



Virtual Public Meeting option extended through July 1, 2021

November 19, 2020

On November 19, 2020, the Ohio General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 404, which extends the ability to hold virtual public meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic beyond the previous December 1, 2020, deadline, through July 1, 2021. The Bill is expected to be signed by the Governor. With COVID-19 cases far exceeding what we saw in the spring and summer, public entities may want to revisit the need or desire to utilize a virtual option to conduct business meetings and hearings.

Since the spring, Bricker & Eckler has been providing a thoughtful facilitation service using a technology platform, similar to a conference call, which considers the unique nature of public meetings. Our approach permits public bodies to manage technical procedures like executive session and public participation in a remote meeting environment. Virtual Public Meeting Facilitation includes the following:

- Virtual Public Meeting (VPM) policy
- Sample VPM notice
- VPM instructions for public body members
- VPM client questionnaire
- VPM facilitation protocol that allows for convening a virtual public meeting, providing access to the public, allowing public participation, provision for moving in and out of executive session(s), and allowing individuals to move in and out of executive session(s) as necessary

- Managing the technical aspects of VPMs using web conferencing technology
- Providing a recording of the VPM if requested
- Training for VPM facilitators

Please contact Denise Ruddock at druddock@bricker.com for information about having Bricker & Eckler facilitate one or more of your public meetings.

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