

3/19/20 via email

From Mel Davis, TSSWCB

TSSWCB Policy Advisor/Special Projects Coordinator

District Guidance for Conducting Teleconference Meetings

Tuesday, March 17th we e-mailed you a copy of the Governor's Disaster Proclamation which waived certain provisions of the Open Meetings Act to aid in preventing face to face meetings due to COVID-19 and to allow governmental entities to conduct open meetings using teleconferencing.

Conducting a teleconference meeting under the Governor's proclamation will require the district to take the follow steps:

1. The district is still required to post notice as required before – Date, time, agenda, phone number.
2. The district must provide a phone number in the meeting notice that is available for anyone to call in and participate in the meeting.
3. The phone number may be a local number or a toll free number.
4. At the bottom of this e-mail is a list of possible companies that may be contacted if you do select to provide a toll free number.
5. Whatever number is used it is the responsibility of the district to bare the expense associated with the use of that number.
6. If the district normally uses a phone number belonging to NRCS, please consult them about using that number in your posting notice.
7. The district must record the meeting and maintain the recording for two years.
8. Please post on the meeting notice that the meeting will be recorded.
9. The length of individual comments may be limited to a set number of minutes.
10. The chairman must call the roll to identify the board members on the conference call and any others on the phone call.
11. Please send a copy of your teleconference posting to your field representative and any other TSSWCB employee that works with your district and include an agenda item for their comments and suggestions.

Below is a sample posting notice to aid you in creating your local meeting.

_____ SWCD Meeting Notice
Date – Time – Phone number

In accordance with Governor Abbott's March 13, 2020 Disaster Proclamation concerning COVID-19 and his follow-up proclamation of March 19, 2020 suspending the requirement to conduct face to face meetings and authorizing teleconference meeting by governmental entities, the -----SWCD will conduct a teleconference meeting that includes the opportunity for public participation.

Members of the public may call (phone number) to participate in the meeting. The district will have a roll call conducted by the chairman. You are requested to clearly identify yourself and indicate if you wish to make a public statement. When the district gets to public comment on the agenda the chairman will recognize you by name and give you the opportunity to speak. All public comments will be limited to ----- minutes.

The meeting will be recorded and a copy of the recording will be made available after (meeting date). To obtain a copy, please contact (name) at (phone number).

1. Roll call for board members and district employees.
2. Roll call for Public Participants – this would include any TSSWCB employee and any USDA employees.

3. Approve minutes from regular meeting of -----
4. Comments from Public Participants
5. Comments from State and Federal Participants
6. Review and take appropriate action on the following items:
 - a. Accounts payable
 - b. Bank reconciliations.
7. Review and take appropriate action on: (items specific to the SWCD)
8. Updates on -----
9. Set next meeting date.
10. Adjourn.

Listing of Conference Call Providers

Free Conference Call	www.freeconferencecall.com
Toll Free Conference	www.tollfreeconference.com
Turbo Bridge	www.turbobridge.com
Connex International	www.connex.com
Unlimited Conferencing	www.unlimitedconferencing.com

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