

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-015

A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION, CONNECTED, AND HYBRID MEETING POLICY TO FUTURE TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, acting in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2020-040 establishing a temporary policy permitting remote attendance at regular and special meetings by members of the Town Council, Town staff, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, on April 7, 2020, the Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2020-044, expanding the policy to allow for quasi-judicial hearings to be conducted at remotely-attended Town Council meetings; and

WHEREAS, with the passage of Resolution No. 2020-121 on December 15, 2020, Town Council made the policy permanent by incorporating such policy into its existing rules and procedures for the conduct of Town Council meetings; and

WHEREAS, recent episodes suggest a need for the Town Council to reconsider whether to offer a remote option for public comment; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of a public comment period is to allow the general public an opportunity to address the agenda and other Town business meaningfully and in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, public comment periods in other Colorado municipalities have been misused by some remote participants as a platform to disrupt meetings by spewing obscenities and hate speech, or by making extraneous comments that have no bearing whatsoever on municipal business; and

WHEREAS, remote public comment options are no longer necessary to ensure public health and have become primarily a method of expanding participation in government, the value of which is diminished if municipal business is delayed or if Council members are distracted by the commentary; and

WHEREAS, general counsel for the Colorado Municipal League has advised that the simplest solution may be for municipalities to remove remote comment options entirely, while recognizing that alternate methods of communication (e.g., e-mail, online comment submittal forms, town hall-style meetings, and one-on-one meetings) can provide the same or better access to elected officials; and

WHEREAS, with this advice in mind, the Town Council finds and determines that, for future regular and special meetings of the Town Council, the Connected Meeting and the Hybrid Meeting options shall no longer be made available to the general public; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to remind its constituents that online viewing of all regular and special meetings will be available at www.CRgov.com/WatchCouncil.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CASTLE ROCK, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Direction to Town Staff. The Town Council hereby directs that, commencing with the regular meeting scheduled for March 19, 2024, the Connected Meeting and the Hybrid Meeting options under the Town Council Electronic Participation, Connected, and Hybrid Meeting Policy, shall no longer be made available to the general public.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 20th day of February, 2024, by the Town Council of the Town of Castle Rock, Colorado, on first and final reading, by a vote of ___ for and ___ against.

ATTEST:

TOWN OF CASTLE ROCK

Lisa Anderson, Town Clerk

Jason Gray, Mayor

Approved as to form:

Approved as to content:

Michael J. Hyman, Town Attorney

Kristin Read, Assistant Town Manager