CITY OF HOWELL

TEMPORARY REMOTE ACCESS TECHNOLOGY MEETING POLICY

EXECUTIVE ORDERS 2020-15 & 2020-21

PUBLIC MEETINGS DURING THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

The purpose of this policy is to authorize the temporary use of remote access technology to conduct public meetings of the Howell City Council during the COVID-19 Emergency under Governor Gretchen Whitmer’s Executive Order 2020-15. The intent of this policy is to limit in-person contact of the City Council and members of the public, promote governmental accountability, foster open and responsible governmental decision making under the guidelines of the Open Meetings Act (OMA), without unduly compromising the public health, safety and welfare of residents. In addition, so long as Howell City Offices are closed to the public under Executive Order 2020-21, Council Chamber will be closed, as well, under this Executive Order. As a result, there will be no in-person attendance at City Council Meetings by Council members or the public no earlier than April 15, 2020, unless extended under subsequent Executive Orders issued by the Governor of the State of Michigan.

Executive Order 2020-15 temporarily suspends MCL 15.263 of the OMA, in order to alleviate physical-place or physical-presence requirements of public bodies to conduct public business during the COVID-19 Emergency. Public bodies are required to continue to conduct public business so that the general public is able to continue to participate in government decision-making process.

All public notices of such meetings will meet the applicable notice requirements under the OMA, and provide advance notice of meetings held electronically on the homepage of the City of Howell’s website. The notice shall include an explanation of the reasons why the public body is meeting; detailed procedures by which the public may participate in the meeting electronically including a telephone number, internet address or both; procedures by which persons may contact members of the public body to provide input or ask questions on any business that will come before the public body at the meeting; and procedures by which persons with disabilities may participate in the meeting.

All meetings of the Howell City Council held under Executive Order 2020-15 will be held in a manner in which both the general public and members of the public body may participate by electronic means, and must be conducted in a manner that permits two-way communication. Members of the public body and of the general public participating electronically will be considered present and in attendance at the meeting and may participate in the meeting as if
physically present at the meeting. All votes by Members related to business to be conducted at the meeting shall be by roll call vote to avoid any question as to how an individual Member voted. All other requirements related to the meeting as required by MCL 15.263 (1-6) and City Council’s meeting rules shall apply.

Meetings of the Howell City Council during this emergency period will only include items necessary to conduct minimum basic operations, necessary government activities including payment of bills/payroll for City employees, approval of necessary policies, contracts or procedures to allow continuation of important work and service levels to the public during this interim emergency period.

The Mayor, Interim City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney and Technology Director of the City of Howell will perform necessary functions to conduct electronic meetings within the spirit of the Executive Order 2020-15 and within the requirements of the OMA during this emergency period.

The Temporary Remote Access Technology Meeting Policy is effective immediately and continues until April 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm unless extended under subsequent Executive Orders issued by the Governor of the State of Michigan.

ADOPTED BY THE HOWELL CITY COUNCIL MARCH 30, 2020