

Public Meeting Policy

Purpose

Oregon Public Meeting Law, Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 192 requires that public bodies, like the Lake County Library District, conduct their business openly and in the eye of the public. ORS 192.660 provides some exceptions to this rule for certain types of meetings, called Executive Session. The Lake County Library District conducts all of its meetings in accordance with these laws. This policy provides an informal summary of the main points of Oregon law for ease of reference. In any conflict between this policy and Oregon law, state law governs.

Notice and Location of Meetings

Application

This policy applies to all meetings of the Board of Directors of the Lake County Library District, and to any meetings of subcommittees, or advisory groups appointed by the Board if such subcommittees or advisory groups normally have a quorum requirement, take votes, and form recommendations as a body for presentation to the Board of Directors.

Location of Meetings

All meetings shall be held within the geographic boundaries of the District, except for training sessions held without any deliberative action. No meeting shall be held in any place where discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability is practiced. All meetings shall be held in places accessible to the handicapped.

Meetings Held By Telephone

Meetings held by telephone or other electronic communication are subject to the Public Meetings Law if they otherwise qualify by virtue of their deliberative purpose and the presence of a quorum. Notice and opportunity for public access shall be provided when meetings are conducted by electronic means. At least one location shall be provided where meetings held by telephone or other electronic means may be listened to by members of the public.

Regular Meetings

The Board shall hold regular monthly meetings. During the first Board meeting of the fiscal year, the date, time, and location for regular meetings will be established. Notice of the regular meeting date, time, and location will be given to the public. The Board may designate other places and times for regular meetings from time to time.

Special Meetings

The Board shall hold special meetings at the request of the President or any three members of the Board. If the President is absent from the District, special board meetings may be held at the request of the Vice President. No special meeting shall be held upon less than 24 hours public notice.

Emergency Meetings

Emergency meetings may be held at the request of persons entitled to call special meetings, upon less than 24 hours' notice in situations where a true emergency exists. An emergency exists where there are circumstances which, in the judgment of the person or persons calling the meeting, create a real and substantial risk of harm to the District which would be substantially increased if the Board were to delay in order to give 24 hours' notice before conducting the meeting. The convenience of Board members is not grounds for calling an emergency meeting.

At the beginning of any emergency meeting, the Director or Directors calling such meeting shall recite the reasons for calling such meeting, and the reasons the meeting could not have been delayed in order to give at least 24 hours' notice, which reasons shall be noted in the minutes. The Board shall then determine if the reasons are sufficient to hold an emergency meeting and, if not, shall immediately adjourn such meeting. Only business related directly to the emergency shall be conducted at an emergency meeting.

Notice of Meetings

Notice of the time, place, and principal subjects to be considered shall be given for all meetings. For regular meetings, the notice shall be in the form of an agenda, which shall be sent to all Board members, local media, and to all persons or other media representatives having requested notice in writing of every meeting.

Written notice shall also be sent to any persons who the District knows may have a special interest in a particular action, unless such notification would be unduly

burdensome or expensive. For special meetings, press releases shall be issued or phone calls made to wire services and other media; and interested persons shall be notified by mail or telephone. For emergency meetings, the District shall attempt to contact local media and other interested persons by telephone to inform them of the meeting.

Executive Sessions

Notice for meetings called only to hold executive sessions shall be given in the same manner as notice for regular, special and emergency meetings set forth above, except that the notice need only indicate the general subject matter to be considered at the executive session. Notice shall also set forth the statutory basis for calling the executive session.

Interpreters for the Hearing Impaired

The District shall comply with ORS 192.630(5) regarding the provision of interpreters for the hearing impaired at Board meetings, in accordance with the following rules:

- The District shall make a good faith effort to have an interpreter for hearing impaired persons provided at any regularly scheduled meeting if the person requesting the interpreter has given the District at least 48 hours' notice of the request, provided the name of the requester, the requester's sign language preference, and any other relevant information which the District may require. "Good faith efforts" shall include contacting the Oregon Disabilities Commission, or other state or local agencies that maintain a list of qualified interpreters.
- If a meeting is held upon less than 48 hours' notice, the District shall make reasonable efforts to have an interpreter present.
- The requirement for an interpreter does not apply to emergency meetings.
- The Library Director shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a list of qualified interpreters, and shall have the responsibility for making the required good faith effort to arrange for attendance of an interpreter at any meeting for which an interpreter is requested.

Preparation for Board Meetings

Distribution of Materials to Board Members

The Agenda, Financial Report, and Statement of Bills shall be given to each member of the Board of Directors at least four (4) days prior to any regularly scheduled Board meeting. At the same time, the Library Director shall provide members detailed

information relative to the Agenda, including existing Board policy pertinent to Agenda items.

Distribution of Agenda to the Public

The proposed Agenda will simultaneously be distributed to all District offices and other facilities, local and other news media, and posted at one or more locations convenient for review by Lake County Library District personnel and the public.

Board Meeting Agenda

The Library Director, serving as Executive Secretary, shall draft the Agenda after conferring with the President of the Board. Any board member, staff member, or citizen of the district may suggest items of business by so notifying the Library Director at least five working days prior to the meeting. Occasionally, out of necessity or efficiency, items may be added to the Agenda that were not stated in the publicly disseminated Agenda. The following general agenda order shall be observed:

- Call to order
- Agenda Approval
- Approval of the minutes
- Financial Report
- Consideration of Bills
- Library News
- Old business
- New business
- Items not on agenda open to public, Board, and staff participation (late items)
- Adjournment

Board Meeting Conduct

Presiding Officer

The President shall preside at Board meetings. In the President's absence, the Vice-President shall preside. If both the President and Vice President are absent, any other member of the Board may preside.

Authority to Conduct Meetings

The President or other presiding officer at any Board meeting shall have full authority to conduct the meeting. Meetings shall be conducted in such a manner as to provide a full and fair opportunity for discussion of the issues in an efficient and timely manner. Any decision of the President or other presiding officer at the meeting may be overridden by a majority vote of the Board.

Voting

A quorum of board members is necessary to conduct an official meeting of the board and vote to take action on any item. Three (3) board members constitute a quorum for the five-member board. If only three members are present, a unanimous vote is necessary to take action on an item.

The outcome of the vote of the Board on all motions will be recorded in the minutes. When appropriate, the vote of each member will be recorded in the minutes. Any member may request that his or her vote be changed, if such request is made prior to consideration of the next order of business. Members of the Board may append to the record, at the time of voting, a statement indicating either the reason for their vote or abstention.

Public Participation

If public participation is to be a part of the meeting, the presiding officer may regulate the order and length of appearances, and limit appearances to presentations of relevant points. Persons failing to comply with the reasonable rules of conduct outlined by the presiding officer, or causing any disturbance, may be asked or required to leave. Upon failure to do so, such persons become trespassers.

Electronic Equipment

The authority to control the meetings of the District Board extends to control over equipment such as cameras, tape recorders and microphones. The presiding officer shall inform persons attending any meeting of the District Board of reasonable rules necessary to assure an orderly and safe meeting. The physical comfort and safety of members of the Board and the public attending the meeting shall be of primary concern in formulating such rules.

Conflict of Interest/Ex Parte Contacts

In the event of a potential conflict of interest, a member of the Board shall declare such conflict but may participate in discussions and vote. In the event any member of the Board has had any ex parte contact in a quasi-judicial matter, the member shall declare such contact prior to participating in discussion on the matter. In the case of an actual conflict of interest, as opposed to a potential conflict of interest, the Board member in question will announce the conflict of interest and abstain from discussion and voting on that subject.

Smoking

Pursuant to ORS 192.710, no person shall smoke or carry any lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe or other smoking equipment into a room where a meeting is being held by the Board or is to continue after a recess. For purposes of the statute, a meeting is deemed to have started at the time the agenda or meeting notice indicates it is to commence, regardless of the time the meeting actually begins. This rule shall apply at any regular, special or emergency meeting at which the Board intends to "exercise or advise in the exercise of any power of government." No quorum requirement shall apply for this smoking ban to apply.

Whenever members of the public are in attendance at a meeting, the presiding officer shall remind those present of the no smoking rule at the beginning of the meeting to avoid potential embarrassment.

Adjournment

The meeting shall be adjourned by a majority vote or as a result of the loss of a quorum.

Executive Sessions

Notice

Notice for meetings called only to hold executive sessions shall be given in the same manner as notice for regular, special and emergency meetings set forth above, except that the notice need only indicate the general subject matter to be considered at the executive session. Notice shall also set forth the statutory basis for calling the executive session.

No Final Decisions

The Board shall not make any final decisions during any executive session. This policy, however, shall not prohibit full discussion of Board members' views during executive sessions.

Purposes

Executive sessions shall be held only for the following purposes as outlined in ORS 192.660. In the event of discrepancy between this list and ORS 192.660, the ORS shall be used:

- **Employment of Personnel: ORS 192.660(2)(a).**
To discuss the employment of a public officer, employee, or staff member, but only if the following requirements have been met:
 - The vacancy for the position has been advertised.
 - Regularized procedures for hiring have been adopted.
 - There has been opportunity for public input into the employment of such employee or officer.
 - Where employment of a Library Director is under consideration, the standards, criteria and policy directives to be used in hiring such officer must have been adopted at a meeting open to the public at which the public has had an opportunity to comment. No executive session may be held under ORS 192.660(2)(a) for purposes of filling a vacancy in an elective office.
- **Discipline of Public Officers and Employees: ORS 192.660(2)(b).**
To consider the dismissal or disciplining of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or to hear complaints or charges brought against such persons, unless the person complained against requests an open hearing.
- **Consultation with Labor Negotiator: ORS 192.660(2)(d).**
To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the Board to carry on labor negotiations on its behalf. News media representatives may be excluded from executive sessions called under this section.
- **Real Property Transactions: ORS 192.660(2)(e).**
To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the Board to negotiate real property transactions.
- **Exempt Records: ORS 192.660(2)(f).**
To consider records which are exempt by law from public inspection. Examples of such records include medical records pertaining to personnel, confidential

communications from legal counsel, employment tests or examination materials, and other materials exempted from public disclosure under the Public Records Law, ORS 192.501 and 192.502.

- Trade or Commerce: ORS 192.660(2)(g).

To consider preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce in which the governing body is in competition with governing bodies in other states or nations.

- Litigation/Consultation with Legal Counsel: ORS 192.660(2)(h).

To consult with legal counsel concerning the District's legal rights and duties, as well as current litigation or litigation likely to be filed. Whenever written legal advice received from counsel is to be discussed, the Board may utilize an executive session to discuss the writing under the authority of ORS 192.660(2)(f), as well. This section authorizes an executive session to consider records which are exempt by law from public inspection.

- Performance Evaluations: ORS 192.660(2)(i).

To review and evaluate the employment related performance of the Library Director, other officers, employees or staff members, pursuant to standards, criteria and policy directives adopted by the District, unless the person whose performance is being reviewed and evaluated requests an open hearing. The standards, criteria and policy directives to be used in evaluating chief executive officers must first have been adopted by the Board in meetings open to the public in which there was an opportunity for public comment. Executive sessions called pursuant to this section may not include a general evaluation of any District goal, objective or operation, and may not include any directive to the Library Director or other District personnel concerning agency goals, objectives, operations or programs.

- Public Investments: ORS 192.660(2)(j).

An executive session may be called to negotiate with private persons or businesses regarding proposed acquisition, exchange or liquidation of public investments.

Conduct of Executive Session

The President or other presiding officer shall announce the statutory authority for the executive session before going into closed session. Once the executive session has been convened, the President shall direct any representatives of the news media who are present not to report certain specified information from the executive session. In general, the extent of the non-disclosure requirement should be no broader than the

public interest requires, and the news media will ordinarily be allowed to report the general topic of discussion in the executive session. Board members, staff and other persons present shall not discuss or disclose executive session proceedings outside of the executive session without prior authorization of the Board as a whole.

Minutes of Board Meetings

Written Minutes

Per Oregon law, the Library Director is also the Executive Secretary of the Board. The Executive Secretary of the Board shall keep, or cause to be kept by a competent clerk, written minutes of all meetings of the Board. The written minutes will be a true reflection of the matters discussed at the meeting and the views of the participants. Minutes of public meetings shall include at least the following information:

- All members of the Board present.
- All motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances and measures proposed and their disposition.
- Results of all votes, including the vote of each member by name.
- The substance of any discussion on any matter.
- Subject to ORS 192.410 - 192.505 relating to public records, a reference to any document discussed at the meeting.

Minutes of Executive Session

Minutes of executive sessions shall be kept separately from minutes of public meetings. Executive session minutes will include who was present for the session and the general subject of the discussion.

Disclosure of Executive Session Matters

If disclosure of material in the executive session minutes would be inconsistent with the purpose for which the executive session was held, the material may be withheld from disclosure. No executive session minutes may be disclosed without prior authorization of the Board.

Retention

Any tape recordings or written minutes of public Board meetings or executive sessions shall be retained by the District until such time as their disposal is authorized by rule or

specific authorization of the State Archivist pursuant to ORS 192.105. It is recommended that minutes be retained permanently.

Availability to the Public

Written minutes of public sessions shall be made available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting.

Public Records Policy

Purpose

Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 192, requires that all records of public agencies, like the Lake County Library District (“District”), are available for inspection and copying by the public. In order to protect the privacy of individuals and for other specific reasons, the law also provides exceptions to disclosure for certain types of public records. The Lake County Library District complies fully with Oregon Public Records Law. In the event that this policy is in conflict with Oregon Public Records Law, the law will supersede this policy.

Requesting Public Records

Custodian of Records

The Library Director is the Custodian of Records for the Lake County Library District, and is responsible for reviewing and responding to public records requests. As Oregon Public Records law requires, the Library Director will:

- Within 5 business days of receipt of a written records request
 - Acknowledge or complete public records requests within 5 business days of receipt of written request
 - Confirm or deny custodianship of the records within 5 business days; OR inform the requestor that that the library is uncertain whether the library is the custodian of the requested records
- Within 10 days of the acknowledgement of the request, either complete the request or provide a time estimate to complete the request

The District is not subject to this response timeframe if it is awaiting a response from the requester seeking clarification of the inquiry or if the requester has not agreed to pay for the records, provided that the cost is \$25 or more. If the Custodian of Records is unavailable on a given business day, that business day will not be counted as part of the timelines given above.

Specificity of Request

In order to facilitate the public's access to records in the District's possession, and to avoid unnecessary expenditure of staff time, persons requesting access to public records for inspection or copying, or who submit written requests for copies of public records, shall specify the records requested with particularity, furnishing the dates, subject matter and such other detail as may be necessary to enable District personnel to readily locate the records sought. Records requests must be made using the Lake County Library Districts Public Records Request Form.

If the requestor fails to respond within 60 calendar days to a request from the library for information or clarification, the library will close the request.

Access

The District shall permit inspection and examination of its non-exempt public records during regular business hours in the District's offices, or such other locations as the Library Director may reasonably designate from time to time. Copies of non-exempt public records maintained in machine readable or electronic form shall be furnished, if available, in the form requested. If not available in the form requested, such records shall be made available in the form in which they are maintained.

Fees for Public Records

In order to recover its costs for responding to public records requests, the District has adopted a fee schedule for producing copies of District records. If fees for records are estimated to be more than \$25.00, the requestor will be provided with a written notification of the estimated amount of the fee. The copies will be produced after the requestor confirms, in writing, that he/she wants the public body to proceed. If the requestor does not provide payment of the applicable fees within 60 calendar days of notification from the library of the fee, the request may be closed.

The following fee schedule is adopted by the District:

- Copies of Public Records; Certified Copies: Copies of public records shall be \$0.10 per copy for standard, letter size copies.
- Copies of Maps and Other Nonstandard Documents: Charges for copying maps or other nonstandard size documents shall be charged in accordance with the actual costs incurred by the District.

- **Research Fees:** If a request for records requires District personnel to spend more than 15 minutes searching or reviewing records prior to their review or release for copying, the minimum fee shall be \$20 per hour and additional charges shall be in ¼ hour increments. The District shall estimate the total amount of time required to respond to the records request, and the person making the request shall make payment for the estimated cost of the search and copying of the records in advance. If the actual time and costs are less than estimated, the excess money shall be refunded to the person requesting the records. If the actual costs and time are in excess of the estimated time, the difference shall be paid by the person requesting the records at the time the records are produced.
- **Additional Charges:** If a request is of such magnitude and nature that compliance would disrupt the District's normal operation, the District may impose such additional charges as are necessary to reimburse the District for its actual costs of producing the records.
- **Reduced Fee or Free Copies:** Whenever it determines that furnishing copies of public records in its possession at a reduced fee or without costs would be in the public interest, the Board or Library Director may so authorize.

Authorization Required for Removal of Original Records

At no time shall an original record of the District be removed from the District's files or the place at which the record is regularly maintained, except upon authorization of the Board of Directors or Library Director.

On-Site Review of Original Records

If a request to review original records is made, the District shall permit such a review provided that search fees are paid in advance in accordance with the Fees for Public Records section, above. A representative shall be present at any time original records are reviewed, and the charges for standing by while the records are reviewed shall be the same as the Research Fees as outlined above.

Unauthorized Alteration, Removal, or Destruction of Records

If any person attempts to alter, remove or destroy any District record, the District representative shall immediately terminate such person's review, and notify the attorney for the District.