

RESOLUTION NO. 22-__

Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Emeryville Making Required Findings To Allow The Continuation Of Remotely Held Meetings Of The City Council, Pursuant To AB 361

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Governor of the State of California (“Governor”) issued a Proclamation of a State of Emergency due to COVID-19, which proclamation remains and is in effect as of the date of this Resolution, as are the facts, circumstances, and emergency under which it was issued; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order N-29-20 allowing local legislative bodies to hold meetings via teleconference and to make meetings accessible electronically without it constituting a violation of the open meeting laws found in the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Sections 54950 et seq., “Brown Act”); and

WHEREAS, there has been an increase in public participation at public meetings that are held via teleconference during the course of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, pursuant to Resolution No. 20-23, the City Council of the City of Emeryville (“City Council”) ratified the City of Emeryville’s Director of Emergency Services Proclamation of Local Emergency dated March 17, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer of the County of Alameda (“Health Officer”) has issued various health orders and updates designed to slow the spread of COVID-19 (including variants thereof) such as vaccinations, quarantines, face covering requirements, and social distancing recommendations designed to protect public health; and

WHEREAS, as of August 3, 2021, the Health Officer continued to state that indoor settings, whether public or private, are a higher risk for COVID-19 transmission and, that while vaccination protects against severe COVID-19 illness, the COVID-19 Delta variant was beginning to infect a small percentage of vaccinated people as well as many unvaccinated people; and

WHEREAS, eight Bay Area health officers, including Alameda County’s, have issued Health Orders requiring masks indoors in public places, which require all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings when indoors in public settings, with limited exceptions, starting at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, August 3, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2021, the Governor issued Executive Order N-08-21, which placed an end date of September 30, 2021, on the so-called Brown Act Orders that allowed exemptions to public meeting laws; and

WHEREAS, since the issuance of Executive Order N-08-21, the Delta variant, and now the Omicron variant have proliferated, causing a spike in COVID-19 cases throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control has found that after getting vaccinated against COVID-19, protection against the virus may decrease over time and be less able

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to protect against the Delta and Omicron variants, and recently recommended that individuals receive booster shots; and

WHEREAS, the most recent guidance from Alameda County Public Health was issued on February 28, 2022, and is in alignment with the State’s masking announcements, which were revised to remove the requirement that unvaccinated individuals mask in indoor public settings, replacing it with a strong recommendation that all persons, regardless of vaccine status, continue indoor masking, and, for K-12 school and childcare, the State guidance is moving from “requiring” to “strongly recommending” the wearing of masks; and

WHEREAS, Alameda County case rates and hospitalizations are on the decline from their peak in January, however, masking indoors is still strongly recommended and institutions are encouraged to consider protecting the well-being of employees and people entering their locations with masking and other health safety practices; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Orders N-29-20 and N-08-21, the City Council has been holding remote meetings using teleconferencing and virtual meeting technology in an effort to help protect the public, members of the City Council and staff attending such meetings (“attendees”) from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, due the rise in COVID-19 case, including due to the Delta and Omicron variants, the City Council continues to be deeply concerned about protecting the health and safety of meeting attendees, particularly given that even fully vaccinated people have contracted the Delta and Omicron variants, people may have and transmit the virus before knowing they are infected and/or if they are asymptomatic; meetings of the City Council can exceed fifteen minutes, and its meeting facilities are limited in space with seats close together, and facilities have restricted air flow; and

WHEREAS, the California state legislature adopted AB 361 as an urgency measure that was signed by the Governor on September 16, 2021, to be effective immediately, and which amends the Brown Act to allow local legislative bodies to continue meeting remotely using teleconferencing and virtual meeting technology as long as there is a gubernatorial “proclaimed state of emergency” upon the local legislative body finding that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing or that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to continue holding public meetings of the City Council remotely using teleconferencing and virtual meeting technology in order to avoid the imminent risk to the health and safety of attendees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public meeting on March 15, 2022; and

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WHEREAS, at such public meeting, the City Council considered all pertinent information, exhibits, testimony, and comments received during the public review process, including, without limitation, information received at the public meeting, the written report from staff dated March 15, 2022, this Resolution, and all other information on which the City Council has based its decision; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the City Council hereby finds the following:

- a. The foregoing recitals are true and correct.
- b. A state of emergency remains active.
- c. State and local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing.
- c. The City Council has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency.
- d. The following circumstances exist:
 - (i) The state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of meeting attendees to meet safely in person.
 - (ii) State or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that as of the effective date of AB 361, meetings of the City Council will continue to be conducted remotely using teleconferencing and virtual meeting technology for the next 30 days in compliance with AB 361 and the City Council will revisit the need to so conduct its meetings within 30 days of the adoption of this Resolution.

ADOPTED, by the City Council of the City of Emeryville at a regular meeting held Tuesday, March 15, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: _____

NOES: _____

ABSTAIN: _____

ABSENT: _____

MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CITY CLERK

DocuSigned by:
John Kennedy
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CITY ATTORNEY