



POLICY NAME: **REMOTE MEETING PARTICIPATION/TELECONFERENCING**
POLICY #: POL-2016-001

ORIGINAL ADOPTION DATE: 11-9-16
ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 11-9-16

PURPOSE AND INTENT: It is desired that each elected member of the Summerfield Town Council be able to openly participate in all Council meetings. However, at times Council members are unable to physically attend. This policy permits teleconferencing as an occasional means of participation (not a regular occurrence), in compliance with state open meeting laws.

This policy pertains only to Town Council meetings. Remote participation is not permitted within town committee meetings, planning/zoning committee meetings, or Board of Adjustment meetings.

DEFINITION: Remote participation or teleconferencing involves an off-premises Council member using technology to participate in a formal meeting so that other Council members, the participant, and the public can conduct town business.

RULES AND PROCEDURES:

- 1) Notice of remote participation shall be made to the Clerk and/or Manager as soon as possible with the reason for the expected absence. Examples include illness or disability of the member or a close relative, military service, unexpected lack of child care, family emergency, and work or public service obligations which prevent the member from being physically present at the meeting. Remote participation shall not be allowed solely for the convenience of the Council member or to avoid attending a particular meeting.
- 2) Remote participation shall only be permitted when it is logistically feasible, meaning available technology can be arranged in time for the particular meeting location, and that any connection between the member participating remotely and those physically present, is clear and audible.
- 3) Acceptable means of remote participation include speaker phone, real-time internet, satellite-enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other technology that enables the remote participant, Council members, and public to be clearly audible to one another. Text messaging, instant messaging, email, and web chat without audio are *not* acceptable methods of remote participation.
- 4) At the beginning of the meeting, the Mayor shall announce that a member is requesting to participate remotely. The member shall acknowledge the request and state the reason for its need. The Clerk shall note the remote participation within meeting minutes.
- 5) A remote participant cannot contribute to a quorum determination – Council must have a quorum without respect to the remote participant.