

**NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD****MINUTES****Tuesday, February 25, 2020**RECEIVED
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Due to the Northbridge's webpage being offline the Planning Board meeting of February 25, 2020 was canceled/postponed and rescheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2020 (7PM -Town Hall). Reference is made to Attorney General's Office notification provided below:

The Division of Open Government is aware of a web outage that is impacting municipal websites throughout the Commonwealth. We have received many questions about how a website outage impacts the Open Meeting Law's requirements for posting meeting notices. The following guidance applies to municipalities that have adopted the municipal website as the official method of posting meeting notices.

If the website becomes inaccessible to members of the public within 48 hours of a meeting, not including Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, the municipal clerk or other individual responsible for posting notice to the website must restore the website to accessibility within six hours of the time, during regular business hours, when such individual discovers that the website has become inaccessible. In the event that the website is not restored to accessibility within six business hours of the website's deficiency being discovered, the public body must re-post notice of its meetings for another date and time in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(b). See 940 CMR 29.03(7). We understand that some websites were briefly restored before going out again. A brief restoration does not suffice to re-start the 6-hour period.

Once a municipality has adopted its website as its official method of posting notice, it is the method that must be used to post meeting notices. Other notice posting methods, however thorough and wide-reaching they may be, cannot replace web posting during a website outage.

We are aware that many municipalities' meeting notices are hosted on a MyTownGovernment.org site, which is not impacted by the website outage. However, if the website that a municipality has identified and publicized as its official notice posting location is the municipal website that is experiencing an outage, which then links users to a MyTownGovernment site for the actual meeting notice, we consider the website to be down for purposes of the Open Meeting Law, even though the notices themselves may technically remain posted.

Note that a website outage only impacts meetings that are scheduled to take place within 48 hours of the outage. Meetings that have been posted for farther in the future do not need to be re-posted as long as the website is restored 48 hours prior to the meeting.

As always, you are welcome to contact us at (617) 963-2540 or OpenMeeting@State.MA.US with any Open Meeting Law questions.

In partnership,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DIVISION OF OPEN GOVERNMENT

Agenda items originally included for the February 25, 2020 meeting shall be considered at the Planning Board meeting of March 10, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,


Barbara A. Kinney
Planning Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Planning Board:



Cc: Town Clerk
/File