



TO: NORWALK RESIDENTS

FROM: THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

DATE: APRIL 6, 2020

RE: PARTICIPATING AND ATTENDING PUBLIC MEETINGS VIRTUALLY

Due to COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, the City has had to make a change in the way it conducts business to support the efforts of social/physical distancing to reduce community spread. As a result the City established a protocol for how to hold online Zoom meetings, the chosen virtual meeting software. This software allows the Common Council, Committees, Commissions, Authorities, Agencies, and other City meetings to conduct business virtually with the most available functions.

Using the Zoom platform you will be able to participate in public meetings by dialing in using the teleconference phone line or using the video conference link, both of which will be available on the meeting agenda (posted on the City of Norwalk's website), to listen and/or watch the meeting. For some meetings, as outlined on the agenda, you will be able to provide public comment.

Below are a few items to assist you in participating and to make sure that meetings progress accurately and efficiently for the record:

- **How to Test Your Audio and Internet Connection:** In order to make sure you are able to hear and have good internet connection using a computer be sure visit <https://zoom.us/test> before the meeting begins. If you have difficulty simply use the provided telephone call in number and mute your computer audio. This way you will be able to watch via the computer and listen via phone.
- **How to Join a Meeting and Participate or Watch a Meeting:** Meeting agenda's and notice are required to be posted to the City's website and calendar at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting with all supporting materials and documentation for your review.
 - **To submit public comment** – there are two ways to participate in public comment:
 - **PUBLIC COMMENT Option 1:** It is strongly encouraged to submit all public comment before the meeting via email to the designated staff member (see the Designated Staff Members document posted on the City of Norwalk's website). Public comment received via email will be read by the designated staff member into the record, as part of the meeting, and will be provided to the Minute Taker for inclusion in the official meeting minutes. This is the simplest and most effective way to provide public comment on an agenda item. To watch the live stream via YouTube, please visit the URL link provided on the meeting agenda.
 - **PUBLIC COMMENT Option 2:** If you choose not to provide written comment in advance of the meeting, live comments will be permitted as part of the "public

comment/participation” or “public hearing” portion of the meeting, as identified by the Chair. For live comments you will need to use the Public Participation URL link, which will allow you to register with your name and phone number for the meeting. Once you have registered, you will be able to enter and participate in the meeting. For land use meetings, public hearing items are specifically listed on the agenda. If you wish to speak to a listed public hearing item, please use the “Raise Your Hand” function in the Zoom platform. The host will call on you and unmute you so you can speak. Please state your name and address for the record before you begin. You will have three minutes to comment. For other public agency meetings, please use the “Raise Your Hand” function in the Zoom platform when the meeting begins. The host will then call on you and unmute you so you can speak. Please state your name and address for the record before you begin. You will have three minutes to comment. Only items that are on the agenda can be commented on.

- **TO WATCH THE MEETING ONLY (no live public comment possible)**: A live stream has been set up for each meeting. To watch the live stream, please visit the URL link provided on the meeting agenda.
 - **TO CALL INTO THE MEETING, WITHOUT A COMPUTER (no visual, or live public comment possible)**: A call in number will be provided on the meeting agenda. This will allow you to listen to the meeting, but it will not allow you to speak, as part of the meeting, or allow you to visually see the meeting take place.
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- **How to register your Zoom account:** You have the option to register for your own Zoom account, but this is not required to listen or watch a meeting that is taking place. Before your first meeting be sure to go to <https://zoom.us/> and sign up for free. You can also go directly to this link: <https://zoom.us/signup>. Here you will be able to provide your phone number, email, and name so that when you call in or watch live we will be able to identify you for the record and take your comments or questions accurately. This is required if you wish to give live comment during a Zoom meeting.
 - **How to download Zoom:** You have the option to register for your own Zoom account, but this is not required to listen or watch a meeting that is taking place. Following your registration go to <https://zoom.us/download> to download Zoom. You DO NOT have to download Zoom to participate in a meeting. This is only to streamline the process. If you do not wish to download, skip this step and you can simply join by visiting the link provided on the City’s website and the relative agenda. Please note that you will have limited capabilities if you just use the link. You will still be able to give comment but you may have other missing capabilities depending on your device.
 - **Profanity, Hate Speech, Cursing, and Inappropriate Actions:** If anyone in the meeting uses any hate speech or any inappropriate language in the meeting you will be removed from the meeting and blocked from returning.
 - **Seeing the Minutes and watching the Recording of the Meeting:** Within seven days of the meeting, the minutes as well as the recording will be posted to the City’s website at <https://www.norwalkct.org/1691/Recordings-of-Public-Hearings-and-Meetin> (recordings), <https://www.norwalkct.org/1077/Minutes> (minutes), and also on the relative Common Council, Commission, Committee, or other’s City of Norwalk webpage.

All in all, please remember that you are participating in a meeting virtually and take all possible precautions to ensure that the meeting can run smoothly and you can participate effectively. Should you have technical difficulties or questions please contact the designated staff member for the

meeting. They will connect you with the appropriate person to answer your question.

Thank you all for your cooperation during this time. We hope to, virtually, see you all soon. Please ensure you and your families remain safe and healthy during this pandemic.