



*Mammoth Lakes Housing, Inc.
supports workforce housing
for a viable economy and
sustainable community.*

STAFF REPORT

Subject: The Board will discuss AB 361 and consider adoption of Resolution 22-01, regarding the continued utilization of teleconferencing for meetings of the Board that are required to follow the Brown Act.

Presented by: Patricia Robertson, Executive Director

BACKGROUND

On June 11, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-08-21, which among other things rescinded his prior Executive Order N-29-20 and sets a date of October 1, 2021 for public agencies to transition back to public meetings held in full compliance with the Brown Act.

In September the Governor signed AB 361 which extends public meeting teleconferencing until January 1, 2024. This allows for the continued use of teleconferencing without the need to publicly notice the address of every teleconference location.

Brief summary of AB 361 Changes:

For as long as a Brown Act body uses the modified Brown Act rules authorized by AB 361, it must:

1. Give notice of the meeting and post agendas as otherwise required by the Brown Act.
2. Allow members of the public to access the meeting and address the legislative body directly (this doesn't mean in-person).
3. Give notice explaining how members of the public may access the meeting and offer public comment.
4. Identify and include an opportunity for all persons to attend via phone or internet on the agenda.
5. Conduct meetings in a manner that protects the statutory and constitutional rights of the parties and the public.
6. Take no action on items on the agenda in the event there is an interruption which prevents remote members of the public from commenting, until connection is restored [THIS IS NEW].
7. Provide an opportunity for the public to address the board and offer comment in real time from their location.

8. Even though public agencies cannot require the public to “register” prior to providing comment, if they use a website or other platform that requires registration and it is not under the agency’s control, that is acceptable.

New requirements for public comment:

1. If the agency provides a timed public comment period for each agenda item, it may not close the public comment period for the agenda item (or the opportunity to register, pursuant to paragraph 8 above) to provide public comment until that timed public comment period has elapsed.
2. An agency that does not provide a timed public comment period, but takes public comment separately on each agenda item, shall allow a reasonable amount of time per agenda item to allow public members the opportunity to provide public comment, including time for members of the public to register, or otherwise be recognized for the purpose of providing public comment.
3. An agency that provides a timed general public comment period that does not correspond to a specific agenda item shall not close the public comment period or the opportunity to register, until the timed general public comment period has elapsed.

Required Findings:

No later than 30 days after teleconferencing for the first time under AB 361 (and every 30 days thereafter) the board must make the following findings by majority vote:

- (A) The legislative body has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency.*
- (B) Any of the following circumstances exist:
 - i. The state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person.
 - ii. State or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

* “state of emergency” means a state of emergency proclaimed pursuant to Section 8625 of the California Emergency Services Act (Article 1 (commencing with Section 8550) of Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2).

Because the Mammoth Lakes Housing Board of Directors meets monthly (or less frequently), the Board will need to make the required findings at the beginning of every Board meeting.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued a mask mandate indoors, irrespective of vaccine status, from December 15, 2021 through January 15, 2022. You can find more information on the CDPH website here: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>.

Mono County Public Health issued an order on August 6, 2021 requiring masking in all public indoor spaces. In a letter dated September 20, 2021, Mono County Public Health Director recommended that the Board of Supervisors continue virtual meetings (Attachment 1). The Mono County Public Health Order requiring masks is provided as Attachment 2.

RECCOMENDATION

The Board should consider making the required findings to continue with virtual meetings.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Letter from Bryan Wheeler, Director of Public Health, to the Mono County Board of Supervisors, dated September 20, 2021
2. The Mono County Public Health Order requiring masks, August 6, 2021
3. Resolution 22-01



MONO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health

P.O. BOX 476, BRIDGEPORT, CA 93517 PHONE (760) 932-5580 • FAX (760) 932-5284
P.O. BOX 3329, MAMMOTH LAKES, CA 93546 PHONE (760) 924-1830 • FAX (760) 924-1831

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Bryan Wheeler, Director of Public Health

Date: September 20, 2021

Re: Continued Recommendation regarding Social Distancing and Remote Meetings

Both Mono County “covering” Health Officer Dr. Rick Johnson and I strongly recommend that physical/social distancing measures continue to be practiced throughout our Mono County communities, including at meetings of the Board of Supervisors, to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Whether vaccinated or not, positive individuals are contracting the Delta variant and infecting others in our communities. Social distancing and masking are crucial mitigation measure to prevent the disease’s spread. Virtual board meetings allow for the participation of the community, county staff, presenters, and board members in a safe environment, with no risk of contagion. It is recommended that the board implement 100% remote meetings.

As a secondary alternative, the board could implement hybrid meetings (i.e., meetings that are both in-person and virtual), combined with adequate social distancing measures and masking requirements that are actively enforced, in order to minimize risk of contagion. However, as noted above, the safest path would be to implement meetings that are solely remote.

If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be present at the September 21, 2021, meeting to answer any questions.

MONO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health Officer Order:

Face Coverings For All While in Public

P.O. BOX 3329, MAMMOTH LAKES, CA 93546 PHONE (760) 924-1830 • FAX (760) 924-1831

EMAIL RJOHNSON@ALPINECOUNTY.CA.GOV

August 6, 2021

Please read this Order carefully. Violation of or failure to comply with this Order is a crime punishable by fine of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 90 days, or both. (California Health and Safety Code § 120295.) **This Order supersedes and replaces all previous Mono County Public Health Officer Orders regarding Face Coverings.**

WHEREAS, a state of emergency has been declared by the State of California, and a local emergency has been declared in Mono County in response to the virus COVID-19 (Coronavirus); and

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2021, California fully reopened the economy, and the State terminated the restrictions on businesses and activities in its Blueprint for a Safer Economy. Epidemiologic evidence demonstrates that the rate of community transmission of COVID-19 and positivity rates have all substantially increased since the June 15, 2021 reopening; and

WHEREAS, since the state reopening, increased interactions among members of the public have resulted in an increased number of daily new COVID-19 cases in Mono County; daily cases have more than quadrupled since June 15, 2021. In addition, as of July 24, 2021, Mono County is reporting a 7-day daily average case rate of 15.3 cases per 100,000 people with a 7-day lag. Based upon Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicators and thresholds, this means that community transmission of COVID-19 within Mono County is now considered Substantial, and highly likely to increase during the coming days and weeks; and

WHEREAS, while a significant number of Mono County residents are fully vaccinated (i.e., two weeks or more have passed after the receipt of a second dose in a 2-dose series or 2 weeks or more after receipt of a single-dose vaccine) as of the date of this Order in Mono County, COVID-19 remains a concern to public health and safety and there are still a large number of individuals in the County who are not yet fully vaccinated, including children under 12 years old, who are not currently eligible to be vaccinated. Furthermore, variants of the virus that may spread more easily and/or cause more severe illness, including the Delta variant, are present in Mono County, impacting local residents and visitors, based on positive case reporting; and

WHEREAS, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in Mono County, as well as throughout California and the nation, there have been insufficient quantities of critical healthcare infrastructure, including hospital beds, ventilators and workers, capable of adequately treating mass numbers of patients at a single time as the virus spread unchecked; and

WHEREAS, in order to continue to protect the community from COVID-19, in particular for those who are not fully vaccinated, this Order mainly aligns with the State Public Health Officer Order, dated June 11, 2021, as well as the July 28, 2021, Guidance on the Use of Face Coverings issued by the California Department of Public Health. The primary intent of this Order is to help slow and improve the Substantial level of community transmission here in Mono County, to align with recent State recommendations and to help mitigate and reduce the impact on Mono County, and its critical healthcare infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, face coverings have been recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to decrease COVID-19 transmission. Face coverings are believed to decrease shedding of COVID-19 by people who are infected. Many people with COVID-19 infection have mild or even no symptoms. Such cases may unknowingly spread the virus to others and face coverings are intended to decrease the chance of such transmission.

NOW, THEREFORE, effective beginning August 6, 2021, under the authority of California Health and Safety Code sections 101040, 101085 and 120175 and Title 17 California Code of Regulations, Section 2501, the Mono County Acting Health Officer **HEREBY ORDERS** as follows:

1. All persons within Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes, regardless of vaccination status, shall wear face coverings¹ **while in indoor public settings, venues, gatherings, and businesses** (examples include offices, retail, restaurants, theaters, family entertainment centers and meetings, among others).
2. Individuals, businesses, venue operators, or hosts of public indoor settings must require all patrons to wear masks, for all indoor settings, regardless of their vaccination status, and post clearly visible and easy to read signage at all entry points to communicate the masking requirements for patrons.
3. Recommendation: It is **recommended** that all persons wear face coverings while attending large outdoor public events.
4. The following individuals are exempt from wearing masks:
 - a. Persons younger than two years old. Very young children must not wear a mask because of the risk of suffocation.

¹ The following list, informed by the California Department of Public Health <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Get-the-Most-out-of-Masking.aspx> and the Center for Disease Control <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html> are attributes of face coverings, or masks, needed to fulfill the requirements of this Order:

- A properly worn mask that completely covers the nose and mouth.
- Cloth masks should be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source).
- Mask should be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head.
- Mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side and bottom of the face.
- Mask should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.

- b. Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a mask could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.
- c. Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- d. Persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

This Order shall take effect beginning on Friday, August 6, 2021 and will remain in effect until rescinded, in writing, by the Mono County Health Officer based on three consecutive weeks of adjusted case of below 6.9 per 100,000.

General Provisions

1. This Order is issued as a result of the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 disease, also known as “novel coronavirus,” which has infected at least 197 million individuals worldwide in 220 countries and is implicated in over 4.2 million worldwide deaths, including 1065 cases and five deaths in Mono County.

2. This Order is issued based on evidence of increasing transmission of COVID-19 both within the County of Mono and worldwide, scientific evidence regarding the most effective approach to slow transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, as well as best practices as currently known and available to protect the public from the risk of spread of or exposure to COVID-19.

3. This Order is intended to reduce the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19, thereby slowing the spread of COVID-19 in Mono County as well as, on a larger scale, to communities worldwide. As the presence of individuals increases, the difficulty and magnitude of tracing individuals who may have been exposed to a case rises exponentially.

4. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the: March 4, 2020 Proclamation of a State Emergency issued by Governor Gavin Newsom; the March 15, 2020 Declaration of Local Health Emergency based on an imminent and proximate threat to public health from the introduction of novel COVID-19 in Mono County; the March 17, 2020 Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mono proclaiming the existence of a Local Emergency in the County of Mono regarding COVID-19 and ratifying and extending the Declaration of Local Health Emergency due to COVID-19; all current applicable guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health, including but not limited to the June 11, 2021 California Public Health Officer Order and the July 28, 2021 California Department of Public Health Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings, and the Center for Disease Control recommendations on masking protocol.

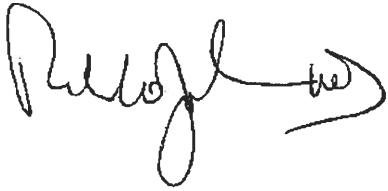
5. This Order is made in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws,

including but not limited to: Health and Safety Code sections 101030, et seq.; Health and Safety Code sections 120100, et seq.; and Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations section 2501.

6. To the extent necessary, pursuant to Government Code sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code section 101029, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and all Chiefs of Police in the County ensure compliance with and enforcement of this Order.

7. This Order is made because of the propensity of the virus to spread person-to-person.

8. Copies of this Order shall promptly be posted on the County of Mono's Public Health Department's website (monohealth.com) and provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Johnson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date: August 2, 2021

Richard Johnson, MD
Acting Local Health Officer
For Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes

RESOLUTION NO. 22-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF MAMMOTH LAKES HOUSING, INC. MAKING FINDINGS TO ALLOW THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO MEET VIRUTALLY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC DECLARED EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, meetings of the Mammoth Lakes Housing, Inc.'s Board of Directors are conducted in compliance with the Brown Act (Government Code Section 54950 et seq), so that members of the public may attend, observe, and participate, in accordance with the organizations' Bylaws (Section 5.2.(c)); and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 54953(e) is a provision of the Brown Act establishing special rules that apply under specific circumstances to meetings that are conducted remotely via teleconference; and

WHEREAS, using the special rules will facilitate continuing to conduct meetings remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of Mammoth Lakes Housing, Inc. does hereby find that allowing for conducting public meetings virtually will support social distancing and reduce the potential risk to the public, elected officials, and employees to be infected by or to spread COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, a required condition for the use of the Section 54953(e) rules is the existence of a state of emergency declared by the Governor pursuant to Government Code Section 8625, proclaiming the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the State caused by conditions as described in Government Code Section 8558; and

WHEREAS, an additional required condition is that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, or, the legislative body meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health and safety of attendees; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of California declared a Statewide state of emergency due to the COVID-19 virus on Wednesday, March 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020 the Mono County Health Officer declared a local health emergency, including finding "that there is an imminent and proximate threat to public health from the introduction of COVID-19 in Mono County;" and

WHEREAS, the Mono County Director of Public Health has recently issued a memorandum recommending that social distancing be used as one means of reducing the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors does hereby find that meetings of the Mammoth Lakes Housing, Inc. Board shall be conducted in compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Government Code Section 54953, as

authorized by subdivision (e) of Section 54953, and that the Board of Directors shall comply with the requirements to provide the public with access to the meetings as prescribed in paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of Section 54953.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this resolution by this reference; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors hereby declares that a State and County emergency exists due to the existence or threatened existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property due to the COVID-19 virus; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mono County Director of Public Health has issued a memorandum recommending the continued use of social distancing as a means to reduce the spread of COVID-19, and that the COVID-19 state of emergency impacts the ability of the Board of Directors to safely meet in person; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors finds the use of virtual meetings, as provided for under AB 361 as approved by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor, is a prudent and safe means to conduct the organization's business respecting the recommendation to use social distancing as a precaution to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the organization's staff and Board of Directors are hereby authorized and directed to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution including conducting open and public meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) and other applicable provisions of the Brown Act; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and shall be effective until the earlier of (i) February 5, 2022, or such time the Board of Directors adopts a subsequent resolution in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to extend the time during which the Board of Directors may continue to teleconference without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of section 54953.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 6th day of January 2022.

AYES: _____ NAYS: _____ ABSTAIN: _____ ABSENT: _____

ATTEST:

Kirk Stapp, President

Patricia Robertson, Secretary