



CITY of CALABASAS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: APRIL 18, 2022

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

FROM: MICHAEL RUSSO, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION REGARDING HYBRID/IN-PERSON CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

MEETING
DATE: APRIL 27, 2022

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding hybrid/in-person City Council meetings.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

There has been talk about Hybrid meetings for City Council, and there may be some confusion about the term. A true "HYBRID MEETING" means one or more of the meeting participants – who must be seen on camera – is not located in Council Chambers. That person located remotely could be any person normally seated at the dais, a staff person, a consultant, or even a member of the public whose face must be on camera for some reason.

There are four options for Council meetings:

1. Traditional In-Person Meeting
2. HYBRID: Zoom + CTV (Current Status)
3. HYBRID: Participants in Chambers with Remote Public
4. HYBRID: Some Participants in Chambers with Multiple Remote Participants

We have the technical capability to do them, but it is more labor-intensive than doing a traditional in-person meeting for just CTV and the web stream. Typically, it takes 1-2 people inside master control to run a traditional Council meeting. In a truly hybrid environment, where there are some Council members at home and others in the Chambers, that jumps to four staff members, mostly due to increased audio demands with a hybrid meeting, and Clerk staff needed to bring in remote meeting participants.

The Council suggested we look at how LA County handles its Public Comment at its Board of Supervisors meetings. The County uses AT&T Conferencing in their meetings. We checked with AT&T and using one of their "Professional Moderators" and "Communication Line Specialists" would cost approximately \$300 for each 30 minutes or fraction thereof. Using that pricing formula, a three-hour meeting would cost City taxpayers \$1,800. And that is only for one meeting. If you extrapolate that rate for 20 meetings each year, the total cost would be \$36,000. And that number does not account for any City commission meetings.

If the plan is to return everybody to Chambers, a good solution is to produce the meeting as you would a regular meeting, using the five cameras in Chambers, run it through CTV and the web, as in the past ... but also feed that same production downstream to Zoom. A resident could be at home, watching on a TV, tablet, or phone as in the past – or watching it on Zoom on a phone, tablet, or other device. If the resident engages in public comment remotely, no matter how he/she is watching, the resident would use the Zoom call-in number, just like a current Council meeting in this Zoom environment. And the budget impact would be ZERO because the City already has a Zoom account.

Due to staff limitations and budget and overtime considerations, it may be more prudent to limit any hybrid meetings to Council meetings only and continue using Zoom for Commission meetings – unless we plan to return to Chambers for all meetings without any remote capability.

REQUESTED ACTION:

That the City Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding hybrid/in-person City Council meetings.

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint Presentation