Tips for Running Effective Virtual Meetings

General

- Test the software program before your meetings and become familiar with differences between programs: BoxCast, UberConferencing, Facebook Live, Granicus, GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar, Zoom, YouTube.
- Take 20-30 minutes before the meeting to practice video, audio, muting and unmuting, screen sharing, presenter sharing, chatting and questions.
- Use video, if possible, to keep people's attention.
- Include an agenda and/or script when presenters will need control and when to unmute attendees for questions and comments.
- Start meetings 15 minutes early to test audio, web cam and screen sharing, and solve attendee problems.
- Many of these programs have apps that can be downloaded onto phones to use instead of a traditional computer

Starting your meeting

1. Ask users to mute from their end, if possible.
2. Explain the agenda and chat/question options and format to attendees.
3. Ask speakers to announce themselves (name) before speaking. (You can ask this of members of public who decide to speak at public comment portion, just as you would in a regular meeting.)
4. Ask all attendees to be aware of their surroundings while participating in meetings (i.e. make sure the space they are using will not lead to anything private being shared, such as bathrooms, bedrooms, etc.)
5. Make sure when finished to end meeting (hang up, end meeting button, etc.)

NACO's experience

NACO has and is currently using Zoom to conduct its virtual meetings. Here is our perspective on it and suggestions to counties who might not be familiar with such technology:

- Complete test runs with 2-3 people to make it manageable before conducting in larger group.
- Do tests to ensure all can hear and it can be recorded by your clerk.
- Verbally identify yourself before speaking.
- Remind participants to mute unless speaking to eliminate background noise.
- Take a roll call vote for all motions/actions.
- Use phone(s) for citizens to call in or public comment.
- Don't attempt to achieve total proficiency before using, try it and work out the bugs as you move along.
- Accept that you'll get better each time you use it.
- Allow for a little extra time to conduct the meeting, you may or may not need.
- Know that mistakes may happen with first time use but you can't correct those mistakes if you don't formally use it.