

**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION**

Ordinance amending Sections 3.55.030, 3.56.030, 3.61.030, 3.62.030, 3.63.030, and 3.64.030 of the Bellevue City Code to reinstate limitations on members of commissions and boards attending meetings remotely.

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*City Attorney's Office*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Ordinance reinstates, with more flexibility, limits in city code on remote participation by advisory board and commission members.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Move to adopt Ordinance No. 6662

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

On June 1, 2020, the City Council adopted Ordinance 6516, amending the Bellevue City Code (BCC) to eliminate the restrictions that prevented all members of the Environmental Services Commission, Arts Commission, Human Services Commission, Parks and Community Services Board, Transportation Commission, and Planning Commission from participating remotely in board or commission meetings. This amendment was intended to be temporary, to allow the boards and commissions to meet fully remotely while in-person meetings were not available due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-person attendance by board and commission members is now possible.

Prior to COVID, the City Code limited remote participation by board and commission members to no more than two members per meeting and no more than four meetings per year. At its March 21, 2022, meeting, Council directed staff to bring back an ordinance that provided consistency across all boards and commissions, but also provided more flexibility for remote participation than had previously existed, as needed, not to exceed a maximum of three board or commission members attending remotely per meeting.

Following Council's direction, at the Council's April 25, 2022, meeting, staff presented proposed Ordinance 6659, which would have allowed no more than three board or commission members to participate remotely at any one meeting, expanding from the prior limit of two members. Proposed Ordinance 6659 did not limit the number of meetings per year that a member could attend remotely, but did retain the pre-COVID requirement that remote participation be approved in advance by the board or commission. Council did not vote on proposed Ordinance 6659 at the April 25 meeting. Instead, Council provided further information to staff for purposes of bringing back amendments to the proposed ordinance.

Proposed Ordinance 6662, before Council tonight, retains the provisions that were in the prior proposed ordinance, and adds two new provisions:

1. A sentence is added to sections E.1 that encourages board and commission members to attend meetings in person when practicable.
2. A new provision is added, located in sections E.2, that requires the presiding officer to be physically present for a meeting, or to pass the presiding officer role to another board or commission member who will be physically present at the meeting. Other jurisdictions, such as Kirkland, Issaquah, and Shoreline, have adopted similar requirements for their Council meetings.

As directed by Council, staff will bring these amendments back after one year, so Council may discuss how these new parameters for remote participation are working and whether Council wants to make any changes.

## **POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Policy Impact**

RCW 35A.12.120 states that “The council shall determine its own rules and order of business and may establish rules for the conduct of council meetings and the maintenance of order.” The City Council operates under special rules of procedure adopted by Council Resolution.

RCW 42.30, Open Public Meetings Act, governs the way in which Council meetings are conducted.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with implementing these changes.

## **OPTIONS**

1. Adopt Ordinance 6662 amending Sections 3.55.030, 3.56.030, 3.61.030, 3.62.030, 3.63.030, and 3.64.030 of the Bellevue City Code to reinstate limitations on members of commissions and boards attending meetings remotely.
2. Do not adopt Ordinance 6662 and provide alternative direction to staff.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

A. Proposed Ordinance 6662 redlined  
Proposed Ordinance No. 6662

## **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

N/A