



**EMERGENCY ORDER NO. 2020-14**

**ORDER AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL METHODS  
OF PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENT IN PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**WHEREAS**, on March 9, 2020, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 20-52, declaring that a state of emergency exists in every county in the State of Florida due to the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 17, 2020, the City Commission of the City of North Port, Florida adopted Ordinance No. 2020-18, declaring a state of local emergency due to the COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 2020-18 conferred on the City Manager or designee the power and authority set forth in Florida Statutes Section 252.38(3)(a); and

**WHEREAS**, the City Manager issued administrative declarations extending the state of local emergency on March 24, 2020; March 31, 2020; April 7, 2020; April 14, 2020; April 21, 2020; April 28, 2020; May 5, 2020; May 12, 2020; May 19, 2020; May 26, 2020; June 2, 2020; June 9, 2020; June 16, 2020; June 23, 2020; June 30, 2020; and July 7, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 5, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 20-139, declaring Phase Two of reopening the state and encouraging all persons in Florida to avoid congregating in groups larger than 50 persons; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Florida Statutes Section 252.46, the City Manager has the power to issue emergency orders with the force of the law; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2-55 of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida sets forth procedures for providing public comment in a City Commission meeting, including the submission of a speaker card and approaching the podium to speak; and

**WHEREAS**, allowing public comment to be made by additional methods other than in-person protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community and increases the public's ability to participate in public meetings.

**IN HIS EMERGENCY AUTHORITY, THE CITY MANAGER OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA ORDERS:**

1. This emergency order applies to public meetings as defined in Chapter 286 of the Florida Statutes, including City Commission meetings, City Commission workshops, advisory board meetings, and any other public meeting at which public comment is permitted.
2. In addition to in-person public comment, persons interested in making public comment in a public meeting may do so by:
  - a. Submitting a written comment via the online public comment form on the City's website at [www.cityofnorthport.com/PublicComment](http://www.cityofnorthport.com/PublicComment). Online public comment will be accepted the day before the meeting from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. The commenter must provide the information identified as "required" and the comment cannot exceed 3000 characters.
  - b. Leaving a voicemail message via telephone at 941-429-1032. Voicemail messages will be accepted the day before the meeting from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. The commenter must leave all information identified as "required" in the City's outgoing message and must not exceed two minutes, fifteen seconds.
  - c. Any other method developed by the City Manager. The City will provide notice for any additional public comment method on the City's website at [www.cityofnorthport.com/PublicComment](http://www.cityofnorthport.com/PublicComment).
3. All public comments that are timely submitted and that include the required information will be afforded the same consideration as if they were offered in person. A public comment will only be considered as part of the public hearing for a quasi-judicial item if the commenter clearly identifies the agenda item and confirms taking an oath to tell the truth.
4. To the extent this order conflicts with any provision of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida or the Unified Land Development Code, this order controls.

**This order is effective immediately. Unless otherwise terminated, this order expires simultaneously with the expiration of the state of local emergency.**

ORDERED ON AND FILED WITH THE CLERK OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA ON JULY 9, 2020 AT 10:40 A.M./P.M. BY



Peter D. Lear, CPA, CGMA  
City Manager