

## Neighborhood Council Virtual Governance Facilitation Best Practices for Zoom Platform

Together, we are continuing the important work of our Neighborhood Councils (NC) and giving a voice to our community. Creating an inclusive and uniform virtual governance system for NCs and community members alike, is key to keeping access to Council meetings open to everyone during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

The outreach for these meetings will consider the diversity of your neighborhood. As Board members, it is imperative to welcome all residents, points of view and all walks of life. Every resident in your neighborhood has a voice, a vote and should be invited to the meetings. The Board should set the example to include ALL residents to make sure the rest of the neighborhood follows in your footsteps.



**There are many levels of comfort, accessibility, and familiarity with technology tools and with virtual meetings.** What we do in a physical meeting room is not the same in an online meeting. Meeting the needs of the people in your neighborhood is especially important now. The steps below will guide you in creating a virtual governing environment that increases participation and connection for more Angelenos across the city. A full description of EmpowerLA protocols is [here](#).

At the beginning of each section you will find a checklist in red. More detailed information on each item in the checklist is listed below it.

### PRE-MEETING WORK

Planning ahead will help to avoid technical or administrative difficulties that can arise in a Neighborhood Council meeting. This may happen several times before the process is smooth.

### PRE-MEETING CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Plan ahead and identify partners to help fill meeting roles
- ☐ Make sure all participants have access to the content ahead of time to familiarize themselves with the material.
- ☐ Log in first and early to give yourself time to set up and handle any potential glitches

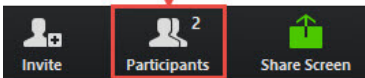
1. Be sure that the name people see on your square has your full name in the sentence case and your role in all CAPS for easier identification.



To change how your name appears, follow these steps.

**1**

After launching the Zoom meeting, click on the "Participants" icon at the bottom of the window.

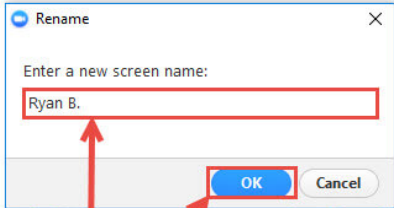


**2**



In the "Participants" list on the right side of the Zoom window, hover over your name and click on the "Rename" button.

**3**



Type in the display name you'd like to appear in the meeting and click on "OK".

## 2. Plan ahead and identify partners to help fill meeting roles

### ☐ Moderator (Host/Co-Host)

- ☐ Sets up and starts the virtual meeting
- ☐ Provides technical support for the Zoom meeting
- ☐ Assigns Board Members as panelists
- ☐ Monitors attendees, mutes/unmutes attendees during public comment
- ☐ Assigns interpreters if requested
- ☐ Records the meeting (as decided by each NC) and removes anyone who may have inappropriate images as their profile picture

### ☐ Chair/President

- ☐ Presides over the meeting. They can be a Host/Co-Host as well.
- ☐ Informs the attendees who are listening to the meeting through the phone by pressing \*9 which will sign to the moderator a raised hand.

### ☐ Timer/Moderator

- ☐ Keeps track of public comment time, speakers/presenters time.

### ☐ Secretary or Minute Taker

- ☐ Records actions taken by the board, motions, amendments, vote count, and any other details for their Board Meeting Minutes.

### ☐ Interpreter/Accommodations

- ☐ If requested, the [Moderator will assign the interpreter](#) as they schedule the meeting or before they start the meeting.
- ☐ Attendees need to click on the interpreter button and select language.
- ☐ Closed caption is available as well. In order to get accommodations, the request should be made before the Board meeting.



**3. Make sure all participants have access to the content ahead of time to familiarize themselves with the material. Content includes:**

- ☐ Agendas
- ☐ Meeting rules
- ☐ Slides
- ☐ Notes
- ☐ Other materials

**4. Log in first and early to give yourself time to set up and handle any potential glitches**

- a. The host, moderator and anyone providing tech support should log on at least 15 minutes early to ensure that there is a stable internet connection and good audio.
- b. Ensure that all the Zoom functions you intend to use, work.

**BEING IN THE MEETING**

While we feel more connected when we can see each other's faces and body language, the DONE team does not recommend that Boardmembers be on camera. Use the tips below to create a pleasant, appropriate and professional environment for virtual governance.

**CHECKLIST:**

- ☐ Make sure your video is off
- ☐ Ensure you have a quiet location from which to conduct the meeting

**1. Make sure your video is off**

**2. Ensure you have a quiet location from which to conduct the meeting.**

- a. Eliminate distractions like ringtones, etc. which can be disruptive and make people feel disrespected during a meeting.
- b. Wear earphones or headphones to avoid audio feedback, if you have them.
- c. View the [NC Branding guidelines](#) for further guidance.



## STARTING THE MEETING

Now that you have done your pre-work, it's time to start your NC meeting. Use these tips to help everyone understand how the meeting works.

### CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Share the rules at the beginning of each meeting to set expectations.
- ☐ Introduce Neighborhood Council at the beginning of each meeting.
- ☐ Constantly remind participants where you are on the agenda.
- ☐ For decision-making processes, restate or repeat key issues to help reach a decision.
- ☐ Be mindful of participants with disabilities or special needs.
- ☐ Address Internet disruptions.

#### **1. Share the rules at the beginning of each meeting to set expectations. Rules to consider are:**

- ☐ Mute yourself unless speaking.
- ☐ Introduce yourself before you speak.
- ☐ Avoid multitasking and eating.
- ☐ Speak loudly and clearly.
- ☐ More information and sample language can be found [here](#).

#### **2. Introduce Neighborhood Council at the beginning of each meeting.**

#### **3. Constantly remind participants where you are on the agenda.**

- ☐ If you are sharing your screen, point to where you are with your cursor so everyone can see where you are referencing.

#### **4. For decision-making processes, restate or repeat key issues to help reach a decision.**

#### **5. Be mindful of participants with disabilities or special needs.**

- ☐ Anticipate extra time to ensure that all participants have time to get used to the new technology.
- ☐ Avoid potentially complicated features like polling.

- ☐ When showing images or charts be sure to provide descriptive words of the visuals for those who are visually impaired or have poor video quality.

#### 6. Address Internet disruptions.

- ☐ If participants are experiencing lagging or skipping, suggest that they use their computer to access video, while simultaneously dialing in by phone for the audio.

### ENDING THE MEETING

1. **Encourage people to share the next meeting date!** Use language provided to post to your social media, text or call a friend - encourage at every meeting more participation!
2. **As the host, stay on the call until everyone has left the meeting.**
3. **Provide a NC link to a post-meeting survey so participants can give feedback and report any technical or administrative issues to help improve the virtual governance experience.**

