

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARINGS AND RECEIVING PUBLIC COMMENTS

***Disclaimer:** The template below is in draft form and is intended for the purpose of authorizing and noticing electronic public hearings and receiving public comments where large public gatherings may be detrimental to public health. Pope Flynn, LLC is providing open access to this template, but makes no warranties or assurances that this template, as drafted, complies with any local ordinance, resolution, policy, or bylaws. These may be adopted in conjunction with any authorization for electronic meetings or as a stand-alone policy, as needed. While we have attempted to draft this broadly to supersede any existing ordinance, resolution, policy, or bylaws, it is advisable to consult with your legal counsel regarding any specific circumstances and their proper means of adoption.*

Template Electronic Public Comment/Public Hearing Policy:

With respect to any electronic meeting, any public comment periods provided for by local ordinance, resolution, policy, or bylaws are hereby suspended. Members of the public may submit written public comments to the [clerk/secretary/etc.] no later than one hour prior to any regular meeting, which shall be distributed to the members of the Governing Body at such meeting.

With respect to any public hearing that is required by law to be held in connection with any proposed action of the Governing Body, electronic public hearings shall be permitted. Individuals wishing to provide written comments for any such public hearing may email comments to the [clerk/secretary/etc.] no later than one hour prior to the scheduled time for such public hearing, and the presiding officer shall read such comments aloud during the public hearing. Individuals wishing to speak at the public hearing shall sign up with the [clerk/secretary/etc.] no later than one hour prior to the scheduled time for the public hearing. The [clerk/secretary/etc.] shall contact those who wish to speak at the public hearing by phone, in the order the requests were received, to admit them to the public hearing. Public hearings shall otherwise be conducted in accordance with all other rules and procedures of the governing body. Notices of public hearings shall include detailed instructions regarding the manner in which the public hearing shall be held.

Template Notice of Electronic Public Hearing:

A public hearing will be held via an electronic meeting on [Date and Time] on the question of the approval of the annual budget of [Local Government] (the “Public Hearing”). The Public Hearing will be held in accordance with the [governing body’s] procedures for conducting electronic meetings. Those wishing to provide written public comments for the public hearing should email comments to [email address] no later than one hour prior to the time set for the public hearing. Those wishing to make oral comments at the public hearing should email [email address], and provide their name and a telephone number where they can be reached during the Public Hearing. Those who have signed up to provide oral comments via telephone will be contacted during the Public Hearing in the order the request was received. The Public Hearing may be accessed by the public in the same manner as public meetings of the [governing body].