

# 2021.09.09 HLLT MEETING (VIRTUAL) AGENDA

10:00 AM

## 1. Establish Quorum

## 2. Item 1 - Public Comment

## 3. Item 2 - Remote Meetings Policy

### Summary

Adoption of Policy Addressing Remote Participation in Public Meetings.

### Description

In March 2020, the Maine Legislature passed 1 MRSA §403-A which authorized remote participation in meetings of public bodies during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Falmouth Town Council and other Town boards and committees have been meeting remotely as authorized by this legislation to date. This temporary legislation expired on July 30, 2021. On June 21, the Legislature passed, and Governor Mills signed, new legislation, 1 MRSA §403-B, which authorizes remote participation in meetings of public bodies on a permanent basis under the following criteria:

- Remote methods include telephonic or video technology allowing simultaneous reception of information and also permits other means necessary to accommodate disabled persons. Public proceedings may not be conducted by text-only means such as email, text messages or chat functions.
- Members of the body are expected to be physically present for public proceedings except when being physically present is not practical (i.e. emergency or urgent issue that requires the body itself to meet remotely and illness or temporary absence that causes a member significant difficulties in traveling to the meeting)
- Members of the public must have a meaningful opportunity to attend by remote methods when members of the body participate by remote methods. If public input is allowed or required at a meeting, an effective means of communication between the members of the body and the public must be provided.
- Notice of all meetings is required and must include the means by which members of the public may access the meeting using remote methods. A body must provide a location where members of the public may attend in person. A body may not determine that public attendance at a proceeding will be limited solely to remote methods except in the case of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the body itself to meet remotely.
- All votes taken during public proceedings using remote methods must be taken by roll call vote
- The body must make all documents and other materials considered by the body available to the public who attend remotely and in person

To enable remote participation in public meetings by members of the Falmouth Town Council and other Town boards and committees under the new legislation, each body must adopt a policy governing remote participation by members of the body and the public that contains the above criteria.

The Town Council adopted a policy at its July 26 meeting. Staff recommend that the Highland Lake Leadership Team adopt a similar policy (attached) at this meeting so that remote meetings may be held in the future if necessary.

## 4. Adjourn