

REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY

Towns of Castle Hill

Section 1. Purpose

Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. § 403-B, and after public notice and hearing, the Town of Castle Hill Select Board adopts the following policy to govern the participation, via remote methods, of members of Castle Hill boards and committees, here after known as “the body” and the public in the public proceedings or meetings of the body.

Section 2. Scope

This policy applies to all board and committees, appointed or elected, of the Town of Castle Hill, included but not limited to the Select Board, Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Board of Assessors, and other boards/committees under the direction of the Select Board.

Section 3. Guidelines / Standards

Members of the body are expected to be physically present for meetings except when not practicable, such as in the case of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the body to meet via remote methods, or an illness or temporary absence of a member that causes significant difficulty traveling to the meeting location. The chair or presiding officer of the body, in consultation with the Town Manager, will make a determination that remote methods of participation are necessary in as timely a manner as possible under the circumstances. A member who is unable to attend a meeting in person will notify the chair, or presiding officer of the body, or Town Manager as far in advance as possible.

Remote methods of participation may include telephonic or video technology allowing simultaneous reception of information and may include other means necessary to accommodate disabled persons. Remote participation will not be by text-only means such as e-mail, text messages, or chat functions.

The public will be provided a meaningful opportunity to attend via remote methods when any member of the body participates via remote methods. If public input is allowed or required at the meeting, an effective means of communication between the body and the public will also be provided. The public will also be provided an opportunity to attend the meeting in person unless there is an emergency or urgent issue that requires the entire body to meet using remote methods.

Notice of all meetings will be provided in accordance with 1 M.R.S. § 406 and any applicable ordinance, policy, or bylaw. When the public may attend via remote methods, notice will include the means by which the public may access the meeting remotely and will provide a method for disabled persons to request necessary accommodation to access the meeting. Notice will also identify a location where the public may attend the meeting in person. The body will not restrict public attendance to remote methods except in the case of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the body to meet using remote methods of attendance.

The Town will make all documents and materials to be considered by the body available, electronically or otherwise, to the public who attend remotely to the same extent customarily

available to the public who attend in person, provided no additional costs are incurred by the body.

All votes taken during a meeting using remote methods will be by roll call vote that can be seen and heard if using video technology, or heard if using audio technology only, by other members of the body and the public. A member of the body who participates remotely will be considered present for purposes of a quorum and voting.

Section 4. Effective Date

This policy will remain in force indefinitely unless amended or rescinded by the Select Board.