

Memorandum

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Renee Eisenbeisz , Assistant City Manager
DATE: December 15, 2025
SUBJECT: Remote attendance discussion
ITEM NUMBER: 1.a
SECTION: GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

INTRODUCTION

The city council is being asked to review and provide direction on updating policies allowing for council and advisory board members to call in remotely based on new statutes.

DISCUSSION

Since spring 2022, all council and advisory board meetings have been in-person unless, on a rare occasion, members needed to call in remotely. If this occurred, the city needed to provide notice of the location where they would be calling in from at least three days before the meeting. At the same time, the city council discontinued letting members of the public attend meetings via Zoom.

During their 2025 session, the Minnesota Legislature approved statutes regarding remote meeting options for city council and advisory boards. The new laws remove the requirement that members can only attend remotely from a location that is not open and accessible to the public up to three times per year if they are serving in the military and at a required drill, deployed, or on active duty or has been advised by a health care professional against being in public places. Additionally, they removed the requirement that members must attend remotely in a location that open and accessible to the public. As such, members may call in remotely if the following requirements are met:

- At least one member is physically present at the regular meeting location and notice is provided of that location
- Notice is provided on the agenda that notes that members may be attending and participating remotely
- All members must be able to hear and see each other and all discussion and testimony presented at any location at which at least one member is present
- All members of the public at the regular meeting location must be able to hear and see all discussion, testimony, and votes of all members
- All votes are conducted by roll call so each member's vote can be identified and recorded
- The minutes must reflect the names of any members appearing by interactive television technology and state the reason or reasons for it

The city council discussed this at their August 18 workshop and directed staff to bring back a policy allowing for remote attendance for further discussion. Attached for review and discussion are two draft resolutions allowing for both council and advisory board members to attend up to three meetings remotely. Both resolutions highlight that members are expected to attend all meetings in person for effective meetings with attentive and engaged members.

City council resolution

This resolution updates the city council's operating procedures to add the following language under the meetings section.

Remote attendance

In order to have effective meetings with attentive and engaged members, city council members are expected to attend all meetings in person. However, the city understands that on occasion, remote participation may be needed.

City council members may participate remotely in council meetings up to three times per calendar year, provided all notices and other requirements of the Open Meeting Law are met. Remote participation should be coordinated with the city manager at least two business days ahead of the meeting.

All staff and consultant presentations will be in person, unless otherwise approved by the city manager.

Advisory board resolution

This resolution updates the city's 2015 attendance policy. Staff liaisons for the city's advisory boards met earlier this month to discuss the pros and cons for allowing remote attendance, as well as technology requirements for meeting in the council chambers. As noted during the August 18 workshop, implementing hybrid meetings in the council chambers, specifically for workshops or advisory board meetings, will add a significant amount of work for staff. This includes setting up and managing the virtual meeting and ensuring adequate microphones are in place so everyone can hear each other, as well as training additional staff on the AV equipment in the chambers. Given the technology requirements for using the council chambers, staff are recommending the following:

- Allow for remote participation at the same level as the city council if the Open Meeting Law requirements above are met
- Move all advisory boards that currently meet in the council chambers (except for the planning commission) to meeting room 4 in the community center.
 - This room has a monitor and webcam and will only require staff to set up the virtual meeting.
 - If this room is not available, staff liaisons have the right to not allow remote participation.

RECOMMENDATION

It's recommended that the city council provide direction on the above items. If the council agrees with this language, both resolutions will be placed on the January 5, 2026 agenda for approval.

ATTACHMENTS

[City council resolution](#)

[Draft council operating procedures](#)

Advisory board resolution

League of MN Cities memo on options for meeting remotely