A BILL FOR AN ACT

Concerning online notice of public meetings of a local governmental entity.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill requires a local government to post notices of public meetings required by the state open meetings law on the local government's website. The notices are accessible to the public at no charge. The notices shall be searchable, if feasible, by type of meeting, date and time of meeting, and agenda contents.
Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-6-402, amend

(2)(c) as follows:

24-6-402. Meetings - open to public - legislative declaration -
definitions. (2) (c) (I) Any meetings at which the adoption of any
proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action
occurs or at which a majority or quorum of the body is in attendance, or
is expected to be in attendance, shall be held only after full and timely
notice to the public. In addition to any other means of full and timely
notice, a local public body shall be deemed to have given full and timely
notice if the notice of the meeting is posted in a designated public place
within the boundaries of the local public body no less than twenty-four
hours prior to the holding of the meeting. The public place or places for
posting such notice shall be designated annually at the local public body’s
first regular meeting of each calendar year. The posting shall include
specific agenda information where possible.

(II) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT:

(A) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS TRANSITION FROM POSTING PHYSICAL NOTICES OF PUBLIC
MEETINGS IN PHYSICAL LOCATIONS TO POSTING NOTICES ON A WEBSITE,
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT, OR OTHER OFFICIAL ONLINE PRESENCE OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO THE GREATEST EXTENT PRACTICABLE;

(B) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO RELIEVE A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT TO PHYSICALLY POST MEETING
NOTICES, WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS, IF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ONLINE POSTED NOTICES OF
MEETINGS;

(C) A NUMBER OF FACTORS MAY AFFECT THE ABILITY OF SOME LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO EASILY ESTABLISH A WEBSITE, POST MEETING NOTICES ONLINE, AND OTHERWISE BENEFIT FROM HAVING AN ONLINE PRESENCE, INCLUDING THE AVAILABILITY OF BROADBAND OR RELIABLE BROADBAND, THE LACK OF CELLULAR TELEPHONE AND DATA SERVICES, AND FISCAL OR STAFFING CONSTRAINTS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT;

(D) LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO AVAIL THEMSELVES OF EXISTING FREE RESOURCES FOR CREATING A WEBSITE AND RECEIVING CONTENT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE FROM THE COLORADO STATEWIDE INTERNET PORTAL AUTHORITY AND STATEWIDE ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTING LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES; AND

(E) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CLOSELY MONITOR THE TRANSITION TO PROVIDING NOTICES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ONLINE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS AND, IF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IS NOT MADE, TO BRING LEGISLATION MANDATING IN STATUTE THAT ALL NOTICES BE POSTED ONLINE EXCEPT IN VERY NARROW CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ARE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

(III) ON AND AFTER JULY 1, 2019, A LOCAL PUBLIC BODY SHALL BE DEEMED TO HAVE GIVEN FULL AND TIMELY NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING IF THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY POSTS THE NOTICE, WITH SPECIFIC AGENDA INFORMATION IF AVAILABLE, NO LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS PRIOR TO THE HOLDING OF THE MEETING ON A PUBLIC WEBSITE OF THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY. THE NOTICE MUST BE ACCESSIBLE AT NO CHARGE TO THE PUBLIC. THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY SHALL, TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE, MAKE THE NOTICES SEARCHABLE BY TYPE OF MEETING, DATE OF MEETING, TIME OF MEETING, AGENDA CONTENTS, AND ANY OTHER CATEGORY DEEMED
APPROPRIATE BY THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY AND SHALL CONSIDER LINKING THE NOTICES TO ANY APPROPRIATE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS OF THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY. A LOCAL PUBLIC BODY THAT PROVIDES NOTICE ON A WEBSITE PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2)(c)(III) SHALL PROVIDE THE ADDRESS OF THE WEBSITE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS FOR INCLUSION IN THE INVENTORY MAINTAINED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-32-116. A LOCAL PUBLIC BODY THAT POSTS A NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING ON A PUBLIC WEBSITE PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2)(c)(III) MAY IN ITS DISCRETION ALSO POST A NOTICE BY ANY OTHER MEANS INCLUDING IN A DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(c)(I) OF THIS SECTION; EXCEPT THAT NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO REQUIRE SUCH OTHER POSTING. A LOCAL PUBLIC BODY THAT POSTS NOTICES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ON A PUBLIC WEBSITE PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2)(c)(III) SHALL DESIGNATE A PUBLIC PLACE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE LOCAL PUBLIC BODY AT WHICH IT MAY POST A NOTICE NO LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS PRIOR TO A MEETING IF IT IS UNABLE TO POST A NOTICE ONLINE IN EXIGENT OR EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS A POWER OUTAGE OR AN INTERRUPTION IN INTERNET SERVICE THAT PREVENTS THE PUBLIC FROM ACCESSING THE NOTICE ONLINE.

(IV) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "LOCAL PUBLIC BODY" INCLUDES MUNICIPALITIES, COUNTIES, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 32-1-903, amend (2) as follows:

32-1-903. Meetings. (2) Notice of time and place designated for all regular AND SPECIAL meetings shall be posted in at least three public
places within the limits of the special district, and, in addition, one such
notice shall be posted in the office of the county clerk and recorder in the
county or counties in which the special district is located. Such notices
shall remain posted and shall be changed in the event that the time or
place of such regular meetings is changed PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH SECTION 24-6-402. Special meetings may be called by any director
by informing the other directors of the date, time, and place of such
special meeting, and the purpose for which it is called, and by posting
PROVIDING notice as provided in this section at least seventy-two hours
prior to said meeting IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24-6-402. All official
business of the board shall be conducted only during said regular or
special meetings at which a quorum is present, and all said meetings shall
be open to the public.

SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act
takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a
referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.