

**Local Law # 1 of 2022 - A local law authorizing the Town of Gallatin to continue holding virtual public meetings.**

**Section 1:** On April 9, 2022 Governor Hochul signed an amendment to the Public Officers Law (“the Open Meetings Law”) to allow the expanded use of videoconferencing by public bodies in the conduct of open meetings until July 1, 2024. In order to continue meeting virtually, the Town must pass a local law authorizing the use of videoconferencing.

Pursuant to the April 9, 2022 amendment to the Open Meetings Law, beginning on July 23, 2022, the Town of Gallatin may continue holding Hybrid Public Meetings, permitting members of the Town Boards and Committees as the public to appear virtually, under the following circumstances:

- A. The Board or Committee must meet in person at a physical location open to the public with a minimum number of members present to fulfill the Board’s quorum requirement.
- B. Members of the Board or Committee may only attend meetings virtually due to extraordinary circumstances.
- C. Extraordinary circumstances shall be defined as: disability, illness, caregiving responsibilities, or any other significant or unexpected factor or event which precludes the member’s physical attendance at such meeting.
- D. It shall be within the Town Supervisor’s discretion as to whether there is an extraordinary circumstance permitting remote attendance at a meeting by a member of the Board or Committee.
- E. Members of the Board attending virtually may not count towards a quorum, but may participate and vote. A quorum shall only be met by in-person member attendance.
- F. The meeting minutes must identify which, if any, Board members are participating remotely.
- G. Public notice for the meeting shall inform the public that videoconferencing will be used and where the public can view and/or participate in the meeting, where the documents and records will be available and will also identify the physical location of the meeting.
- H. Members of the public will be allowed to view the meeting via video and to participate via videoconference in real time where public comment or participation is authorized and shall be able to participate or provide testimony in the same manner as in person participation or testimony is given.
- I. Members of the public will also be allowed to attend, observe and participate where public comment or participation is authorized at the designated physical location of the meeting.
- J. All meetings conducted by videoconferencing shall ensure that members of the Board can be heard, seen, and identified while the meeting is being conducted.
- K. Each meeting conducted using videoconferencing shall be recorded and such recordings posted or linked on the public website of the Board within five

(5) business days following the meeting and shall remain so available for a minimum of five (5) years thereafter.

L. The in person participation requirements for members of the Board shall not apply during a state disaster emergency declared by the Governor or when a local state of emergency is declared by the Town Supervisor, if it is determined that the circumstances necessitating the emergency declaration would affect or impair the ability for the public body to hold an in person meeting.

M. The Board or Committee will broadcast all meetings using the Board or Committee ZOOM account or equivalent pursuant to meeting notice.

N. This Town law shall be posted upon the Town website.

**Section 2:** This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the Secretary of State and shall expire and be deemed repealed on July 31, 2025.