MMA Technical Advice on Holding Remote Meetings

We have received inquiries regarding the best technology option to use to broadcast or participate in municipal meetings. While no one solution will work for everyone, there are many alternatives that municipalities can use. In the event that you want to hold a teleconference, you may have the ability to do teleconferencing from your own phone system if the number of participants are few. This is something you could address with your telephone vendor. There are teleconferencing solutions that you can purchase. Many offer month to month contracts, so you would not need to sign a long-term contract.

**Those vendors include:** ezTalk Cloud Meeting; AnyMeeting; Adobe Connect; WebinarJam; Polycom.

**Facebook Live**

If you are looking for a video option, many municipalities have Facebook and you can use that platform at no cost. Facebook Live may be the easiest way to stream live video to the public, especially if it will be used only for a short period of time. All that is needed is a laptop, phone or tablet, strong internet or cell connection and a Facebook account for your municipality.

Quick setup: [https://www.facebook.com/help/1636872026560015](https://www.facebook.com/help/1636872026560015)


Other streaming options popular with our members – which come with technical support – are: [Town Hall Streams](https://www.townhallstreams.com/) and [GovOffice](https://govoffice.com/). Both of these options have ways to preserve meeting video as well, which can be important in regard to public record retention.

Many of these have "light," free versions and can be easily set up. There are many online tutorials to assist with set up. Most work with a basic laptop and many have apps available for phones. You may not even know it, but laptops, rather than desktop computers, typically are equipped with cameras and microphones. A Google search will also provide you with additional solutions specific to your needs.

If you are willing to pay for professional, Maine-based technical support, we would direct you to Otelco, which is a major advertiser and exhibitor with MMA (https://http://www.otelco.com/).

Finally, Ben Thomas, MMA Website and Social Media Editor, is available by email to provide basic advice and support. You can reach him via email at: bthomas@memun.org.