

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Changes to upcoming public meeting and hearing format**

West Hartford, CT (March 30, 2020) – West Hartford Mayor Shari Cantor announced today that West Hartford is developing a virtual meeting format so that the Town Council can safely conduct business during the global pandemic of COVID-19.

“Open and accessible Town government is a core West Hartford value,” Mayor Cantor said. Mayor Cantor noted that the Governor has delayed budget adoption for all municipalities, but that West Hartford will still conduct two budget hearings in a virtual format and on a new timeline. “The entire Town Council is committed to ensuring that all members of the public have the ability to be heard on the budget.”

On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Governor Ned Lamont issued an Executive Order No. 7B, which allows towns to conduct meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology if certain conditions are met. “Without the Governor’s executive order, it would have been almost impossible to conduct public meetings without risking further spread of COVID-19,” said Corporation Counsel Dallas Dodge. “The executive order is a common sense measure that allows for towns to continue conducting business in a way that balances public access with health and safety.”

Dodge and Town Clerk Essie Labrot are working in coordination with the Town’s information technology staff to develop a process that complies with Governor Ned Lamont’s executive orders concerning virtual meetings.

(more)

In light of the new circumstances, the Town Clerk has announced the following changes to the schedule of upcoming public hearings and meetings.

March 31 - Public Hearing (2020-21 Town Budget) – Postponed until further notice

April 6 - Public Hearing (Budget) – Postponed until further notice

April 6 - Public Hearing re: 12 Grove Street – Postponed until further notice

April 6 - Town Council Meeting – In lieu of the Regular Meeting that is scheduled, a virtual Special Meeting is tentatively planned for earlier in the evening on April 6 and it will be publicly noticed as soon as possible.

All meetings are posted on the town's web site,  
<https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/westh/Board.nsf/Public>.

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