



**EMERGENCY ORDER NO. 2020-22**

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

**WHEREAS**, the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic may cause life threatening conditions for the residents of the City of North Port; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 9, 2020, pursuant to Florida Statutes Chapter 252, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 20-52, declaring a state of emergency in the State of Florida; directing the Division of Emergency Management to execute the State's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan; and authorizing each political subdivision within the State of Florida, pursuant to Florida Statutes Section 252.38(3)(a), to waive certain procedures and formalities otherwise required by law that are in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 4, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 20-213, extending for 60 days the state of emergency declared in Executive Order Number 20-52, as extended by Executive Order Numbers 20-114 and 20-166, and as amended by Executive Order Number 20-192; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 17, 2020, the City Commission adopted Ordinance No. 2020-18, declaring a state of local emergency caused by the threat posed by COVID-19, and granted the City Manager or designee the authority to take actions in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 252.38(3)(a) including extending the state of local emergency in seven-day increments; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Ordinance No. 2020-18, the City Manager issued twenty-four administrative declarations, each extending the state of local emergency for an additional seven days; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 1, 2020, the Acting City Manager issued his Administrative Declaration of Twenty-Fourth Extension of the Local State of Emergency Pursuant to Ordinance No. 2020-18, and the actions therein expired by operation of law on September 8, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 9, 2020, the City Commission of the City of North Port, Florida adopted Ordinance No. 2020-38, declaring a state of local emergency due to the COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 2020-38 conferred on the City Manager or designee the power and authority set forth in Florida Statutes Section 252.38(3)(a); 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. This order does not apply to public meetings conducted via communications media technology (CMT) pursuant to Emergency Order No. 2020-19.
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  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2020 AT 8:16 A.M./P.M. BY

  
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Jason Yarborough, ICMA-CM  
Acting City Manager

