

OPEN MEETINGS COMPLIANCE BOARD
Minutes of August 20, 2014 Organizational Meeting
Office of the Attorney General
200 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, Maryland

In attendance:

Monica J. Johnson, Esq., Board Chair
Wanda Martinez, Esq. Board Member
Mamata Poch, Esq., Board Member
Ann MacNeille, Board Counsel
Deborah P. Spence, Board Administrator

Call to order and welcoming remarks: At 9:15 a.m., the Chair called the meeting to order. She introduced the members and staff to each other and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to address the logistics of addressing Open Meetings Act complaints. She then gave the floor to staff.

Explanation of the current complaint procedures: Staff reviewed the current complaint procedures. When a complaint clearly does not state any Open Meetings Act issues, staff informs the complainant of the limits of the Board's authority and, often, directs the complainant to entities that might be able to address the problem. The Board receives copies of those letters. In case of any doubt on whether a complaint states a violation of the Act, the complaint is forwarded to the public body for a response. When responses seem incomplete or internally inconsistent, staff asks the public body for more information or looks to the public body's website for more information. The Board decided that teleconferences would be appropriate in some matters and not necessary for others.

Other topics: The Board stated its preference for publishing a summary of its opinions, rather than the full text, in the Maryland Register. The Board discussed the occasional need for a member to recuse herself from a matter and agreed that the member would inform staff. The Board authorized counsel to contact public bodies in the event of a prospective complaint. The Administrator discussed mileage and parking expenses and asked for the members' preferences for how to receive complaint files.

Adjournment: At about 9:50, the members voted on a motion to adjourn the meeting, and the Chair did so.