

RESOLUTION NO. 23-

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, RE-AUTHORIZING THE TOWN COUNCIL TO MEET VIRUTALLY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC DECLARED EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the Town of Mammoth Lakes supports transparency in government, and meetings of the Town Council and other legislative bodies of the Town 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; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 54953(e) is a provision of the Brown Act establishing special rules that apply under specific circumstances to meetings of local government legislative bodies 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 Town Council does hereby find that allowing for conducting public meetings virtually will support social distancing and reduces 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 that 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; 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, on October 6, 2021, the Town Council adopted a resolution finding that pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e), the legislative bodies of the

Town of Mammoth Lakes shall conduct their meetings without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Government Code Section 54953, as authorized by subdivision (e) of Section 54953, and that such legislative bodies 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;

WHEREAS, as a condition of extending the use of the provisions found in Section 54953(e), the Town Council must reconsider the circumstances of the state of emergency that exists in the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and the Town Council has done so; and

WHEREAS, emergency conditions continue to exist in the Town of Mammoth Lakes, as reflected by the ongoing state of emergency declared by the Governor; and

WHEREAS, requiring the meetings of the Town Council and other legislative bodies of the Town of Mammoth Lakes to be conducted entirely in person would create a risk to the health and safety of the members of the public who might attend, the members of the Town Council, Town staff, and other persons attending meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mammoth Lakes continues to comply with the requirements of Section 54953(e) to ensure public access to meetings of Town legislative bodies, including by providing notice and posting meeting agendas, allowing members of the public to access the meeting and provide comments via an Internet-based service option, and providing an opportunity for the public to address legislative bodies and offer comment in real time.

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 Town Council of the Town of Mammoth Lakes hereby declares that a State and County emergency continues to exist due to the existence or threatened existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the Town of Mammoth Lakes 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 Town Council to safely meet in person; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mammoth Lakes Town Council finds the use of virtual meetings, as provided for under AB 361 as approved by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor, continues to be a prudent and safe means to conduct the Town'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 Town staff and legislative bodies are hereby authorized and directed to continue taking 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) March 15, 2023, or such time the Town Council adopts a subsequent resolution in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3) to extend the time during which the legislative bodies of the Town of Mammoth Lakes may continue to teleconference without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of section 54953.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 15th day of February 2023.

JOHN WENTWORTH, Mayor

ATTEST:

JAMIE GRAY, Town Clerk