

City of Paynesville
Chief Administrator Determination Regarding Conducting Meetings by
Telephone or Other Electronic Means

As the Chief Administrator of the City of Paynesville (the “City”), I find as follows:

- a. The City of Paynesville has, along with the State of Minnesota, United States of America, and world as a whole, been tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b. COVID-19 is a virus that causes a wide-range of symptoms in affected individuals from no symptoms whatsoever to severe cases that may cause the death of the infected person.¹
- c. COVID-19 is transmitted to others when infected persons exhale droplets and other very small particles that contain the virus and those droplets or particles are inhaled or come into contact with certain parts of others’ bodies.² Close proximity to others increases the chance of infection.³
- d. The COVID-19 virus first detected has mutated multiple times, with the newest variant being labeled “Omicron.”⁴ Each variant triggers different symptoms, responds differently to treatments, and may spread more or less quickly.⁵
- e. Over the last seven days, CentraCare, the local healthcare provider, has conducted 10,275 COVID-19 tests throughout its system and has identified 2,871 cases of COVID-19 – a 27.9% positivity rate.⁶ In the last three days, CentraCare, has observed a 49.7% positivity rate. This indicates a rapid escalation of the transmission of the COVID-19 virus within the community.
- f. Approximately 70% of all critical care beds within the CentraCare system are occupied by COVID-19 patients.⁷
- g. The CentraCare system is operating at “crisis levels of care” in order to meet the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic and certain treatments are being rationed to meet need.⁸
- h. Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.021 authorizes cities to meet by telephone or interactive technology if it is determined that meeting in person is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 12.
- i. I have consulted with the Mayor and Legal Counsel along with local health officials regarding the current situation and the ability of the City to meet and conduct business “as usual” in light of the increased COVID-19 numbers.

Based on the above findings, I determine as follows:

1. Due to the current pandemic and state of emergency, complying with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13D, would threaten the health safety and welfare of City officials, City staff, and the public.
2. Due to the local conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not practical or prudent for the City Council or other city boards (“City Boards”) to conduct in-person meetings.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

² <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/index.html>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/understanding-variants.html>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1L3s2aTX2co>

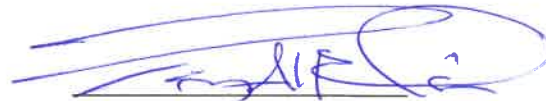
⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1L3s2aTX2co>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1L3s2aTX2co>

3. It is not feasible for one member of the city council, one member of City Boards, the city's chief administrative officer, the city's chief legal counsel, or members of the public to be present at the regular meeting location. Efforts will be made, to ensure access to the meetings by the public, for the City Administrator and the City's social media specialist to be present at the meeting location for those who cannot access the meeting through interactive technology.
4. Members of the public may be present at the regular meeting location, unless unfeasible due to the global health COVID-19 pandemic.
5. A member of the City Council or City Boards that attends a meeting by telephone or interactive technology shall be considered "present" for purposes of establishing a quorum.
6. Until further notice, all meetings of the City Council and City Boards governed by Minnesota Statute, Section 13D shall be conducted by telephone or interactive technology.
7. All meetings of City Boards shall comply with the requirements of Minnesota Statute, section 13D.021.

Dated:

1/7/2022



Tariq Al-Rifai
City Administrator
City of Paynesville