



**Date:** 01/11/2022

## **CITY OF MONROE CONTINUES TO HOLD OPEN MEETINGS WITH MASK WEARING ENCOURAGED**

**(MONROE, MI)** - Protecting the health and welfare of the residents and employees of the City of Monroe continues to be a top priority of the City Council and City Administration, as we continue the delivery of our core essential services during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As such, and given the recent rise in the coronavirus Omicron variant, City Administration encourages all staff and visitors to wear masks in City Hall, as city business and open meetings are being conducted.

The City of Monroe, as well as other Michigan public governing bodies, are mandated to hold in-person meetings by virtue of recent State of Michigan legislative changes. Previously, the Michigan Legislature adopted into law a provision under the Michigan Open Meetings Act that authorized public Zoom meetings under special circumstances (generally related to health concerns or military service of the members of the Council). That law included a sunset provision providing that after December 31, 2021, the only exception for remote participation was for Council members in military service. There are no current exceptions for public health matters.

As the State Legislature has not modified the Open Meetings Act requirements in light of the current situation, City Council and Administration will continue in-person meetings when a quorum is obtained and business matters demand. This applies to all City boards, committees, and commissions.

To the extent that the State of Michigan is not currently under a state of emergency, local authority regarding masking mandates regulating public access to facilities is limited. **However, the use of masks and when possible, social distancing, inside City Hall is strongly encouraged.**

The City of Monroe allows for written communication to be submitted through the City Clerk-Treasurer's Office to be included as part of the official record of the Council proceedings. Visitors or residents unable to attend open meetings can submit written comments via letter or email to Clerk-Treasurer Michelle LaVoy at [michelle.lavoy@monroemi.gov](mailto:michelle.lavoy@monroemi.gov). Comments must be submitted by the preceding Tuesday, close of business, to be included as a part of the official record of the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

City Council meetings are cablecast live at 7:30 PM on the first and third Monday of each month. Council meetings are also replayed on the following schedule: Tuesday – Sunday at 7:30 PM and Wednesday and Friday at 2:00 AM on Comcast Cable Communications Channel 18. City Council meetings are also broadcast on Rewind 94.3 every Saturday at 6AM. All council meetings, work sessions, etc., are also streamed live on the City's YouTube channel. A schedule of upcoming meetings to view livestream are available on the City's website, [www.monroemi.gov](http://www.monroemi.gov).

The City also reminds residents of the many online resources available for routine city business and requests available on our website and via our app, MyMonroe. These include reporting service requests, making payments, submitting applications, etc.

Incorporated in 1817, the City of Monroe is a community that has a shared vision that seeks to balance the opportunities of economic development with the stewardship that is required for historic preservation. With a population of 20,733, Monroe is located about 17-miles north of Toledo, Ohio and about 35-miles south of Detroit. The City of Monroe is Michigan's third oldest community, and is also the county seat of Monroe County.

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