

Holding Public Meetings in Accordance with Senate Bill 704

STEP 1: Before the Meeting



Provide advanced meeting notice, following existing guidance for notifying the public under G.S. 143-318.12. Include details on how the public can access the remote meeting.

Provide all documents to all board members prior to meeting.

If applicable, make sure presentation capabilities are restricted to designated individuals and prepare the meeting for recording (not required).

STEP 2: Launching the Meeting



Ensure meeting is simultaneously available to the public by an audio stream, dial-in conference line, or video live stream. (YouTube has easy livestream functionality)

Make sure all Board members hear all communication during the meeting from fellow members and the public.

Have a staff member or meeting lead review guidelines including: conducting roll call, identifying actions and votes, and mute. (*Virtual Meeting Best Practices*)

STEP 3: During the Meeting



Reference the specific item or section of the agenda to identify what is being discussed or acted on.

Vote by roll call. Board members count for quorum/votes only while active on the remote meeting. No votes may be taken by written or secret ballot Board members that cannot be seen must say their name a) during roll call, b) prior to taking any action, and c) prior to voting. (*a good practice for all*)

Closed sessions may be held in accordance with G.S. 143-318.11; access to the public is not required during this time.

STEP 4: Holding Hearings



Quasi-Judicial Hearings can be held if a) the right of an individual to hearing and decision occur during emergency b) all persons participating in the hearing have been notified of the hearing and consent to a remote meeting.

Public Hearings can be held, as long as comments are accepted between the initial request for comments and one day before the meeting start.

STEP 5: After the Meeting



Ensure meeting minutes reflect a) that it was done by simultaneous communication, b) which board members participated by simultaneous communication, and c) board members who came or left during meeting.

Make note of technical challenges and adapt for following meetings.

**All chats, instant messages, texts, or other written communications between members of the public body regarding the transaction of the public business during the remote meeting are deemed a public record.

**If you chose to record, please note the recording must be preserved until the meeting minutes are adopted.