

## **STAFF REPORT**

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**DATE:** October 25, 2021

**TO:** Sacramento Regional Transit Board of Directors

**FROM:** Olga Sanchez-Ochoa, General Counsel/ Tabetha Smith, Clerk to the Board

**SUBJ:** AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO CONDUCT ITS BOARD MEETINGS FOR THE NEXT 30 DAYS VIA TELECONFERENCE AS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE BROWN ACT PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953 AS AMENDED BY ASSEMBLY BILL 361, DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Attached Resolution.

### RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adoption of the Resolution will authorize implementation of AB 361 for Board meetings conducted between October 25, 2021 and November 23, 2021. Meetings conducted during this 30-day time period will be conducted via teleconference due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact.

### DISCUSSION

Adopted and signed into law earlier this month, Assembly Bill 361 ("AB 361") amended the Ralph M. Brown Act to authorize modified procedures for remote (teleconference) meetings held during a state of emergency and when state or local officials impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing. See *Cal. Gov. Code* § 54953(e). These new rules supersede and replace similar rules in the Governor's Executive Order No. N-29-20, which the SacRT Board has been adhering to since its adoption at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to avail itself of these modified procedures, the Brown Act requires the Board find, by a majority vote, that it has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency, and (i) the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and/or (ii) state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to

promote social distancing. The findings must be made no later than 30 days after using the modified procedures, and every 30 days thereafter. Unlike many of SacRT's member agencies, SacRT's auditorium is significantly small, making it difficult to safely space out members of the Board, staff and the public to meet in person. Because the peril of transmission has not significantly declined, the safest course of action is to continue meeting virtually for the next 30 days.

An additional requirement of AB 361 is that members of the public be allowed to participate in real time during the virtually held Board meeting. Thus, beginning October 25, 2021, members of the public will be able to virtually participate in the Board meetings in real time.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-10-0114

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Sacramento Regional Transit District on this date:

October 25, 2021

**AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO TELECONFERENCE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE BROWN ACT PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953 AS AMENDED BY ASSEMBLY BILL 361, DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT AS FOLLOWS:

THAT, on March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency in response to the novel coronavirus (a disease now known as COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, the Sacramento County Health Officer declared a local health emergency related to the COVID-19 on March 6, 2020. The County Administrator, acting in his capacity as the Director of Emergency Services, proclaimed the existence of a local emergency related to COVID-19 on March 6, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, which suspended and modified the teleconferencing requirements under the Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950 et seq.) so that local legislative bodies can hold public meetings via teleconference (with audio or video communications, without a physical meeting location), as long as the meeting agenda identifies the teleconferencing procedures to be used; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2021, the Governor clarified that the “reopening” of California on June 15, 2021 did not include any change to the proclaimed state of emergency or the powers exercised thereunder; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2021, the Governor issued Executive Order N-08-21, which extended the provision of N-29-20 concerning the conduct of public meetings through September 30, 2021, and the Governor subsequently signed legislation revising Brown Act requirements for teleconferenced public meetings (Assembly Bill 361, referred to hereinafter as “AB 361”); and

WHEREAS, as of the date of this Resolution, neither the Governor nor the Legislature have exercised their respective powers pursuant to California Government Code section 8629 to lift the state of emergency either by proclamation or by concurrent Resolution in the state Legislature; and

WHEREAS, as of the date of this Resolution, neither the County Health Officer nor the County Administrator have exercised their powers to lift the local health emergency and local state of emergency declared and proclaimed on March 6, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the County Health Officer has confirmed that continued local rates of transmission of the virus and variants causing COVID-19 are such that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees of public meetings; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND FOUND as follows: 1. The Board of Directors hereby finds that the facts set forth in the above recitals are true and correct, and establish the factual basis for the adoption of this Resolution; 2. There is an ongoing proclaimed state of emergency relating to the novel coronavirus causing the disease known as COVID-19 and as a result of that emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees of in-person meetings of this legislative body within the meaning of California Government Code section 54953(e)(1). 3. Under the present circumstances, including the risks mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the Board of Directors determines that authorizing teleconferenced public meetings consistent with Assembly Bill 361 is necessary and appropriate. 4. Staff are directed to take all actions necessary to implement this Resolution in accordance with the foregoing provisions and the requirements of Government Code section 54953, as amended by Assembly Bill 361, including but not limited to returning for ratification of this Resolution every 30 days after teleconferencing for the first time pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 for so long as either of the following circumstances exists: (a) the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of this legislative body to meet in person; and/or (b) state or local officials, including but not limited to the County Health Officer, continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

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STEVE MILLER, Chair

A T T E S T:

HENRY LI, Secretary

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tabetha Smith, Assistant Secretary