



HARWICH COVID-19 GUIDANCE DOCUMENT #7 EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

REMOTE PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC BODIES IN PUBLIC MEETING

March 20, 2020

[THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT NULLIFIES GUIDANCE DOCUMENT #2]

All public meetings of public bodies will be conducted by remote participation only. Only essential public bodies (Board of Selectmen and all regulatory bodies) will be permitted to meeting during the weeks of March 23, 2020 and March 30, 2020. This action is necessary to ensure adequate staff coverage to provide necessary services in support of the Board of Selectmen and the regulatory bodies.

Any presiding officer of any public body not allowed to meet under this guidance should reach out to the Interim Town Administrator to articulate the urgent need for their public body to meet during this timeframe.

Necessary steps for public bodies to take to effect a meeting are:

1. The public will not be allowed into a Board/Committee meeting, even where there are any members of the public body and/or Harwich Town staff or official(s) physically present at the meeting location during the meeting.
2. Any person deemed to be a "presenter" at an allowed public meeting must be identified by the presiding officer (Chair) and will be provided appropriate meeting access information.
3. The general public will be provided with alternative access through which they can watch or listen to meetings "in real time," and meeting notices will specify the manner in which members of the public may access audio or video of the meeting as it is occurring.
4. If, despite our best efforts, our technological capabilities do not adequately support public access to virtual or remote meetings, the Town of Harwich will ensure that an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings at the meeting is posted on the Town of Harwich's website as soon as possible after the meeting.
5. Every effort should be made to forgo Executive Session discussions during this timeframe.
6. Meeting notices will still be posted at least 48 hours in advance (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays), unless it is an emergency meeting as defined under the Open Meeting Law (in which event, the meeting notice will be posted with as much advanced notice as is possible in the circumstances). Minutes will still be taken.

Please refer to the Town Clerk's website for additional guidance and protocols. Go to: <https://www.harwich-ma.gov/town-clerk> or call 508-430-7516 ext. 5

Respectfully submitted:

Joseph F. Powers
Interim Town Administrator

Anita N. Doucette
Town Clerk