

Herald-Tribune

SARASOTA

Want to give input at Sarasota city meetings during the pandemic? Here's how

Timothy Fanning Sarasota Herald-Tribune

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SARASOTA — Typically, Florida's open records law requires elected officials to meet in person. But these aren't typical times.

Since late March, Sarasota city commissioners and other local officials have met online, a practice that can make providing valuable public input on city business difficult.

Here's how to participate:

Commission meetings can be viewed via live streaming on the city's website, SarasotaFL.gov (click "Meetings/Agendas/Video"), and on Access Sarasota television (Comcast channel 19, Frontier channel 32).

If you want to provide input during City Commission meetings (the commission meets the first and third week of every month), you can participate remotely via video technology.

The next meeting is 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 8.

You must preregister by emailing your request to the City Auditor and Clerk's office (clerk@SarasotaFL.gov) by 5 p.m. on the Thursday before each meeting.

You will then receive a link to complete an online registration form, and once you are registered, you will receive further instructions and links from city staff on when and how to access the meeting online and participate.

You can also submit written comments before the meeting by emailing clerk@SarasotaFL.gov or by using an online form.

Public input also can be provided in person during the meeting at a computer station set up and monitored by staff at City Hall.

Head to the SRQ Studio in the City Hall annex building. You're required to wear face mask. If you have a medical exception and are unable to wear a face covering, you'll be directed to conference room 112.

In addition to Tuesday's regular commission meeting, the city is hosting a special budget workshop at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

For more information, contact the City Auditor and Clerk's office at 941-263-6222 or email clerk@SarasotaFL.gov.