

The Community Life Commission would like to bring this matter to the attention of the Mayor, City Council and City Manager pursuant to the roles and responsibilities of this commission.

“The Community Life Commission is charged with fostering improved City-Citizen relations by focusing on how people interact with critical government services and improving the human relations’ aspect of these services”.

*(description of the community life commission under the community life webpage on the city’s website)*

The concern involves residents’ abilities to view and participate in City Council meetings live. As you are well aware this is a critical part of the Brown act.

As we understand it, there are three ways to engage with a live City Council meeting.

- 1) Streaming the council meeting directly from the city website.
- 2) Watching community television which is hosted by some cable providers.
- 3) Connecting directly into the zoom meeting via zoom website or application.

Let’s start with the City Council meeting being streamed live from the city’s website. Brian Mundy, Community Life commissioner has done exhaustive testing on many platforms with at least four different browsers that are current and up-to-date, and he found in many of the cases the stream does not work. It was tested on smart phones, tablets, laptops and desktops. On both Mac and PC platforms. Up-to-date and current browsers from Safari, Google Chrome, Internet explorer and Firefox were used in the testing; still resulting in the livestream not starting.

Pros: Any resident with the technology can watch live the City Council meeting from anywhere.

Cons: This technology requires Internet access and very expensive devices. A large portion of our residents cannot afford this type of technology, and as stated above the option does not work for many of the residents even if they have those devices.

Next, in assessing the option of watching on community television, it is our finding that only a few carriers have access to these community channels. The sound quality is also very poor and sometimes hard to understand someone’s statements. The television volume also needs to be turned all the way up just achieve minimal sound from the council meeting session.

Pros: Very convenient to sit and watch a City Council meeting

Cons: Can require expensive monthly fees to cable companies to access these meetings. Furthermore, it is not available through all service providers.

Our next concern involves the direct connection into the zoom meeting. This can be a technical challenge for many people. Even though during this time of worldwide pandemic many people are using Zoom options for meetings, a lot of people including our senior citizens have difficulties navigating the technology.

Pros: It presents an alternative for those who have the technology and expertise to navigate the application. The quality is most likely the best you can get.

Cons: Links to these meetings are only available after accessing the city website and downloading the agenda, which again requires a bit of technical knowledge. You must have Internet access, which includes an expense not everyone can afford. Dial-in information is currently shared in a Zoom format that is not user friendly. There are things that could be done to present the dial-in information in a way that would be easier for even non-technical individuals to use.

Example:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 669 900 9128 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 857 7367 7075

Passcode: 331842

Lastly, we should support notification and awareness to as many community members as possible on the meetings and how they can be accessed live.. These posters can be made as a general reference, which would not require specific council meeting details. These posters can be placed at community centers, parks, senior citizen homes, medical facilities and posted on stores' bulletin board to get the information more broadly viewed.

In conclusion, we would like to see these issues raised as a priority, action items generated and addressed. The Community Life Commission values the importance of reaching and communicating with transparency to as many residents of the city of Pomona as possible. We also understand the importance of being compliant with the Brown act.

Thank you for your time and considering our concerns. We know the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and City Staff find this important as well.

If you have any concerns, need clarification or assistance in any of these matters please feel free to reach out to CLC chair Christina Jimenez (e-mail) or Brian Mundy (e-mail) responsible for communication on the CLC commission.