



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Jones and Members of the Board

FROM: Karen Proctor, Town Administrator

DATE: July 15, 2021

RE: Remote Meeting Participation

DISCUSSION:

Staff is seeking direction regarding the possibility of hybrid meetings. Now that the Board is meeting in person, do you wish to offer remote participation to the residents? In order to allow remote participation, the Town would need to invest in some equipment to include a laptop, the Meeting Owl, possibly some speakers and continue to pay for Zoom. This cost is estimated at approximately \$2,500.

Below is some feedback Staff received from other Cities and Towns regarding hybrid meetings.

If the Board desires to offer remote participation, Staff will bring back a detailed analysis of possible options and costs to the next meeting.

Centennial

Centennial did one hybrid meeting and then came back to full, in-person meetings on June 14th. Hybrid was difficult and there are too many opportunities for technical problems.

Centennial City Council will look at virtual zoom meetings for work sessions, during blizzards, etc., in the future. Fully virtual, Zoom meetings worked better for them than hybrid.

Cherry Hills Village

CHV is going back to all in-person with no hybrid option. The people on Zoom have a hard time hearing the people in the Council Chambers so it makes hybrid meetings difficult.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth is using a Meeting Owl. It works, but a little hard to really see people, you need some good speaker system for people on Zoom to hear. They have external speakers to amplify the sound. A good system for the price.

Parker

Parker has been doing a “hybrid” model for Council meetings and Study Sessions in which the Mayor, Council and staff are in-person and outside presenters, applicants and general public are “virtual” via Zoom and Facebook. The Council elected to transition to this model from the 100% virtual meetings back in July 2020. They opened the in-person option to outside presenters and applicants in April (none have taken them up on it yet).

Parker has done the Facebook Live Streaming for Council meetings for several years and under COVID it was restricted it to public who wish only to view the meeting and not participate. They are not able to provide public comment during public hearings through Facebook Live. This live streaming is done on-site by a contracted individual and with his equipment.

With COVID and the in-person restrictions, they added the Zoom option for both Council meetings, which is used for public hearings and general public comment, and Council study sessions. They purchased some equipment to assist with this through CARES funds. The Zoom option and participation is managed by staff.

Crested Butte

Crested Butte’s Deputy Clerk would prefer to transition away from this interactive component. It has been a lot to manage the remote audience for her and the Clerk who already have to focus on the meeting and she expects that management will become more difficult as they transition to having Council members, staff and the public back in the Chambers. They would have to make some significant modifications to the technology in the meeting room to accommodate both in-person and remote audiences effectively.