

MOTION


On March 4, 2020, the City and State declared a local and state of emergency to address the global COVID-19 outbreak. A few days later on March 19, 2020, a "Safer at Home" order was issued by the City to slow the spread of COVID-19. Since May 1, 2020, all Neighborhood Councils (NCs) in the City have been conducting virtual public meetings online and over the phone utilizing meeting protocols established by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment's EmpowerLA Virtual Governance (EVG) system. The EVG system was developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prohibited all private and public gatherings, including temporarily suspending Neighborhood Council meetings and activities from taking place. The development of the EVG system allowed NCs to resume their meetings, while still adhering to all local, state, and federal laws. The EVG system supports and provides an opportunity for NCs to govern in a uniform and structured virtual environment.

As the pandemic subsides, some NCs have begun to inquire about future NC operations and how meetings will be conducted. Some NCs have expressed an interest in resuming in person meetings, and others have voiced their preference for staying virtual and continuing to use the EVG system. While other NCs have expressed a preference for a hybrid meeting option. It is clear that the landscape has changed and that the City should look at all viable options to facilitate NC operational needs and meetings.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the City Attorney, to report on viable options for conducting Neighborhood Council meetings in the future, such as the use of virtual/EVG system meetings, the return to in-person meetings, or a hybrid meeting option; including any related legal implications, and how these approaches relate to emergency declarations.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, as part of this review, assess if individual Neighborhood Councils may be granted the flexibility to select a preferred meeting option that meets their needs.

PRESENTED BY:


JOHN S. LEE
Councilmember, 12th District

SECONDED BY:



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