting.

7. A member has the same voting privileges when participating remotely as they have when they are physically present at the meeting.

8. A member participating remotely must at a minimum be fully heard (and if possible also seen) by all members of the board/committee and other individuals in attendance at the meeting. A member participating remotely must also be able to hear all other members of the body and other individuals in attendance at the meeting. If this cannot be accomplished, the presiding officer shall not allow the member to participate remotely.

9. When casting a vote, a member participating remotely shall be called on individually by the presiding officer, after all physically present members have voted, to verbally cast their vote as "aye" or "nay" in such a manner as can be clearly heard by all members.

10. Members participating remotely shall have the right to receive all documents that were distributed to the board/committee prior to the start of the meeting. However, it is the responsibility of the remotely participating member to provide a means whereby the documents can be delivered to them in a timely manner, for example electronic mail or mailing address. All such expense shall be paid for by the City.