MARBLEHEAD MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS HYBRID CAPABILITIES

Voted and approved unanimously by the Article 44 Study Committee   April 26, 2023

Any hybrid meeting room set-up includes hardware components, a software component, and internet connectivity. Hardware components include a computer connected to the internet and also, for example, a Polycom studio bar (camera and microphone), an OWL system, or a personal laptop computer. Software components include, for example, Zoom, Google Teams, or GoTo Meeting. Marblehead's municipal buildings access internet connectivity via the municipality's fiber optic network (the public school district maintains its own network). Equally important for the operational success of a hybrid meeting is oversight by a person with the technical knowledge to manage all three primary components; this includes establishing and running the interface between hardware, software, and internet components, troubleshooting glitches, and monitoring the meeting. This is especially critical for regulatory boards (such as the Zoning Board of Appeals, Old & Historic Districts Commission, Planning Board, Select Board, and Conservation Commission) that hold public hearings. Committees and boards that have municipal staff support rely on that staff person to fill this administrative function. For committees that do not have municipal staff support, the administrative role must be assumed by a committee member, for whom technical training should be made available by the town.

• NOTE #1: The Town's fiber optic infrastructure is in need of upgrading from series to parallel structuring so that if internet service is impeded at one municipal building it does not impact service at the other municipal buildings. The capacity of Marblehead's municipal fiber optic system also needs to be increased due to the additional size of audio and visual data now commonly transmitted. As of 2019, estimates for these improvements to Marblehead's municipal fiber optic infrastructure was estimated at $350,000.

• NOTE #2: Municipalities often support the functions of government by reconfiguring building usage over time. This can result in challenges to upgrading spaces that were not built to readily meet code requirements and technology needs that did not exist when the building was first constructed. Upgrading specific building spaces necessitates consideration of how to phase the improvements in compliance with ADA requirements; if building improvement costs exceed 30% of the building's value within a three-year period, it triggers a requirement for the entire building to meet all ADA requirements without additional phasing of said work. In assessing municipal buildings, what are the Town's needs in perpetuity? What are the priorities and the funding sources?

Abbot Hall
188 Washington Street
Contact: Kyle Wiley
Evening meetings in the Select Board room are as follows:
1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month: Old and Historic Commission
2nd Tuesday of the month: Zoning Board
4th Tuesday of the month: Planning Board
2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month: Select Board
The use of this meeting room could be expanded for use on Mondays and/or Thursdays.
• Currently there is a Polycom tablet, monitor, camera, and sound board. There is good internet connectivity. There is no "Owl" hardware at this site. Zoom is the software platform currently used in the Select Board room and the lower-floor meeting room at Mary Alley. The Town pays a monthly-adjusted licensing fee for Zoom (only meetings under 40 minutes are free of charge) based on the number of user accounts, the size of the meeting (including members of the public), and the number of Zoom rooms (two = Abbot Hall Select Board room and Mary Alley lower-floor meeting room). The Town's average monthly Zoom fee is between $275 and $300, totaling an average annual fee of $3,450. NOTE: There are many software platforms available, all with recurring charges. Additional custodial services (to close the building) would be required to accommodate any additional meetings.

Abbot Public Library
Location while 235 Pleasant Street site is under construction (until spring 2024): Eveleth School, 3 Brook Road
Contact: Kim Grad, Director
Current hours:
Monday: 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM
Tuesday: 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM
Wednesday: 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM
Thursday: 9:30 AM to 6 PM
Friday: 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Saturday: 9:30 ^{AM} to 5:00 ^{PM}
Sunday: Closed
The custodian works 7:30 ^{AM} to 4:00 ^{PM}
The building is closed by staff personnel; staff includes a technical research specialist.
• **Eveleth School temporary site:** In the interim space at 3 Brook Road, Abbot Public Library offers one program room for use by non-profit groups and organizations for meetings that are educational, cultural or civic in nature during public hours of service. The room accommodates a capacity of 49 attendees and has an audiovisual system, a movable podium and an interactive screen, but no kitchen facilities.
• **The renovated 235 Pleasant Street location** will include three small rooms to accommodate 12 to 15 people each with mobile hybrid-meeting equipment. The lower-level meeting room can accommodate 75 people with a Polycom studiobar which covers most of the room. Internet connectivity is good.

Jacobi Community Center
10 Humphrey Street
Recreation and Parks Department and Council on Aging
The Jacobi Community Center is opened and closed by staff personnel.
• The Jacobi Center does not currently have hybrid-meeting equipment, however internet connectivity is good. Committees currently holding hybrid meetings use laptops brought by individuals (however using Zoom on laptops is not ideal—the speaker on each laptop may interfere with other members' laptops and create echoes or sometimes high-pitched sounds. Remote participants cannot necessarily hear the meeting, and each member of the committee and in-person members of the public need access to a laptop in order to speak. Meetings held remotely work best when all the participants are in different locations. Once participants are meeting in-person, additional specialized equipment is recommended).
• The Jacobi Center conference room table can accommodate 10 to 15 people and the dining room is also available for meetings.
• **Adding hybrid equipment to one or both of these rooms would increase flexibility for committees to schedule hybrid meetings, however lack of consistent availability of building staff (Recreation and Parks) during evening hours (to close the building after meetings) means the building is not a practical location for public bodies to hold meetings (with the possible exception of the Recreation and Parks Commission, which has building staff to close the building).**

1. Recreation and Parks Department
Contact: Peter James
• The Community Center is currently staffed on Monday & Wednesday evenings; this will change effective May 1. From May 1 until October 31, the building will not have evening staff *unless requested and staff is available*. During these months, the Park and Recreation department has difficulty finding staff to work evening hours.
• During the summer months, the building closes at 5:45 ^{PM}
    --The Recreation and Parks office hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 ^{AM} to 5:45 ^{PM}, and Sunday 12:00 ^{PM} to 2:00 ^{PM}
• From November through March, Mondays through Thursdays, the building closes promptly at 9:00 ^{PM}. On Fridays, the building closes at 5:00 ^{PM}
• There would be a fee to staff the building during meetings and afterwards close the building.

2. Council on Aging
Contact: Lisa Hooper, Executive Director
Mondays through Fridays: 7:30 ^{AM} to 4 ^{PM} (summer months: Mondays through Fridays, 7:00 ^{AM} to 3:00 ^{PM})

Mary Alley Municipal Office Building
7 Widger Road
Contact: Kyle Wiley
Current evening meetings are as follows:
Mondays or Tuesdays: Board of Health
Mondays: Finance Committee
2nd Thursday of the month: Conservation Commission
• NOTE #1: As of the end of February 2023, until further notice, the building's elevator (which provides ADA-compliant access to the lower floor) is out of service. Under the Covid-19 Open Meeting Law regulations, a hybrid meeting may take place in a location that is not physically accessible to all as long as "adequate, alternate means" for participation are available, i.e. phone or video access. However, if the hybrid internet connection is lost, the meeting would have to stop/be cancelled because an "alternate means" of attendance is no longer available (the lower floor meeting room is not physically accessible to all).

• NOTE #2: Thatcher Kezer and municipal staff have begun to review costs associated with making the two conference rooms on the lower floor of the Mary Alley Municipal Building accessible for evening meetings when the rest of the building is closed (after regular office hours). This would facilitate volunteer committees (that do not have municipal staff support) to access the hybrid-equipped conference room in a stand-alone portion of a municipal building when the rest of the building is locked/secured. In order to achieve this and meet ADA requirements renovations would include: changing to electronic egress doors on the lower floor, modifying the slope of the walkway to the lower floor entrances, making the lower-floor bathroom compliant with ADA requirements, and meeting safety and fire code requirements. Initial estimates for this work total approximately $150,000. It has not been determined if making the two conference rooms on the lower floor of the Mary Alley Municipal Building will be a priority project.
• Hybrid meeting equipment in the conference room includes an "Owl" in conjunction with a Polycom tablet and screen. Internet connectivity is not consistent; sometimes Wi-Fi connectivity is achieved through individuals' mobile phones/laptops. See notes in the Abbot Hall section regarding Zoom software monthly fees.
In the building's current configuration, additional custodial services (to close the building) would be required to accommodate additional evening meetings by other municipal boards/committees/commissions.

Marblehead Public School District
Contact: Todd Bloodgood, Facilities and Operations Director
                Lisa Manning, Facilities and Transportation Administrative Assistant
                Stephen M. Kwiatek, Director of Educational Technology
                Michelle Cresta, Asst. Superintendent of Finance and Operations

The Marblehead Public School District is comprised of five schools:
Brown Elementary School, 40 Baldwin Road
Glover Elementary School, 9 Maple Street
Village Elementary School, 93 Village Street
Veterans Middle School, 217 Pleasant Street
Marblehead High School, 2 Humphrey Street

• During the week, each school has its own evening activities calendar for Monday through Friday, however effort would be made to make cafetorium, cafeteria, auditorium, or library space available for municipal committee meetings (see notes from Michelle Cresta below). Scheduling for municipal committee meetings would be arranged by contacting Todd Bloodgood's office and speaking to Lisa Manning. Lisa would work with a representative from any municipal committee wanting to set up regularly scheduled meetings (except for gyms, which are scheduled through Mark Tarmey, Assistant Athletic Director). Access to school buildings during the school summer vacation months would have to be determined.
• The school district is on its own fiber optic network, separate from the town's.
• Each school building's custodial staff is on duty until 10:30pm, however municipal meetings must wrap up by 9:30^{PM} so that custodial staff may clean classrooms as well shut off lights and lock up the building. As long as a meeting is over by 9:30^{PM}, there is currently no fee for municipal committees to use rooms in any of the schools. However, if a meeting runs past 10:30^{PM}, that results in overtime for the custodians.
• CORI requirements: Provided that the school with students is not in session, a CORI check for individual municipal meeting attendees is not required.

Notes from Michelle Cresta, Marblehead Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
February 28, 2023
• If municipal committees are using the school department's technology hardware (projection screens for streaming or remote hosting), the school department would require a technology staff member to be present and there would be a cost passed on to the town. Any member of the public can access the school's guest Wi-Fi, however hosting a live-stream hybrid meeting is more complex than just having a laptop, Zoom account, and Wi-Fi connection. The school department currently live streams all school committee meetings but a considerable amount of equipment had to be installed to do this properly.
• Municipal committee meetings would need cameras, microphones, speakers, and the ability to host through Zoom or another medium, and an additional medium to live stream (for instance the school committee meetings are live streamed through a YouTube channel). Municipal committee meetings with committee members using Zoom on their laptops is not ideal—the speaker on each laptop interferes with other members' laptops and creates echoes and sometimes high-pitched sounds. In addition, the remote participants would not hear the meeting and all the members unless each member of the committee and in-person members of the public had a laptop in order to speak. Meetings held remotely work best when all the participants are in different locations. Once participants are together, you need the specialized equipment. The schools

have limited spaces available for this and IT staff is required to run that equipment; there would not be a person from the school district's IT Department available on a regular basis to assist with the equipment needs for municipal committee meetings.

• The school department would require a rental agreement/request completed for each space-use request. The schools would not be able to accommodate a full year of meetings all at once due to the needs of the school department. At best, the schools could try to accommodate meeting space requests one or two months in advance. However even this would be subject to rescheduling as school evening events are frequently added to the calendar.

• There may be a charge which is yet to be determined about use of the schools for town committee meetings if other than a couple of meetings per year. This issue would have to be reviewed by the Superintendent and School Committee. There are fees that currently exist, but they are under review. The fees would be set and would be quoted by Lisa Manning at the time of request. Availability of space in the schools for municipal open meetings is limited, and sometimes extremely limited.

Status of other municipal buildings re: holding municipal open meetings
Marblehead Harbormaster's Quarters
9 Ferry Lane
Contact: Captain Mark Souza, Harbormaster
Information provided by Mark Souza
• The Harbormaster's building does not have any capability to hold hybrid meetings. Any guidance going forward would be appreciated.

Marblehead Municipal Light
80 Commercial Street
Contact: Joe Kowalik, General Manager
Building is generally open to the public during normal business hours:
Mondays through Thursdays: 7:30 ^{AM} to 4:30 ^{PM}
Wednesdays: 7:30 ^{AM} to 5:00 ^{PM}
Fridays: 7:30 ^{AM} to 12:30 ^{PM}
• There is hybrid-meeting equipment in the building, with good internet connectivity, however the meeting space is not located in a room that is independently accessible apart from the other parts of the building; Muni Light would not be comfortable with people having access to the entire building if using the meeting room for evening meetings.
The Muni Light building is opened and closed by staff personnel.

Old Town House
One Market Square
Information provided by Chris Johnston of the Marblehead Historical Commission
• Currently the Old Town House has no internet Wi-Fi capacity—the building is not included in the town's fiber optic network. For a recent exhibit, the Marblehead Historical Commission purchased a temporary local Wi-Fi hotspot device powered by Verizon, and paid Verizon for a monthly cellular service fee for the hotspot. The hot spot device cost approximately $200. The monthly Verizon cellular service was approximately $70/month.*
* The hotspot device was installed in the Old Town House's chair closet. The monthly Verizon cell service had to be prepaid, either at a Verizon store every month, or by renewing the monthly service using a credit card on-line. Either way, since the Town of Marblehead does not have credit card accounts for municipal committees, an individual has to use their own credit card and then submit a request for reimbursement to the Marblehead Finance department, along with all the associated paperwork. This is a cumbersome process. There is also the issue of security for the Wi-Fi system. If non-staff individuals are given the password, it is just a   matter of time before it is known to someone who wants to use access for their own purposes. This could provide malicious actors with access the Town's network.

Water and Sewer Department Building
100 Tower Way, Building #11
Contact: Amy McHugh, superintendent
• Information provided by Amy McHugh: Building #11 has poor internet connectivity. The Water and Sewer commission has moved to in-person meetings and that is the preferred way of meeting. When hybrid meetings are held, it is by using a speaker phone and lap top computer and cannot handle many virtual attendees. The meetings are tape recorded. During Covid-19, there was not a great number of meeting attendees at the virtual meetings: often one or two people who usually had placed an item on the meeting agenda and did not attend the entire meeting.