





Memorandum

TO: Kevin Jackson, Village Manager 

FROM: Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager 

FOR: Village President and Board of Trustees

DATE: September 29, 2022

SUBJECT: Transition Plan for Village Board Return to In-Person Meetings

This memorandum sets forth the plan for the Village Board to return to Village Hall for in-person Village Board regular meetings, special meetings and Board committee meetings and to allow for hybrid participation via Zoom for public commenters, presenters/speakers, or other participants as needed.

Location: The Communications Department tested and recommends that the Village Board conduct all meetings in the Council Chambers. This will allow for the best sound broadcast when using the hybrid meeting option via Zoom.

Safety Protocols: The CDC posts "Covid-19 Community Levels" on their website to assist individuals and communities with decisions regarding prevention measures. Communities are classified as low, medium or high. Depending on the classification, communities and individuals may choose to vary their safety protocols. This classification will continue to be monitored as the Village returns to in-person meetings. Currently Cook County, Illinois is classified as low and Oak Park is classified as low.

The following COVID-19 safety protocols will be instituted for the return to in-person meetings and will reviewed on an on-going basis:

- Public Works will install portable air filters appropriate for the room size in the Council Chambers and Room 101.
- All meeting room doors will be kept open for ventilation. Keeping the door open is also a requirement of the Open Meetings Act.
- In the event of a large crowd, staff will have the option to limit access to the Council Chambers and have the public sit in Room 101 for viewing of the meeting on a screen. During the time period of October 24, 2022-November 8, 2022, Room 101 will not be available due to early voting, therefore Room 102 will be used if needed.

- Visitors who are not part of cohort together will be encouraged to space themselves apart when seated .
- All members of the general public will be required to wear a mask while in the Council Chambers in accordance with current Village policy. Staff is required to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, if they are in contact with members of the general public whose vaccination status is unknown and unable to social distance, or if they are not fully vaccinated in accordance with current Village policy.

Public Access to the Council Chambers: On the evening of Village Board in-person meetings, security personnel will be at Village Hall to open the staff entrance lobby doors and allow the public to walk through to the Council Chambers as well as to open and monitor the accessible entrance on Lombard Avenue after hours. During or after the meeting, the public will be allowed to walk back through the building and use the lobby entrance.

Use of Zoom: During a meeting, a Zoom account will open and will show on large screens in the Council Chambers and will be visible on the small screens in front of each Trustee at their seats. Zoom will be used to facilitate remote public comments, remote speaker presentations or for any other participant who needs to attend a meeting remotely.

Village Board Remote Meeting Policy: Once the Village Board returns to in-person meetings, the Village Board's electronic attendance meeting policy will be applicable, which provides that those Trustees participating remotely cannot be counted toward a quorum.

Start Date: Staff recommends the Village Board return for an initial in-person meeting for the special meeting scheduled for Monday October 10, 2002. Prior to this time, the Village Board is welcome to visit Village Hall and view the Council Chambers and provide feedback to the Village Manager's Office.

All Other Village Meetings: The Village President's declaration that the COVID-19 pandemic no longer requires remote Village Board meetings, it will be challenging to allow for other boards and commissions to continue to meet remotely under the Open Meetings Act. Because the public has become accustomed to the accessibility via Zoom as well as all the Commission meetings being recorded and available on the website, this poses challenges.

First, not all Village conference rooms are equipped to allow for a Zoom hybrid set-up. The only room that is recommended currently by the Communications Department for this set-up is the Council Chambers. The Zoom hybrid option also requires a staff member to be present in the broadcast control room for the entire meeting. Therefore, under current staffing levels, the ability for a Zoom hybrid meeting will be limited to the Village Board. As an alternate option that doesn't require added staffing, a Commission meeting can record a meeting with a stationary camera (no Zoom hybrid meeting) that can be posted to the web. Currently only the Council Chambers and Room 101 allow for this option.

Communications is currently researching new technology options to offer Zoom hybrid meetings as a standard in other rooms and/or may propose additional part-time staffing to

run Zoom hybrid meetings for the Commissions if that is determined to be the standard for Commissions. Given the number of board and commission meetings scheduled in a month which will be limited to the use of the Council Chambers and Room 101, there is the potential that some Commissions will not be video recorded. All Commissions have the option of making an audio recording that can be posted on the web. The Village Manager's Office will prioritize Commissions with the largest attendance or greatest community scope as those first to be scheduled in the Council Chambers and Room 101 on a monthly basis. Also, Room 101 will be closed from October 24, 2022 through November 8, 2022 for early voting. Room 102 will be the alternate room for overflow.

Commissions will be transitioned at the same time as the Village Board on a request basis as time, space and training allow based upon the priority mentioned above. Commissions will be required to fully return to in-person meetings starting in January 2023.

If you have questions, please contact Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager at 708-358-5770 or email at village@oak-park.us.