

# CCNA

## COALITION OF CITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

677 N Washington Blvd Ste 52 · Sarasota, FL 34236

January 26, 2021

Governor Ron DeSantis  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

SENT VIA U.S. MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MAIL TO [GovernorRon.Desantis@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:GovernorRon.Desantis@eog.myflorida.com)

**Re: Government Advisory Board Meetings**

Dear Governor DeSantis:

I am writing to you as executive committee chair of the Coalition of City Neighborhood Associations of Sarasota, Inc., which represents tens of thousands of Sarasota City residents, to urge you to again temporarily suspend the requirement that local government bodies be present in person during the height of this pandemic.

**Problem:**

In our City of Sarasota, the CRA Advisory Board and Citizen's Tax Oversight Advisory Board, by way of example, recently had to cancel their meetings because they could not safely get a quorum. Not only is this situation causing individuals to become sick or risk their lives in service to the city, but this situation is affecting the proper functioning of our government.

**Solution:**

As you correctly recognized during the first spike of this pandemic in March 2020, local government bodies, such as advisory boards should be allowed to utilize communications media technology, such as telephonic and video conferencing. This will satisfy any legal requirements that a quorum be present in person in order to safeguard the health and safety of our citizens during the height of this pandemic. Your own Executive Order 20-69 executed by you on March 20, 2020, "suspended any Florida Statute that requires a quorum to be present in person or requires a local government body to meet at a specific public place." Unfortunately, this executive order was allowed to expire with Executive Order 20-52 on May 8, 2020.

**Summary:**

As you are well aware, however, since the expiration of those executive orders, the pandemic has reached painful new heights with record deaths, hospitalizations and transmissions in recent days. We urge you to take swift and appropriate action at your earliest possible opportunity to reinstate Executive Order 20-69 or otherwise act to protect those citizens risking their lives in-service to local government public meetings like advisory boards.

Once again, thank you for your swift attention to this vital matter of the health and safety of the people you serve.

Sincerely,



Lou Costa, Executive Committee Chair

cc: City of Sarasota Florida Commissioners and City Manager