



April 21 Lunch | Learn | Link Presentation Chat

Questions and Answers

How do you deal with security issues using zoom?

Here's a useful update from [MML on how to avoid Zoombombing](#)

Given current circumstances, how have communities reached out to those not on the internet?

A participant recommended physical signage in our regional parks

Another participant suggested signage near grocery stores.

In Kalamazoo, we are working to partner with local radio stations and cable access channel to at least broadcast a recording on the meeting and hopefully run it live.

In Berkley, we have conducted City-wide Wellness Checks through a compiled list of our seniors and at-risk residents by calling them and checking in. We asked basic questions such as, "How are you doing? Is there anything that you need? Can we assist you with finding information? Would you like us to call you next week?"

Postcards, like what the U.S. Census has done, are a great way to reach people. Be sure to include a way to respond by mail, telephone and e-mail. Newspaper notices and flyers have been used. Also, if your staff or volunteers are calling to check in with house bound seniors or other folks, use that interaction as a way to reach out.

Is there a particular tool best for those with disabilities?

This will be depending on what you're trying to accomplish, but for the City of Berkley's Livestream we utilize the State's Michigan Relay service where the residents only have to Dial 7-1-1 and then they are paired with a communications assistant who speaks on their behalf for our Public Comment.

With closed captioning, Carlisle Wortman Associates discovered that you need to use a professional service to do it well. We are using 3Play Media, which has a plug-in closed captioning for Zoom.



Did you say that you require citizens who call in to a public hearing to list their name and address publicly?

In Kalamazoo, at Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings, those commenting sign in and then state their name and address. At the virtual Planning Commission meeting we kept with this and asked folks to state their name and address before making their comments.

In Berkley, we don't necessarily require names and addresses, but we do ask that people state their name and place of residency as they would in a normal in-person meeting.

Everyone should consult their municipal attorney on this question.

Do the presenters record their public meetings both audio and visual? Implications?

Yes, the City of Berkley TV broadcast records all of our public meetings We normally did this at live meetings in the past and we have continued that practice now. We are down to essential meetings only so I don't think there any implications as most people already know that they are recorded and understand that.

For Kalamazoo hearing, how many phone lines did you have to handle those voice mail public comments? Were there issues with busy signals? If people leave voice mails after the public hearing is closed through the live meeting, how are they addressed?

We tried to set the public outreach window to a large enough timeframe to handle the expected comment. We were set to extend it beyond the window if we were overwhelmed with comments. I should also clarify that the comment window was a set time, but the playing of the up to 4 minute messages would have gone on as long as was necessary to have them all played. The Planning Commission agenda also a comment window at the end of the meeting for non agenda items. When we "closed" the marihuana public hearing comment period, we opened up the comment period for the non agenda comment period.

We were able to handle dozens of simultaneous calls to the voice mail. The limiting factor is how many staff you have on hand to review and queue up the messages. At this



meeting, we had 4 people ready since we didn't know how much comment we would receive.

***Carlisle Wortman Associates uses recording via Zoom to their cloud and then gives those files to our clients. Again, consult your municipal attorney, but I would assume that those could be subject to FOIA, just like any usual recordings of meetings. Also, Zoom automatically creates a transcript of the chat, whether to the entire group or between individuals, or Q & A features, if enabled. We choose for public on-line meetings to disable both the chat and Q & A features.*

Regarding Berkley's Master Plan Facebook Page, did you have a plan for removing any particularly offensive or negative comments OR did you decide ahead of time that you were going to leave everything as posted?

First, Facebook already has security algorithms in place that filter and report offensive commentary (e.g. swearing, some hateful or racist commentary). Second, when the City of Berkley established our main Facebook page, we have our settings set up to prevent any vulgar or swear words which we recommend doing. We did decide ahead of time that we would leave comments for the most part unless it breached our social media policy and/or racist/sexist/extreme statements. In addition, to clarify, the City never deletes comments only hides them. The reason for hiding vs deleting is because of free speech and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) if we are ever in a legal situation.