

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-16

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SILICON VALLEY ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS SOLELY BY TELECONFERENCE OR OTHERWISE ELECTRONICALLY PURSUANT TO AB 361 (2021)

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SILICON VALLEY ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (SVACA) is a joint powers agency comprised of 4 member cities; and

WHEREAS, SVACA is committed to preserving and nurturing public access and participation in meetings of the SVACA Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, all meetings of the SVACA Board of Directors are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Sections 54950, *et seq.*, hereinafter referred to as the “Brown Act”), so that any member of the public may attend, participate, and watch the SVACA Board of Directors conduct their business; and

WHEREAS, the Brown Act allows a local legislative body to hold public meetings by teleconference and to make public meetings accessible telephonically or otherwise electronically to all members of the public seeking to attend and to address the local legislative body, as long as the following requirements are met: (1) each teleconference location from which a member is participating is noticed on the agenda; (2) each teleconference location is accessible to the public; (3) members of the public must be able to address the body at each teleconference location; (4) at least one member of the legislative body must be physically present at the location specified in the meeting agenda; and (5) during teleconference meetings, at least a quorum of the members of the local body must participate from locations within the local body’s territorial jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20 which suspended the Brown Act teleconferencing requirements so that legislative bodies can

hold public meetings solely by teleconference, or otherwise electronically, without listing the teleconference locations and without any physical location, as long as the agenda that is posted 72 hours in advance indicates that the members of the legislative body will be participating by teleconference, provides the teleconference or webinar access information by which the public may participate electronically, and lists the procedure for individuals with disabilities to request reasonable accommodations; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2021, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-08-21, which sunsets the Brown Act provisions of Executive Order N-29-20 on September 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed urgency ordinance AB 361 which allows a local agency to use teleconferencing for public meetings without posting the teleconferencing locations on the agenda and without requiring the teleconference locations to be accessible to the public during a Governor-proclaimed state of emergency pursuant to California Government Code Section 8625 *et seq*, if the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members of its legislative bodies to meet safely in person or state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, in light of the continued state of emergency related to COVID-19, the Santa Clara County Public Health Officer continues to recommend that public bodies meet remotely to the extent possible, specifically including use of newly enacted AB 361 to maintain remote meetings under the Ralph M. Brown Act and similar laws, as outlined in their “Recommendation Regarding Continued Remote Public Meetings of Governmental Entities” issued on September 21, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on December 15, 2021, January 12, 2022, February 9, 2022, March 9, 2022, March 23, 2022, April 20, 2022, May 18, 2022, May 25, 2022, June 22, 2022, July 20, 2022, July 27, 2022, and August 24, 2022 the SVACA board adopted Resolutions Nos. 2021-5, 2022-1, 2022-2, 2022-3, 2022-6, 2022-7, 2022-8, 2022-9, 2022-13, 2022-14, and 2022-15 respectively, to allow the SVACA Board of Directors to hold public meetings solely by

teleconference or otherwise electronically pursuant to AB 361; and

WHEREAS, on November 22, 2021, Santa Clara County moved into the moderate (orange) COVID-19 transmission tier; and

WHEREAS, on November 25, 2021, scientists identified the latest COVID-19 variant, Omicron, which has prompted concern among scientists and public health officials because of an unusually high number of mutations that have the potential to make the virus more transmissible and less susceptible to existing vaccines; and

WHEREAS, on December 13, 2021, the California Department of Public Health reinstated its statewide mask mandate, requiring all individuals, regardless of their vaccination status, to wear face coverings in indoor public settings from December 15, 2021 through January 15, 2022 due to a 47% increase in the statewide seven-day average case rate and 14% increase in hospitalizations since Thanksgiving; and

WHEREAS, in light of the rapid surge in cases due to the Omicron variant, on December 28, 2021, the County of Santa Clara Health Officer issued a health order requiring up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination for workers in certain higher-risk settings. The new order builds on recent changes in the State Health Officer's vaccination requirements by mandating up-to-date vaccination by workers in certain healthcare and long-term care settings; and

WHEREAS, as of February 3, 2022, daily COVID-19 cases are on the decline since the Omicron surge. However, California COVID-19 deaths continue to rise and hospitalizations remain elevated; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2022, the Santa Clara County Public Health Officer rescinded the health order requiring the use of face covering indoors effective March 2, 2022. However, the Santa Clara County Public Health Officer continues to recommend that all persons continue to wear face coverings when indoors. The California Department of Public Health continues to require masking in higher-risk settings such as public transit, healthcare facilities, shelters, jails, and long-term care facilities. While Santa Clara County has met the required masking metrics

(80% of the population vaccinated, COVID-19 hospitalizations in the jurisdictions are low and stable, seven consecutive days with the seven-day rolling average of new cases at 550 or below) to transition to a strong recommendation for indoor masking, the County remains in the “medium” level of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s new COVID-19 community level framework; and

WHEREAS, as of March 26, 2022, the Omicron subvariant BA.2 is now the dominant variant in the US accounting for nearly 55% of new COVID-19 cases in the US; and

WHEREAS, On March 29, 2022, the FDA authorized a second booster dose of the COVID-19

WHEREAS, as of April 27, COVID-19 levels in wastewater concentrations in the greater Bay Area from Sacramento to Yolo, San Francisco and Santa Clara County and San Mateo County, were similar to what they were during the Delta surge in the summer of 2021, indicating another wave of the pandemic, although not resulting in an increase in hospitalizations; and

WHEREAS, on April 28, Bay Area Rapid Transit reinstated its mask mandate effective immediately through July 18, which impacts the system’s 50 stations in five Bay Area counties; and

WHEREAS, on May 10, 2022, Santa Clara County’s Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody warned that COVID case counts and hospitalizations are on the increase, with a weekly average of 552 cases and 80 to 100 people currently hospitalized, and urged everyone to consider wearing masks in high-risk settings, keep a stockpile of tests, and exercise caution when socializing indoors; and

WHEREAS, on May 13, 2022, Bay Area health officers from the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma and the City of Berkeley urged residents to wear face masks in indoor public settings as COVID-19 infections driven by highly contagious virus variants multiply throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, as of May 31, 2022, new coronavirus cases in California increased 13.2% from the

prior week and California ranked 10th among the states where coronavirus was spreading the fastest on a per person basis; and

WHEREAS, as of June 13, 2022, new COVID-19 cases in California rose 32.3% from the prior week with 128,893 new cases, with California ranking fourth among the states where COVID-19 was spreading the fastest on a per-person basis, and Santa Clara County with the highest worst weekly outbreaks on a per-person basis; and

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2022, an advisory panel to the FDA voted unanimously to recommend the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for children ages five and younger;

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2022, the CDC and federal regulators authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages six months through four years old and the Moderna vaccine for children ages six months through five years old starting June 21, 2022; and

WHEREAS, as of July 5, 2022, the new omicron subvariant known as BA.5 now comprises a majority of U.S. COVID-19 cases, according to data released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The BA.5, along with a related subvariant known as BA.4, has mutations that have shown an increased ability to evade the protection from vaccines and previous infection; and

WHEREAS, as of July 6, 2022, all nine local counties are back in the CDC's high-risk category for COVID-19 community levels, and the highly-transmissible BA.5 subvariant of the virus that causes COVID-19 is quickly taking over; and

WHEREAS, on August 4, 2022, the CDC continued to classify Santa Clara County in the high community level for coronavirus, in its weekly update; and

WHEREAS, on August 11, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention streamlined its guidance for COVID exposure to recommending that everyone, regardless of vaccination or past infection, wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day five after exposure to the virus; and

WHEREAS, as of August 24, 2022, as California schools reopen for the fall semester with

loosened COVID-19 protocols and low student vaccination rates among younger children, health experts are watching to see how schools do in the coming weeks as some experts expect another rise in cases when winter arrives; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 54953(e)(3) requires that the SVACA Board of Directors review the need and make findings to continue the use of teleconferencing without complying with the agenda posting and public comment requirements at least once every thirty (30) days until Governor Newsom terminates the state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the associated emergency conditions are on-going and there is a need to continue teleconferencing for public meetings without posting the teleconferencing locations on the agenda and without requiring the teleconference locations to be accessible to the public during the current Governor-proclaimed COVID-19 state of emergency and if approved, will be in effect for 30 days and will expire on October 20, 2022 unless staff returns to the SVACA Board of Directors on or before October 20, 2022 to request to continue the need for teleconferencing.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE SILICON VALLEY ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the SVACA Board of Directors hereby finds that the state of emergency conditions related to COVID-19 are on-going.
2. That the SVACA Board of Directors finds that there is a need to continue teleconferencing for public meetings without posting the teleconferencing locations on the agenda and without requiring the teleconference locations to be accessible to the public during the current Governor-proclaimed COVID-19 state of emergency.
3. That the SVACA Board of Directors finds that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of members of the SVACA Board of Directors to meet safely in person.
4. That state and local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing in government facilities.
5. That members of the SVACA Board of Directors are authorized to use teleconferencing,

or other electronic means, to hold its public meetings without noticing the teleconferenced locations on the agenda, without making teleconferenced or physical locations accessible to the public, without posting agendas at teleconferenced locations, without requiring members of the legislative bodies to be physically present at the meeting, and without requiring a quorum of the members of the legislative body to participate from locations within the Board's jurisdiction, as long as the agenda that is posted in advance indicates that members of the Board may be participating electronically, provides the teleconference or webinar access information by which the public may participate electronically, and lists the procedure for individuals with disabilities to request reasonable accommodations, in compliance with AB 361 (2021), Government Code Section 54953(e).

6. That the Executive Director is hereby directed to report to the SVACA Board of Directors within thirty (30) days on the need to further continue teleconferencing for public meetings without posting the teleconferencing locations on the agenda and without requiring the teleconference locations to be accessible to the public during the current Governor-proclaimed COVID-19 state of emergency.

7. Effective Date. This resolution shall become effective immediately.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THE FOREGOING TO BE A TRUE COPY OF A RESOLUTION PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE SILICON VALLEY ANIMAL CONTROL AUTHORITY AT A REGULAR MEETING THEREOF HELD ON THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2022, BY THE FOLLOWING

VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

Paul Resnikoff, Chairperson, Board of Directors
Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority

ATTEST:

Dan Soszynski
Executive Director/Board Secretary

Attachments incorporated by reference: None