

**AGENDA  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL\*  
FEBRUARY 28, 2022**

**\*THIS MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL WILL BE CONDUCTED AS AN ELECTRONIC MEETING. IF YOU WISH TO PROVIDE INPUT, YOU MAY DO SO AS A VIDEO PARTICIPANT BY GOING TO:**

<https://zoom.us/j/826593023>

**OR BY TELEPHONE BY DIALING: US:1-312-626-6799 or toll-free: 1-888-475-4499  
Zoom Meeting ID: 826 593 023**

**CALL TO ORDER: 12:00 NOON**

1. Mask Requirement for City Council, Board, and Commission Meetings:
  - a. Motion rescinding mask requirement effective March 1, 2022

**DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Please note that this agenda may be amended up to 24 hours before the meeting time as provided by Section 21.4(2), *Code of Iowa*.**



## ITEM NO. 1

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Brian Phillips, Assistant City Manager  
**Date:** February 28, 2022  
**Subject:** Public Meeting COVID-19 Policies – Follow-Up

On January 11, 2022, the City Council adopted a temporary masking requirement for City Council and Board and Commission meetings. This measure was approved in light of the surge in COVID-19 cases related to the highly contagious omicron variant. The masking requirement was adopted in conjunction with a staff-implemented policy requiring masking or distancing within City facilities. At the time the masking requirement was approved by City Council, staff indicated that the measure was expected to be needed for approximately two months.

On February 25, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidance regarding COVID-19 precautions. This guidance bases mask-wearing in public settings upon community COVID-19 levels by observing three local metrics: 1) new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past seven days, 2) the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and 3) total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days.

Areas with “high” community COVID-19 levels based on these metrics should continue to universally mask indoors, areas of “medium” community COVID-19 levels should follow some increased precautions, and areas of “low” community COVID-19 levels should follow basic preventative strategies. **The CDC guidance only includes universal masking in the “high” category.** According to the data released by CDC as of February 25, Story County is considered to be at low levels of community COVID-19 impact (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>).

**Therefore, City staff is recommending that the City Council rescind the mask requirement for City Council, Board, and Commission meetings, effective Tuesday, March 1. The policy requiring visitors and staff to mask or distance in City facilities would be rescinded at the same time.**

This action would not prevent anyone who chooses to wear a mask, due to personal preference or an underlying medical condition, from doing so in City facilities. It should be noted that masking on transit buses and in transit facilities is subject to federal requirements; therefore, any Council action rescinding masking requirements would not remove the masking requirements in place for CyRide operations. Additionally, there are certain COVID-19 exposure and recovery situations that may require employees to wear a mask in the workplace.

Finally, it should be emphasized that if conditions in the community or City organization change in the future, such as an increase in community COVID-19 levels or outbreaks among City staff, it may become necessary for staff to return to the City Council with a recommendation to re-implement masking or other public health measures.