

## OPEN MEETINGS COMPLIANCE BOARD OPINIONS

### TOPICAL INDEX

*July 1, 1992, through December 2, 2024 (updated through 18 OMCB Opinions 175 (2024))*

**HOW TO USE THIS INDEX:** This index groups the Compliance Board’s opinions into seven broad topics, each with subtopics. To find a broad topic, go to the list below. The broad topic numbers correspond to the chapter numbers in the [Open Meetings Act Manual](#).

#### **BROAD TOPICS:**

1. [SCOPE: DOES THE ACT APPLY?](#)
2. [NOTICE: DID THE PUBLIC BODY GIVE “REASONABLE ADVANCE NOTICE” OF THE MEETING AND MAKE AN AGENDA AVAILABLE?](#)
3. [ACCESS: WAS THE MEETING CONDUCTED IN THE OPEN?](#)
4. [PERMISSIBLE CLOSED SESSION DISCUSSIONS: IF THE CLOSED SESSION WAS SUBJECT TO THE ACT, DID THE TOPICS DISCUSSED FALL WITHIN ONE OF THE 15 EXCEPTIONS THAT PERMIT A CLOSED MEETING?](#)
5. [CONDITIONS FOR CLOSING A MEETING: BEFORE CLOSING A MEETING SUBJECT TO THE ACT, DID THE PUBLIC BODY MAKE THE WRITTEN DISCLOSURES REQUIRED BY THE ACT AND VOTE PUBLICLY TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC, IN THE PRESENCE OF A MEMBER DESIGNATED FOR TRAINING?](#)
6. [MINUTES AND OTHER MEETING DOCUMENTS: DID THE PUBLIC BODY PREPARE AND RETAIN THE MEETING DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY THE ACT AND, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, POST ITS MINUTES?](#)
7. [GUIDANCE; TRAINING: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF COMPLIANCE BOARD OPINIONS, AND WHO MUST TAKE TRAINING?](#)

**HOW TO FIND AN OPINION:** Go to this [webpage](#), which catalogs all Compliance Board opinions. For opinions issued after this index was updated, go to the most recent volume. The opinions are also searchable.

**STATUTORY CITES:** Statutory cites in the opinions are now to the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Code. Before October 1, 2014, the Open Meetings Act appeared in the State Government Article.

**JUDICIAL OPINIONS:** This index does not include opinions issued by the Maryland courts. The reported opinions of Maryland’s appellate courts take precedence over Compliance Board opinions, which are advisory. For more information, see the introduction to the [Open Meetings Act Manual](#).

**CHANGES IN THE STATUTE:** Some of the guidance in these opinions has been made obsolete by amendments to the Open Meetings Act over the years. For example, the General Assembly broadened the definition of “public body” in 2004, *see* 4 *OMCB Opinions* 132 (2005), and 2009, *see* 7 *OMCB Opinions* 64 (2010), and added a particular class of school-board related entities in 2013. The current law is explained in the Open Meetings Act Manual.

## TOPIC ONE

**1. Scope: Does the Act apply? Sections 3-301 and 3-102, with definitions in § 3-101—a “meeting” of a “public body,” unless the Act expressly excludes the “function” being performed.**

**A. SCOPE OF ACT**

Depth of body’s consideration of matter: not governed by Act	15 .....63
Evasive devices: body using evasive device may still be subject to Act	16 .....229 18 .....101
Meetings: Act does not require public body to conduct business in meeting, only imposes rules if public body does meet	2 .....99-12 .....70 6 .....57 7 .....193 9 .....55 15 .....148 16 .....101 17 .....101
Public comment: public body’s handling not within Act’s ambit	12 .....77 16 .....212 18 .....165 18 .....167 18 .....175
But public does have right to observe public comment period	14 .....83 18 .....165 18 .....175
Public participation: Act does not grant public right to participate in meeting, only right to attend	13 .....16
Website: Act does not require bodies to have websites, does not micromanage way in which public body organizes website ( <i>But</i> : see § 3-307, governing some bodies’ websites)	13 .....27 18 .....40

**B. PUBLIC BODY: Section 3-101(h)**

**1. Generally**

Method by which committee created: parent body should find history	8 .....46 9 .....83
Privately incorporated entity: may be public body	7 .....195
Public funds: receipt of public funds irrelevant to public body status	1 .....97-3 ....212

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Quasi-judicial functions: performance irrelevant to public body status	7 .....186
Uncertainty: if unclear if entity is public body, assume Act applies	13 .....21
<b>2. Determined to be a public body</b>	
Committee(s):	
Committee appointed by board of county commissioners	7 .....76
Committee of residents appointed by city council resolution	1 .....94-4.....69
Committees created in bylaws before entity became public body	15 .....107
Committee created by MOU adopted by town council resolution	9 .....94
Committee created/recognized/required by law, regulation, resolution	9 .....92 9 .....151 10 .....12 10 .....74 13 .....16 14 .....98 16 .....144
Committee informally created, later recognized by resolution	16 .....144
Committee recommended by strategic economic development plan, which was adopted by resolution	16 .....90
Committee required by county executive's regulation	10 .....67
School boundary study committee mandated by local board of education policy	7 .....21
Community panel created by State statute to recommend local school board candidates	12 .....98
Corporate entities:	
Development corporation created by city	10 .....117
Enoch Pratt Library board	1 .....97-3 ....212
Family League of Baltimore City, Inc.	15 .....71
Private non-profit arts council created by city	11 .....3
County library board	5 .....70
Local management board for children, youth, and families programs	14 .....40
Panel of Critical Area Commission	5 .....189

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Peer review group appointed by Transportation Secretary	7	.....	118
Rockville Economic Development, Inc.	15	.....	24
State Biosolids (Sewage Sludge) Task Force	5	.....	182
Subcommittee created by formal instrument	7	.....	176
Three-judge panel of the Baltimore City Environmental Control Board	7	.....	186
Town council, despite members serving as heads of town departments	3	.....00-7	.....26
<b>3. Determined not to be a public body</b>			
Advisory bodies:			
Advisory committee appointed by county parks director	3	.....03-15	..325
Advisory group to county planning board, informally created	4	.....	132
Advisory committee appointed by Attorney General	7	.....	170
Team advising on COVID-19, created by school superintendent	16	.....	88
Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association board	1	.....96-14	..196
	3	.....03-7	....284
Blueprint for Maryland's Future Funding Formula Workgroup	14	.....	6
Committees:			
Ad hoc audit committee created by school board's chair	13	.....	21
Committee created by informal consensus	15	.....	113
Committee of Governor's Executive Council	11	.....	88
Committee of gun violence prevention task force	13	.....	51
Committees created by one county commissioner, acting alone	9	.....	103
Committee created to investigate complaints filed with Commission of Real Estate Appraisers	14	.....	60
Committee not created by executive or person subject to executive's policy direction	9	.....	27
School committee			
Created by superintendent with no school board action	7	.....	69
	9	.....	81
	10	.....	51
	17	.....	13

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Created only by school board president	9 .....149
University president's committee, without two members of public	9 .....314
County commissioners, department heads in county where commissioners are executive head of county government	1 .....93-10 ....50 1 .....97-16 ..261
Development corporations	
Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc.	18 .....12
Garrett County Development Corporation	9 .....246
Employees:	
Group of employees, when not members of public body	9 .....53 9 .....302 14 .....1 17 .....61
City, county, or school board staff members	1 .....92-2 .....6 2 .....98-8 .... 27 2 .....99-2 .....37 10 .....101
Environmental Assessment Committee, Baltimore County Public Schools	4 .....8
Friends of the Library, Montgomery County	16 .....170
Individual	
Administrative law judge	7 .....186
Committee with only one member	15 .....113
County executive	9 .....234
Hearing officer	1 .....96-8 ....175
Single member of public body	2 .....99-12 ....70 2 .....99-14 ....77 9 .....230
University president	9 .....230
Informally created subgroups	
Informally created committee appointed by Library President	7 .....105
Informally created committee consisting of two jurisdictions' officials	2 .....98-2 .....5

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Informally created subcommittees comprising only parent commission's members	12 .....53
Informally created subgroup established by single council member	6 .....155
Land planning "committee" of project applicant, planning officer, and state and local officials	3 .....00-9. ....36
Management committee informally established by executive director of Baltimore Metropolitan Council	6 .....17
Maryland Judicial Council's Language Access Subcommittee	16 .....175
Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association ( <b>Note:</b> superseded by 2013 amendment to §10-502(h))	4 .....43
Maryland Racing Steering Committee	15 .....34
Memoranda of agreement/understanding:	
"Management committee" formed by memorandum of agreement	5 .....194
Body created by memorandum of understanding not formally adopted by resolution	11 .....68 14 .....14
<i><b>But see</b> 9 OMCB Opinions 94 (2014), suggesting committees created through MOUs with private entities may be public bodies</i>	
Municipal officials and individual members of city council	1 .....93-6 .....35
Neighborhood association controlled by lot owners	8 .....118
Political party central committee	3 .....03-6 ....278
Procurement review panels assembled by public body staff	8 .....63 8 .....73
Private entities:	
Private group formed by members of public to study future of movie theater acquired by city	8 .....73
Private, voluntary association of public officials, others (Maryland Association of Election Officials)	1 .....95-4....120
Privately incorporated health information exchange entity	9 .....203
Private, non-profit hospital: board of directors	1 .....92-2 .....6

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
School board entities:			
School committee created by superintendent without board action	7	.....	69
	9	.....	81
	10	.....	51
School board committee created only by president	9	.....	149
Student government association at public college	2	.....99-1	.....35
Subcommittees:			
Subcommittee created informally by one member of public body, if does not perform public body's function	7	.....	284
Subcommittees not formally created	1	.....94-4	.....69
	2	.....99-1 2	...70
	7	.....	176
	7	.....	284
	17	.....	73
Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee subcommittees	6	.....	140
Subcommittees under § 3-101(h)(2)(i)	16	.....	229
Task force formed by particular jurisdiction's chief executive officer does not meet definition of public body as defined by 3-101(h)	12	.....	58
Volunteer fire department	12	.....	65
<b>C. "MEETING": Section 3-101(g), (k)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
County commissioners gathering with department heads: when such gatherings constitute "meetings" subject to Act	3	.....01-7	....105
	7	.....	225
Electronic communications: when they constitute "meetings"	9	.....	259
	12	.....	67
	12	.....	91
	13	.....	39
	13	.....	47
	13	.....	73
	14	.....	29
	14	.....	33
	15	.....	148
	16	.....	66
	16	.....	212
	17	.....	101

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Impromptu gathering: may be “meeting” subject to Act	1 .....93-1 .....20
Presence of quorum of public body at event hosted by someone else: how to determine if “meeting” of public body:	
City council’s presence at city planning commission meeting	16 .....185
City council’s presence at mayor’s luncheon	1 .....96-3 ....157
County commission’s presence at political party meeting	3 .....03-6 ....278
County commission’s presence at private hospital event	1 .....92-2 .....6
County council’s presence at development corporation’s event	18 .....12
Public business:	
Every step of deliberative, decision-making process is Consideration, transaction of public business	8 .....19
Meaning of “public business” generally	2 .....98-2 .....5 5 .....60 15 .....79 15 .....148
Mere receipt of information can be public business	1 .....93-6 .....35 3 .....30 7 .....93
Vote not required for consideration of public business	8 .....19
Quorum:	
Only voting members count toward quorum	9 .....307
Members-elect not considered in calculating a quorum	5 .....93
Unplanned/“accidental” quorum sufficient to establish “meeting”	3 .....00-8 .....30 7 .....85 8 .....8
“Walking quorum” exception to quorum requirement	8 .....56 9 .....186 9 .....234
Retreats: when they constitute “meetings”	3 .....01-10...122 6 .....63 8 .....89 12 .....102
Social gathering exception does not apply if quorum uses gathering to discuss public business	2 .....98-5 .....5



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	2.....99-13.....74
	3..... 01-2.....78
	7 .....269
Training sessions: when they constitute “meetings”	5 .....33
<b>2. Determined to be a meeting</b>	
Advisory board gathering:	
At which body interviewed candidates, decided whom to recommend for appointment	12 .....98
Involving informational briefing, sharing of members’ view	5 .....60
Briefing:	
By presiding officer to quorum of county commission about budget process	3 .....00-8 .....30
By State Highway Administration to two state lawmakers and quorum of county commission (was meeting of county commission)	1 .....93-2.....23
Committee meeting: also meeting of parent body when quorum of parent body present and topic was parent body’s public business	8 .....8 9 .....83 15 .....161 17 .....39
County school board’s joint dinner with county council was school board meeting, when discussion involved school board business	12 .....46
Exchange of emails and/or texts	13 .....39 14 .....29 14 .....33 17 .....101
Gathering of mayor’s informal committee, when attended by quorum of town council	6 .....155
Gathering of public body and private firm to discuss how to better address constituents’ concerns	4 .....168
Joint gathering of county council and city council to discuss consolidating two governments: meeting of both public bodies	2 .....98-2.....5
Pay-to-enter event organized by public body, on issue of public business, attended by quorum of public body	8 .....19
Post-meeting gathering of quorum:	
When quorum continued discussing public business	16 .....64

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
When quorum received info likely to affect decision-making	1 ..... 95-7.....129
Presence of quorum of public body at event hosted by someone else:	
City council at city planning commission meeting: council meeting	16 .....185
County commission at nonprofit foundation's event: commission meeting	17 .....109
County council at meeting of local school board: council meeting	1 .....97-2 ....206
Town council at gathering of mayor and library trustees: council meeting	7 .....85
Town council at meeting of county commission: council meeting	7 .....92
Town council at task force meeting: council meeting	9 .....94
Town council at gathering of library trustees: council meeting	7.....85
Public Service Commission's gathering with Governor's staff	5 .....28
Radio show: discussion by quorum of public business on radio show	9 .....40
Retreat involving discussion of public business	3.....1-10.....122 12.....102
Social gathering where quorum discussed public business	3.....01-2.....78 7 .....269
<b>3. Determined not to be a meeting</b>	
Budget retreat called by mayor, attended by city council quorum, when mayor solely responsible for preparing budget	3 .....02-14 ..242
Committee meeting, when committee not public body, composed of fewer than quorum of parent body	9 .....149
County delegation of General Assembly, when not gathering to perform House committee business	16 .....41 10 .....64
Democratic Central Committee monthly meeting	15 .....79
Discussion of public business among fewer than quorum of members	1 .....94-10 ..107 1 .....96-1 ....151 1 .....97-4 ....218 1 .....97-13 ..250 2 .....99-5 .....45 3 .....01-4 .....92 3 .....02-5 ....191 4 .....114 7 .....21 7 .....186

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	7	.....	269
	7	.....	282
	8	.....	8
	8	.....	56
	10	.....	71
	13	.....	51
Document circulation among body's members, to get approval or input	8	.....	103
	9	.....	55
	16	.....	119
Email communications:			
Email exchange among fewer than quorum of body's members	7	.....	193
	11	.....	20
Email exchange among quorum but only as to interpersonal relations or administrative matters	14	.....	3
Email exchange involving quorum and members' "reply all" to town attorney, but no emails from one member to another	9	.....	259
Email exchange that originated from non-member of body, when no evidence members communicated with each other	17	.....	66
Email from body's chair to members, thanking them for work, informing them of chair's appointment to committee	13	.....	73
Emails from town manager to body's members, when each member spoke to manager one-on-one, without discussion among members	13	.....	47
Text messages sent by non-member to one member of public body	14	.....	29
Presence of quorum of public body at event hosted by someone else:			
Board of aldermen attending gathering hosted by chamber of commerce: not meeting of board of aldermen	3	.....03-12....	310
City council attending gathering of city police chief and county police officers, organized by city administrator: not council meeting	1	.....94-9....	104
City council attending gathering of U.S. senator, mayor: not city council meeting	1	.....95-10 ..	142
County commissioners attending committee meeting, when commissioners gave welcoming remarks but less than quorum remained when committee started work: not commission meeting	7	.....	76
County commissioners attending meeting of House speaker, three State lawmakers: not county commission meeting	2	.....98-8.....	27

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
County council attending development corporation's event	18.....12
Library board attending county commission meeting: not library board meeting	7.....105
Local election boards attending meeting of Maryland Association of Election Officials: not meeting of local boards	1.....95-4....120
Local school board attending county council meeting, solely to answer questions: not school board meeting	6.....77
Local school board attending town hall event: not school board meeting	12.....46
Local school board members participating individually in small group discussions at event organized by school superintendent: not school board meeting	3.....01-17 ..150
Town council attending event hosted by casino developer: not town council meeting	1.....96-10...183
Public forums organized by school district staff, attended by fewer than quorum of school board members	12.....77
Site visit attended by quorum of county council, when members divided into small groups, each with fewer than quorum	9.....239
Small group gatherings of school board members with county executive over several days, when each gathering involved fewer than quorum of board members	9.....234
Social encounters:	
Breakfast gathering before meeting	3.....03-2 ....257
Catered event where library board provided update on libraries but did not engage in substantive discussion	1.....97-7 ....227
Celebratory dinner following officials' swearing in	5.....93
Chance social encounter not used to discuss public business	7.....269
Conversation among quorum limited to social "small talk"	2.....99-5 .....45
Dinner attended by quorum, if conversation limited to social matters	3.....02-11 ..224 4.....58 17.....47
Gathering in member's office during recess	1.....94-6 .....92
Gathering limited to improving interpersonal relations	3.....03-5 ....274

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
“Get acquainted” gathering	2	98-2	5
	17		57
Lunch gathering before meetings or during recess	1	95-6	127
	1	96-3	157
Meal at restaurant, where quorum did not discuss public business	2	99-13	74
Retreat limited to social conversation, discussion of interpersonal relations	6		63
Virtual celebration	16		69
Survey of members without convening quorum	6		57
Telephone calls involving fewer than quorum of body’s members	2	99-6	49
	7		176
	7		193
	10		18
	14		105
<b>D. ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION EXCLUSION: Sections 3-101(b), 3-103(a), 3-104(c) (formerly “executive function”)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Administration of law essential to administrative function:			
Activity/discussion not necessarily “administrative” merely because not any other function defined under Act	1	94-7	96
	4		12
General enabling provision cannot be law being “administered”	6		180
Public body holding meeting must be vested with legal responsibility for administering law in question	5		60
Appointments:			
Distinction between making appointment directly (administrative), voting on appointment nominated by someone else (not)	1	95-5	123
	1	97-14	252
	2	99-5	45
Discussion about whether to form outside committees to support appointment process is quasi-legislative, not administrative	7		264
	8		84
Budgets: preparing budget may be administrative, but approving/disapproving budget not	1	97-16	261
	3	00-10	39

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	4.....28
	9.....83
	9.....171
	11.....43
Personnel matters: discussion may be administrative	1.....96-5.....166
	1.....97-14.....252
	3.....02-10.....218
	9.....110
	9.....290
	10.....22
Policy: implementing existing policy may be administrative, creating/amending policy is not	10.....12
	12.....25
	12.....33
	12.....46
Two-step inquiry, summarized	5.....42
	9.....1
	15.....11
	16.....144
	16.....219
	17.....83
	17.....142
	18.....29
	18.....34
	18.....62
<b>2. Within exclusion, discussion of</b>	
Appointments, pursuant to legal obligation:	
City council's appointment to fill vacancy on council	18.....1
County commission's appointment of counsel to ethics commission	4.....197
County council's appointment of planning board members	6.....57
Local school board's appointment of acting superintendent	1.....95-5 ....123
School board's election of own officers	13.....14
Town council's appointment of clerk-treasurer	6.....53
Town council's appointment to council	1.....97-14...252
	8.....84
	9.....29

## Budget matters:

## Budget preparation:

By community college board, when required by statute	4 .....	28
By county council, when acting as county executive	1 .....97-16 ..	261
	3 .....01-01 ....	74
By library finance committee, when required by bylaws	3 .....01-10 ..	122
City council's discussions with city administrator about future budget, when administrator required to provide council financial updates	2 .....99-10 ....	64
Expenditure forecast, if part of preparing budget	3 .....02-9 ....	211

## Impacts on current budget:

Discussion by county council, acting as county executive, about how to adjust to cuts in State aid to county	1 .....93-2 .....	23
Informational briefing on COVID-19's budgetary impacts, if no discussion of policy changes	14 .....	92
Particulars of how body implementing previously adopted budget	1 .....93-2 .....	23
Payment of bill under current budget	4 .....	197
Review of current fiscal year's budget numbers	8 .....	89
	12 .....	5
Claims: application of existing law to claims against fund administered by public body is likely administrative	8 .....	115
Code enforcement, when public body tasked with enforcing code	12 .....	114
Collective bargaining agreement, when discussion limited to whether surplus must be returned to employees under current contract	4 .....	104
Committee formation, when bylaws empower body to create committees	16 .....	203
Complaints: public body's review of complaint, pursuant to legal duty	11 .....	25
	14 .....	60
Electrical examiners' review of complaint against electrician	1 .....92-4 .....	13
Ethics body's review of ethics complaint	1 .....93-4 .....	30
	9 .....	180
	9 .....	206
	14 .....	64
	17 .....	47

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Kidney disease commission's review of complaints about dialysis and transplant centers	7 .....250
Psychologists' examiners' review of complaint against psychologist	5 .....102
Veterinary medical examiners' review of complaints against vet	11 .....25
Contracts: discussions about implementation of existing contracts	
Interpreting language of existing contract	3 .....00-7 .....26
Remedies: discussion of remedies for breach of existing contract	1 .....95-7 .....129 5 .....7
Status updates on contract implementation, when tied to public body's oversight responsibility	6 .....145 9 .....151
Dismissal of lawsuit filed against county council, absent discussion of council's prior policy decisions	4 .....67
Election board's conduct of election, pursuant to law	10 .....22 18 .....29 18 .....62
Hospital management issues: discussion by county commission with oversight responsibility over hospital	1 .....92-2 .....6
Housekeeping matters involving public body's operations:	
Attendance, provision of refreshments at event	3 .....00-10 .....39 7 .....269 8 .....89
Committee assignments	14 .....79
Coordination of communication between body's members, staff	16 .....203
Internal operations (e.g., parking arrangements, installing phone lines, procuring furniture)	1 .....96-3 .....157
Online meeting platforms	14 .....92
Preparing for onboarding of new members	14 .....92
Solicitation of advice by member of body about how to carry out operational duties	2 .....98-6 .....21
Interviews or interview process for filling vacancy, when public body has power to fill vacancy	4 .....182 16 .....85 18 .....129



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Investment strategies, when body obligated to hold, invest trust assets	16 .....144
Meeting logistics: deciding to allow public to attend only virtually during COVID-19 pandemic	14 .....83 14 .....105
Merging of county and city purchasing departments under current law	1 .....97-15 ..255
Motion to unseal minutes of closed session	5 .....105
Notice	
Choice of newspaper for advertising required by law	1 .....96-13 ..195
Designating member to oversee publication of notice required by Act	10 .....62
Rescheduling meeting to comply with Act's notice requirement	10 .....62
Officers, selection of	5 .....93 7 .....101 12 .....37 14 .....8
Oversight: updates, discussions related to body's oversight responsibility:	
Auditor's report to local school board	6 .....23
City council's assessment of whether election board properly handled referendum petition	2 .....98-1 .....1
Community development coordinator's update to city council on proposed development	3 .....00-4 .....13
School board's review of ethics panel recommendation, as required by board regulation	5 .....121
Superintendent's update to local school board on matters delegated to superintendent	6 .....145 7 .....69 12 .....104 14 .....92 16 .....219
Staff presentation to local school board about compliance with federal disabilities law	11 .....59
Staff report to county commission about application of existing ordinances	3 .....02-9 ....211
Update to city council on staging of work under existing contract	9 .....151
Update from staff to local school board about ongoing audit	6 .....23

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Payments	
Decision to pay bill under available appropriation	4 .....197
Issuance of check to implement prior decision	9 .....78
Personnel matters:	
Dismissal of employees	1 .....96-5 ....166 9 .....290
Performance evaluations	3 .....02-10...218 11 .....12 12 .....88 13 .....71
Evaluations of school superintendents	1 .....95-5 ....123 3 .....01-18 ..159 10 .....57
Personnel grievance hearing, if not subject to judicial review	4 .....76
Transitions of individual employees	11 .....12
Planning commission's review of drawings, building permits before public discussion	1 .....92-3 .....10
Policy, application of:	
Expense policy	8 .....89
Leave policy	1 .....96-5 ....166
Public presentation policy	17 .....83
Press releases/public statements:	
Discussion about how to release audit report results	3 .....00-15 ....67
Discussion about procedure for issuing press releases	8 .....89
Discussion about wording of press release/public statement	1 .....95-8.....133 9 .....110
Protocols for issuing official correspondence on behalf of body, making statements in personal capacity	1 .....97-8 ....233
Property management: school board's discussion about construction on school property, when school board statutorily tasked with managing school property	3 .....00-12....53
Review of "legal script" for reviewing applications, when review does not reach substance of individual applications	12 .....104

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Scheduling meeting, if no discussion of substantive meeting topic	10 .....62 12 .....67 14 .....79 14 .....92
Signing (or signing off on) documents	3 .....00-10.....39 7 .....225 17 .....124
State Board of Education’s identification of schools for reconstitution, pursuant to detailed regulations	3 .....01-11 ..127
Training	
Open Meetings Act training, if addressing Act in abstract, not as applied to public body’s own practices	5 .....33
State ethics law training	11 .....54
<b>3. Outside Exclusion, discussion of<sup>1</sup></b>	
Agenda: deciding whether to put something on agenda	1 .....96-3.....157 9 .....83 11 .....59
Advice or recommendations to another, under delegation by law	7 .....250 10 .....74
Annexation: effect of annexation agreement on proposed zoning law	4 .....127
Appointments:	
Creating committee to assist public body in making appointment	7 .....264
Developing guidelines for identifying candidates to recommend to appointing authority	4 .....163
Process for making appointment	18 .....1
Briefing on matter, as initial step in policy formation	7 .....225
Budget matters:	
Deliberations, as part of budget process, on policy that would take effect with public body’s later approval of contract	9 .....171
Proposed budget amendments	9 .....83
Library committee’s review of budget proposal prepared by staff	1 .....97-7 ....227

---

<sup>1</sup> See also the other “functions” topics; if the activity falls within one of those functions, it is *not* an administrative function. Section 3-101(b)(2).

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Composition of entity created by public body	3 .....02-3 ....182
Contract matters	
Amending contracts	1 .....95-5 ....123 3 .....02-10 ..218 11 .....65 16 .....144
Briefing on contract matter requiring body's consent	6 .....145
Contract negotiation	4 .....127
Easement request	4 .....28
Franchise reassignment	5 .....7
Issuance of quitclaim deed	6 .....35
Lease of real property to another entity	7 .....208 7 .....245
Selecting contractor	10 .....67
Waiver of part of salary under employment contract	3 .....01-18 ..159
Developer's proposal to buy property, convert it to low-income housing	2 .....99-16 ....80
Election board's formulation of procedures, recommendations to city council	10 .....22
Government reorganization, consolidation:	
When discussion involves policy question	3 .....02-12...224 7 .....216
When only law being "administered" is general enabling provision	3 .....02-12...224 6 .....180
Grants: developing plan to apply for grants under State law	10 .....134
Guidelines for issuing honorary degree	4 .....28
Layoffs, approving	14 .....108
Law enforcement matter beyond public body's jurisdiction	5 .....42
Licensing matters	7 .....250
Lobbyist: hiring lobbyist to oppose State legislation before adopting resolution to take position	7 .....131
Merger: changes in law necessary to merge county and city departments	1 .....97-15 ..255

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Mission of library	3 .....01-10 ..122
Personnel matters within jurisdiction of another public body	4 .....188
Petition drive to amend purpose of special taxing district	1 .....94-7 .....96
Placement of monument, when not addressed by existing policy	10 .....31
Policy: developing or adopting policy	1 .....95-2 ....113 13 .....47
Position on pending legislation in General Assembly	4 .....12 13 .....39
Regulations: consideration of new regulations	9 .....180
Return-to-school plans following COVID-19 remote learning	15 .....11
Setting standards for regulated entities	7 .....250
Staff pay adjustments: how to handle	5 .....76
“Strategic” matters	4 .....28 9 .....1
Transportation issues not administered by public body	5 .....60
Zoning matters:	
Permissible use of mobile homes on certain lots	3....02-03....182
Request for development of cellphone tower setbacks	7 .....225
<b>E. ADVISORY FUNCTION: Section 3-101(c)</b>	
Authority of body must come from source identified in Act	5 .....60
Budget matters: may be advisory if another official, entity has final say	9 .....234
Recommendations:	
Pursuant to delegation by parent public body	9 .....1 9 .....92
Pursuant to State law	7 .....250 10 .....74 12 .....98
Studying matters of public concern within legal purview:	
Town council’s discussion of how administrator should use property	13 .....5
Medical review committee’s discussion of policies related to oversight of kidney care	7 .....250

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
<b>F. JUDICIAL FUNCTION: Sections 3-101(e), 3-103(a)</b>			
(no opinions)			
<b>G. LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION: Sections 3-101(f)</b>			
<b>1. Within function, discussion of</b>			
Agenda: whether to place item on agenda	1	.....96-3	.....157
Briefings on legislation:			
Briefing on proposed city ordinance	1	.....93-6	.....35
Sponsor’s explanation of intent of bill, even if no debate	1	.....96-3	.....157
<b>2. Outside function</b>			
Body making appointment, rather than simply recommending candidate for someone else to appoint	1	.....95-5	.....123
Town council discussing position on pending bill in General Assembly	4	.....	.....12
<b>H. LICENSING AND PERMITTING MATTERS: Section 3-103(b)</b>			
Conduct of examination, when part of license application process	1	.....92-4	.....13
Handgun permit review board proceedings to consider license	9	.....	.....296
	12	.....	.....93
Regulatory body’s “certification” of dialysis and kidney transplant center	7	.....	.....250
<b>I. MATTERS NOT FALLING WITHIN A DEFINED FUNCTION</b>			
Activity covered by Act if outside scope of functions defined by Act	1	.....94-7	.....96
	1	.....94-10	.....107
	1	.....95-2	.....113
	5	.....	.....60
<b>J. QUASI-JUDICIAL FUNCTION: Sections 3-101(i), 3-103(a)</b>			
<b>1. Within function</b>			
Animal control body’s proceedings	3	.....03-3	.....260
	7	.....	.....89
City council hearing on appeal from municipal election board ruling	2	.....98-1	.....1
Environmental control board proceeding	7	.....	.....186
Hearing to consider “contested case” under Administrative Procedure Act	8	.....	.....115
Personnel grievance hearing, if subject to judicial review provisions	4	.....	.....76

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
School board hearing on superintendent's decision on instructional materials	18.....156
<b>2. Outside function</b>	
Liquor board's discussions about licenses not being renewed, possible violations by license holders, citizen comments	17.....142
<b>K. QUASI-LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION: Sections 3-101(j)</b>	
<b>1. Within function</b>	
Budget matters: approving, disapproving, or amending budget	1.....93-8.....44 1.....97-2.....206 1.....97-7.....227 4.....104 9.....1 9.....171
Contract: approving, disapproving, or amending	17.....117
Employment contract	1.....95-5.....123 10.....57 11.....12 12.....28
Franchise reassignment	5.....7 5.....200
Selection of contractor	10.....67
Presentation on firm entering contract with public body	11.....65
<b>L. ZONING MATTERS: Section 3-103(b)</b>	
Permissible use of mobile homes on certain lots is zoning matter	3.....02-3 ....182
Planning matters distinct from zoning matters	1.....92-3 .....10

## TOPIC TWO

### **2. Notice and agendas: Did the public body give “reasonable advance notice” of the meeting and make an agenda available? Did the body retain a copy of the notice? Sections 3-102(c), 3-303**

#### **A. NOTICE REQUIREMENT, GENERALLY**

Cancellation: public body must give notice if circumstances allow	3.....01-19...164 14.....72 16.....30 17.....34
---	--

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	18		5
	18		129
Must provide notice as soon as practicable after decision to cancel	18		5
Closed sessions:			
Notice required even if body convening only to enter closed session	10		57
	11		74
	12		88
No requirement to orally announce at meeting expectation of future meeting's closure	12		117
Content, method, and timing: reasonableness judged by considering each element in context of others	9		206
Infrequent meetings: suggested practices for notice	10		93
News media: notice required, even if media know of scheduled meeting	8		137
Parent body and subgroup: notice required for both when quorum of parent body attends subgroup's meeting	8		76
Private actor: public body must give notice, even if private actor does	9		175
Quorum:			
Loss of quorum: new notice may be required before resuming meeting	11		20
Notice required for expected meeting, even if quorum fails to convene	3	03-13	314
	5		1
	7		21
Retention: failure to retain copy for statutory period	6		89
( <b>Note:</b> period increased from one to three years, eff. Oct. 1, 2022)	8		188
Standing notice adequate if provides all details required by Act	9		206
	9		256
	10		9
	18		48
	16		163
Urgently called meetings: body must give notice as soon as possible, using best methods possible	10		54
	16		203



**B. NOTICE: CONTENT****1. In General**

Agenda: notice need not include agenda	1 .....92-5 .....16
<i>(But: agenda is separate requirement; see § 3-302.1, Topic 2F)</i>	1 .....94-4 .....69
	1 .....95-1 .....110
	2 .....98-9 .....31
	2 .....99-7 .....52
	3 .....02-2 ....173
	3 .....03-4 ....264
	3 .....03-10 ..303
	4 .....168
	5 .....117
	6 .....110
	6 .....196
	8 .....1
	9 .....232
	10 .....83
	15 .....174
Change in meeting details: public must be informed	2 .....99-7 .....52
	7 .....237
	15 .....113
	18 .....171
Closed sessions:	
Public access: notice must make clear that public can attend portion of meeting when body votes to enter closed session	8 .....89
	12 .....19
	12 .....28
	12 .....33
	14 .....66
	15 .....136
Reference to closed session:	
Necessary if body expects closure when notice issued	3 .....00-3 .....8
	9 .....57
	12 .....41
Unnecessary if no expectation of closure until just before meeting	3 .....03-9....297
	5 .....165
	9 .....141
Must update notice to reflect closure if time allows	5 .....165
	9 .....141

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Topic of discussion, reason for closed session: need not disclose	3 .....02-6 ....197 5 .....105 10 .....115 17 .....79
Date: tentative date sufficient if public given way to confirm actual date	8 .....76 9 .....206
Location: general guidance on how to convey for virtual meetings	15 .....168 16 .....1 16 .....163 17 .....24
Omission of some details: rarely violates Act if body provides proper notice with all details by another method	13 .....27
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>	
Dual roles of public body: not specifying in notice that county council would consider zoning matter in body's capacity as district council	2 .....98-9 .....31
Inclement weather: listing meeting location that became inaccessible because of blizzard	11 .....35
Omitting details from notice, if all details in notice by other method	13 .....9 13 .....27
Misstating meeting detail to one member of public, if proper written notice posted for general public	5 .....117
Posting notice with correct details on public body's website, even though county website provided incorrect details	15 .....113
Time: starting meeting two hours later than time listed in notice	14 .....8
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>	
Closed sessions:	
Failing to indicate that public body intends to enter closed session	15 .....19 18 .....80
Failing to make clear that public can attend open portion of meeting at which body votes to enter closed session	8 .....89 8 .....150 8 .....182 9 .....1 9 .....99 9 .....180 9 .....243 10 .....35

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	11 .....12
	11 .....22
	11 .....52
	11 .....74
	12 .....25
	14 .....19
	14 .....66
	15 .....5
	15 .....123
	15 .....136
	16 .....12
	16 .....30
	16 .....81
	17 .....42
	17 .....134
	18 .....52
Omitting necessary details:	
Date	8 .....111
Location	4 .....51
	4 .....155
	4 .....168
	8 .....111
	8 .....89
	10 .....67
	15 .....136
Failing to provide log-in details for virtual meeting	16 .....1
	16 .....163
	17 .....31
Public body's name	4 .....51
Time	4 .....155
	4 .....168
	8 .....111
	17 .....134
Postponement: failing to provide notice of new meeting date	18 .....39
Quorum: failing to make clear in notice that gathering would involve quorum, be meeting of public body	9 .....103
Site visit: failing to make clear that public could attend site visit	18 .....88
Standing notices:	
Standing notice that omits some details required by Act	9 .....206

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	9		256
Standing notice that provides inaccurate details	12		108
Standing notice that fails to reflect change in meeting details	10		9
	15		24
Time: failure to provide time of meeting	10		67
Wrong information			
Falsely indicating next meeting not yet scheduled	18		48
Listing wrong start time	18		43
<b>C. NOTICE: FORMAT</b>			
Absent special circumstances, written notice required	7		42
	8		76
Need not be tailored to non-English speakers, hearing/visually impaired	14		111
<b>D. NOTICE: METHOD</b>			
<b>1. In General</b>			
Calendar:			
If body posts meetings on calendar, must post all meetings there	12		01
	12		28
	12		41
	16		30
Notice adequate only if appears on date block for date of meeting	10		95
Consistency: body should use consistent method of providing notice	12		109
	17		134
Discretion: public body has discretion to determine which method best	13		9
	16		192
	18		171
Emergency meetings: best feasible notice required	7		237
	8		46
Multiple methods: complaint about only one generally does not establish violation if body uses multiple methods	16		77
	17		24
News media:			
Act does not require/authorize public body to advise media			

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
on whether, how meeting notices published	3.....03-4....264
Body has discretion in selecting appropriate media outlet	6.....164
No single method of notice required	3.....03-4....264 13.....36
Several methods advisable when single method likely ineffective for public body's interested public	9.....206 10.....22
Webpage:	
Bodies not required to post notice on webpage	17.....92
If body posts meetings on webpage, must post all meetings there	10.....71
If body has multiple webpages, best practice is to post notice to all	17.....154
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>	
Agenda: notice via agenda and newsletter	3.....02-6....197
Bulletin board posting, if near meeting site, body informs public this method to be used	1.....93-4.....30 2.....99-17....84
Cancellation: failure to provide notice of meeting cancellation, when caused by unexpected failure of quorum to attend	3.....02-4....188
Email: notice by email to those who had registered for info, combined with notice to press	7.....259
General Assembly: oral announcement of committee's immediate meeting during last few days of legislative session	4.....147 7.....42
Meeting site: posting notice near meeting site	2.....98-5 .....18
Multiple methods of distribution	3.....03-4 ....264 9.....146
Newsletter: notice via generally distributed newsletter, posted agenda	3.....02-6....197
News media:	
Advertisement in newspaper combined with public posting	3.....01-14 ..143
Notice to newspaper	6.....32 16.....6
Omitting notice to reporters if another method of notice used	1 .....97-9 ....237
On-site sign: failing to update sign at site of proposed development,	

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
when body provided notice on website, online calendar	16.....77
Oral announcement of future meeting, if press receives notice	1.....93-5.....33 3.....02-4.....188 3.....02-15..245 4.....28 4.....155
Press release: notice via state agency's press release	2.....98-8.....27
Registration: asking in notice that public indicate interest in attending meeting, to allow body to make arrangements	9.....206
Series of meetings: notice announcing series of meetings, if supplemented with individual notice of each meeting	1.....94-4.....69
Standing notice that provides all details required by Act	10.....9 16.....163
Television: notice via cable television, if public informed, written version of notice available	1.....96-5 ....166
Town hall: posting at town all	1.....92-3.....10 6.....196
Urgently called meeting:	
Notice via website, public calendar, text, email	16.....178
Notice via website, social media, email, front window of town hall	16.....192
Website:	6.....41 8.....150 13.....1 15.....57
Notice by State agency's task force via agency's website	6.....15
Notice in obscure location of website, when other method used	7.....259
Omitting notice from website if notice provided by other method	13.....36
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>	
Calendars:	
Notice appearing on date block not corresponding to date of meeting	10.....95
Omission from web calendar if other meetings posted there	12.....01 12.....28 12.....41 16.....30

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Cancellation: failure to notify public of cancellation when time allows	1 .....96-11 ..186 14.....72
Continuation: failing to provide notice of continuation	4.....155 5.....184
“Informal verbal” notice	4.....140
Lack of any notice to public	1 .....93-8 .....44 3.....01-4 .....92 3 .....01-5 .....96 7 .....15 7 .....274 8 .....182 9 .....40 9 .....178 9 .....195 9 .....216 9 .....268 10 .....126 10 .....134 12 .....98
Limited recipients: notice only to interested parties, subscribers, not general public	4 .....40 4 .....178 7 .....18 9 .....37
Minutes: announcing next meeting in minutes of last meeting	4 .....28
News media: confirming meeting in response to reporter’s question, but not affirmatively announcing meeting to press	4 .....88
Oral announcement at meeting, when public not advised of that method Parent body, announcement by:	8 .....76
Embedding committee agenda within parent body meeting notice: insufficient notice of committee meeting	12 .....85
Oral announcement at parent body’s meeting insufficient	8 .....76
Regional body’s posting on office door inside building	8 .....111
Standing notices:	
Standing notice that omits some details required by Act	9 .....206 9 .....256
Standing notice that provides inaccurate details	12 .....108

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Standing notice that fails to reflect change in meeting details	10 .....9 15 .....24
Town hall: posting only in town hall when body usually posts notice by several additional multiple methods	7 .....237
Urgent meeting: failure to provide notice by all methods at disposal for meeting called on urgent basis	15 .....136 16 .....47
Usual method: failure to provide notice by usual method	7 .....237 8 .....76 11 .....78 16 .....47 17 .....24
Website: notice on website alone when meeting called on short notice	9 .....110 9 .....125
Written notice: failure to provide written notice when time allows	8 .....76
<b>E. NOTICE: TIMING</b>	
<b>1. Generally</b>	
Content, timing, and method: deficiency in one may be ameliorated by extra efforts as to another	8 .....76
Lead time: Act does not require notice months before meeting	10 .....93
Reasonableness: turns on whether body provided notice as soon as practicable after fixing meeting details	5 .....83 8 .....76 9 .....256 18 .....171
Rescheduled meeting may require less notice	10 .....95
Urgently called meetings:	
Compliance Board will not second-guess need to meet on urgent basis, absent evidence suggesting improper motive	15 .....5 16 .....55 16 .....192 18 .....138
Notice still required	1 .....96-10...183
Public body must provide best public notice feasible	1 .....93-7 .....38 2 .....98-3 .....11 2 .....99-3 .....39 7 .....259



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	7		92
	7		237
	8		76
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>			
Closed session: announcing during open session intention to hold unanticipated closed session during same meeting	3	02-15	245
Continued meeting: announcing intent to continue meeting next day, followed by posting notice next day	5		139
General Assembly: oral announcement of committee's immediate meeting during last few days of legislative session	4		147
	7		42
News media: late notice to media when other methods used earlier	3	00-13	58
Notice within days of meeting:			
One day's notice	4		12
Two business days' notice	4		99
	5		83
Three business days' notice	2	98-5	18
Five days' notice	6		85
Six days' notice	6		47
	6		110
	8		150
	9		230
Ten days' notice	9		230
	18		84
Urgently called meetings:			
Calling meeting on short notice, provided no attempt to foil public's right to attend	4		51
One day's notice	4		12
Same-day notice	1	96-11	186
	6		1
One hour's notice	18		138
Three hours' notice	5		42
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>			
Delaying scheduling of meeting	1	96-11	186

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	5.....		139
	9.....		273
	15.....		51
	18.....		117
Short notice, when meeting scheduled several days earlier:			
Same-day notice	4.....		6
	9.....		199
	10.....		1
	17.....		18
One day's notice	10.....		1
	18.....		88
Three days' notice	10.....		9
Website notice shortly before meeting, absent other methods of notice	9.....		199
	10.....		112
<b>F. RETAINING COPY OF NOTICE: Section 3-302(d)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Cancellation: body need not post notice beyond date of canceled meeting	9.....		151
Retention: body must retain past notices but need not post online	16.....		1
	16.....		110
	16.....		163
Screenshot: satisfies requirement that copy be retained	9.....		175
<b>2. Practices in violation</b>			
Failing to retain copy of website notice	10.....		93
	15.....		57
	16.....		182
<b>G. AGENDA REQUIREMENT, GENERALLY</b>			
Alteration:			
After agenda made available to public, body may alter agenda to add new item of business not known when agenda first prepared	11.....		18
	12.....		21
	12.....		69
	14.....		46
	14.....		89
How body alters agenda not governed by Act	17.....		7
	18.....		40

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Last-minute alterations discouraged	15	.....	113
Omission of known item of business: body still in violation if body later alters agenda to add item	12	.....	21
	16	.....	212
Description of business item: need not explain why item on agenda	14	.....	33
Multiple agendas for different parts of same meeting discouraged	15	.....	76
Notice: body may use same document as notice and agenda, if document includes all details required of agendas	16	.....	110
	18	.....	88
Online posting: not required of most public bodies	11	.....	25
( <b>But:</b> see § 3-307, requiring some bodies to post agendas online)	12	.....	108
	13	.....	61
	14	.....	72
	14	.....	79
	15	.....	24
	16	.....	182
Posting date: agenda need not include date posted	15	.....	113
Retention: not required	16	.....	1
	16	.....	144
	18	.....	5
<b>H. AGENDA: CONTENT</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Body decides content; public has no right to control agenda	8	.....	84
	16	.....	212
Closed session:			
Must disclose intent to enter closed session, if anticipated	16	.....	30
Need not disclose expected topics of discussion, reason for closure	15	.....	5
	15	.....	37
	15	.....	174
	16	.....	69
	17	.....	79
Mentioning item at prior meeting: must still include item in agenda	18	.....	101
Required details must appear in agenda; appearance in memo attached to agenda insufficient	15	.....	1

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Supporting documentation not required of most bodies ( <i>But</i> : see § 3-307, requiring certain bodies to provide other documents)	16	.....	62
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>			
Altering agenda to add item of business not known when agenda prepared	14	.....	89
	14	.....	102
Closed session:			
Not mentioning closed session if body does not expect closure	13	.....	54
Omitting items of discussion for expected closed session	11	.....	78
	14	.....	42
	15	.....	174
Omitting reason for expected closed session	15	.....	99
	15	.....	123
Level of detail: broad agenda topic description:			
“2021-2022 School Year Calendar Modification”	16	.....	62
“Membership Portal”	16	.....	197
“Ratification of Vote on Redistricting (BOE) – ACTION”	14	.....	33
“Superintendent Search”	12	.....	77
“Vote – Wells Fargo Packet”	16	.....	197
Omitting item from agenda when no evidence members of body expected topic to come up at meeting	17	.....	3
Omitting known item of business from agenda made available by one method when complete agenda made available by other methods	15	.....	141
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>			
Closed session:			
Failure to mention anticipated closed session	12	.....	93
Failure to mention body would meet in open session before closure	15	.....	5
“First reader”: describing item only as “first reader” when body also planned to consider whether legislation should take effect immediately	15	.....	1
Insufficiently detailed agenda item description	15	.....	174
Omitting known item of business	17	.....	142
Providing required details only in memo attached to agenda	15	.....	1

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
<b>I. AGENDA: METHOD OF MAKING AVAILABLE</b>			
Need not use same method used to provide notice	17	.....	61
No violation absent evidence someone requested agenda, was denied	11	.....	25
Violation when public body that regularly posted agendas on bulletin Board stopped doing so	15	.....	57
Web posting: OK if agenda briefly unavailable while being updated	18	.....	129
<b>J. AGENDA: TIMING</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Deadline for making agenda available depends on when agenda items set	11	.....	18
Time calculation governed by General Provisions § 1-302	15	.....	1
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>			
Making agenda available 5-6 days before meeting, under circumstances	11	.....	18
Not making agenda available at least 24 hours before emergency meeting	16	.....	192
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>			
Not making agenda available as soon as practicable after agenda determined, under § 3-302.1	15	.....	174
Not making agenda (of non-emergency meeting) available at least 24 hours before meeting	17	.....	129
(Note: Bodies subject to § 3-307 have 48-hour deadline)	18	.....	57
	18	.....	80
	18	.....	117
<b>TOPIC THREE</b>			
<b>3. Access: Was the meeting conducted in the open? Sections 3-102, 3-301, 3-303, 3-304, 3-305(d)</b>			
<b>A. GENERALLY</b>			
Decision-making: Act does not govern body's decision-making process	1	.....92-5	.....16
Disabilities: accommodation of people with disabilities	1	.....97-9	....237
	1	.....97-11	..245
	3	.....02-13	..233
Entirety of discussion: if matter subject to Act's openness requirements, every aspect of discussion must be in open	1	.....94-5	.....73
	1	.....96-4	...162

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	18		59
Livestreaming not required of most public bodies	14		72
<i>(But: § 3-307 requires certain bodies to livestream meetings)</i>	18		161
Overflow space, use of	10		40
Parking: public body generally not required to provide	9		296
Public comment: not required by Act	1	97-7	227
	4		140
	9		146
	9		232
	12		77
	14		83
	14		89
	16		47
“Reasonably accessible”: depends on circumstances	10		18
	10		41
	16		26
	16		133
Reopening after closed session requires notice that public can return	3	01-8	115
<b>B. PRACTICES PERMITTED</b>			
Cameras, camera angles:			
Camera angles of livestream: no basis for violation if provide public meaningful opportunity to observe proceedings	18		165
Reasonable delay in permitting access by camera crew	1	96-8	175
Regulating location of cameras set up in hearing rooms	5		154
Closed session: convening in different room than open session	9		57
Conference call			
Allowing public to listen to conference call meeting by speaker phone	8		111
Eliminating conference-calling service when public could attend in person, watch via internet livestream, or call in to listen	16		173
Delay in admitting public to meeting, if reasonably brief	1	96-8	175
	10		40
Documents: denying public access to documents discussed by body	2	99-15	78
	9		206
Identification: requiring attendees of virtual meeting to identify selves	15		168

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Interpreter for deaf individuals: not required if no request	14	.....	111
Limiting number of audience members allowed in meeting room			
during COVID-19 pandemic, when public allowed to observe remotely	14	.....	83
	16	.....	26
Livestream:			
Continuing with meeting after livestream failure, when public also permitted to attend meeting in person	18	.....	143
Not providing livestream when unclear if notice advertised livestream, public invited to attend in person, no indication body falsely promised livestream to depress turnout	18	.....	161
Location:			
Changing site of annual meeting, if new space adequate for expected crowd	18	.....	147
Choosing room too small to accommodate all interested members of public, if no reason to expect room would be too small	3.....01-9.....		118
	5	.....	50
Meeting in interior room 275 feet from front door of building, absent evidence public had trouble finding meeting	5	.....	50
Rotating location of meetings of body that serves wide geographic area	16	.....	234
Moving public comment period to end of meeting agenda	18	.....	70
Overflow space: permissible if public can still hear meeting	10	.....	40
	13	.....	58
Press:			
Allowing in-person access to press but requiring others to observe meeting by other means	15	.....	91
Not allowing press to ask questions during meeting	15	.....	28
Public comment: disallowing/limiting public comment	8	.....	84
	9	.....	232
	14	.....	83
	14	.....	89
	15	.....	47
	16	.....	212
Registration:			
Asking public to indicate attendance so space can be arranged	9	.....	296

<b>TOPIC/SUBTOPIC</b>	<b>VOL. OPN. PAGE</b>
Requiring registration for virtual meeting	16 .....30
Remote access via telephone, internet, or cable television	14 .....83
Removing individuals	
Removing disruptive individual without formal vote	17 .....121
Removing most of audience from meeting room, when other means of observing meeting	18 .....70
Rescheduling meeting to larger site	4 .....155
Restaurant: meeting in restaurant, if open to public at no cost	8 .....111
Requiring individual, barred from school district property under different law, to watch school board meeting virtually rather than in person	16 .....133
Security: routine security measures	9 .....296 10 .....18
Time of meeting: variation from usual time, if not so unreasonable as to call into doubt public's ability to attend	13 .....58
Virtual meetings:	
Technical glitches, if only occasional, no substantial interference with public's ability to observe meeting	14 .....111 15 .....161
Updating link, four hours before meeting, to correct mistake	17 .....151
Virtual-only meetings (i.e., no option to attend in person)	16 .....6
<b>C. PRACTICES IN VIOLATION</b>	
Adjourning meeting but continuing discussion of open-session matters	1 .....96-4.....162 1 .....96-9.....178 5 .....14 5 .....76
Admission charge for attending meeting	8 .....19
Closed session:	
Convening in closed session without statutory authority	9 .....15 10 .....12 10 .....74 11 .....25 12 .....69



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Discussing matters beyond those identified in advance of closure	6 .....1 9 .....29 9 .....180
Excluding some members of public from meeting space, not providing alternative means to observe meeting	15 .....85 18 .....34
Invitation: access by invitation only	7 .....49
Non-public space: meeting in space not accessible to public	4 .....147 8 .....188
News media: excluding members of press	2 .....99-11 ....67 9 .....290
Notice: meeting without notice to public	1 .....93-8 .....44 4 .....178 6 .....32 9 .....178 9 .....195 11 .....57
Pre-meeting discussion of open-session matters	5 .....81 9 .....273
Recess: continuing discussion during announced recess	4 .....63 9 .....283 14 .....16
Recording: prohibiting public from recording meeting	
Audio recording	5 .....60
Requiring each member of body to consent to recording of meeting	17 .....111
Video recording	1 .....95-9 ....137 3 .....03-21 ..356 5 .....22
Virtual meeting	17 .....111
Text/chat messages: exchange among members of body, during meeting, about public business being discussed at meeting	14 .....29 16 .....185 18 .....59
Virtual meeting without opportunity for public to observe	4 .....79
Continuing meeting after learning that virtual platform had reached capacity and some members of the public could not access meeting	15 .....55

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Livestream: continuing virtual-only meeting when livestream fails	14	.....	66
	15	.....	28
Providing password to only select members of public	15	.....	32

## TOPIC FOUR

### 4. Permissible closed session discussions: If the closed session was subject to the Act, did the topics discussed fall within one of the 15 exceptions that permit a closed meeting? Section 3- 305(a). *See also topic #5.*

#### A. CLOSED SESSIONS

##### 1. Generally

##### Attendees:

Public body can admit select individuals needed for deliberations	1	.....	92-1	.....	1
	6	.....			171
Public body cannot arbitrarily admit some members of public, exclude others	3	.....	02-7	....	202
Contract discussions: must be in open session, unless exception applies	14	.....			92
	15	.....			37
Disclosure of what discussed: no violation if body discloses ( <i>Note:</i> See Topic 6.C for what body required to disclose)	16	.....			64
Location: need not be usual meeting space if public can observe vote to close	5	.....			105
Open-session matter: no violation if body broaches in closed session but immediately ceases discussion upon realizing mistake	1	.....	95-3	....	117
Oral presentation at next open session about closed session: not required	3	.....	03-18	..	340
Procedure for convening in closed session:					
Procedure summarized	7	.....			250
	8	.....			182
	10	.....			77
Requirements of § 3-305 inapplicable when body recesses open meeting to perform administrative function	9	.....			206
Violation to meet in closed session, even if exception applies, if procedure not followed	9	.....			186
	9	.....			195
Vote must immediately precede closed session	16	.....			123

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Scope of discussion:			
Must fall within cited exception(s)	5		177
	7		125
	9		15
	10		98
	11		78
	12		46
	13		5
	16		69
	16		144
Must stay on topic disclosed in written statement	14		66
	15		5
Multiple exceptions for one closed session: permissible	11		78
Taking action in closed session: allowed if exception permits closure	1	94-5	73
	5		126
	9		110
Timing: Act permits body to convene in open session, immediately enter closed session, then return to open session	15		11
Training			
Body cannot meet in closed session unless at least one member trained in requirements of Act	17		83
Compliance checklist required if trained member not present for closed session	11		54
<b>2. Practices in violation</b>			
Closed session when no members of body trained in Act's requirements	12		62
Closed-session discussion about:			
Topics not disclosed on written statement	9		46
	9		57
	9		167
	11		22
	11		59
	11		74
	15		5
Topics not within any exception	9		29
	11		59
Closing session without following statutory procedure	5		70
	5		136

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	7		186
	10		126
	13		9
Failure to prepare written closing statement	3	00-6	24
	3	01-18	115
	6		114
	8		137
	9		195
	18		80
	18		94
Failure to take vote	3	00-6	24
	6		114
	8		137
	9		195
	18		80
Invoking incorrect exception:			
Invoking exception not linked to anticipated discussion	3	03-19	345
Invoking non-existent exceptions	9		29
<b>B. PERSONNEL: SECTION 3-305(B)(1)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Exception applies to discussions of specific, identifiable individuals, not general personnel issues applicable to class of employees	18		5
Written closing statement should specify category of personnel matter	13		1
	16		110
<b>2. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Alleged mishandling of funds by employee	5		42
Appointment of specific individuals	3	03-11	307
	7		142
	7		216
	7		225
	8		120
	13		27
	15		46
Compensation of specific individuals	1	94-5	73
	4		38
	14		92
Severance benefits	7		49

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Creation of new position for specific employee	1 .....94-5 .....73
Employment of specific individual	
Employment contract	1 .....92-1 .....1 8 .....150 12 .....48 12 .....77
School superintendent contract	1 .....95-5 ....123 3 .....03-4 ....264 10 .....57 12 .....77
Hiring specific individual	1 .....94-5 .....73 9 .....167 11 .....12
Interviewing prospective lobbyist	7 .....131
Legal services: proposal to provide legal services	7 .....125
Offer to job applicant	3 .....02-1 ....171
Honorary degree recipients	8 .....166
Job description of specific individual	1 .....92-1 .....1
Licensing of specific employee	1 .....94-5 .....73
Performance evaluation of specific individual	2 .....99-4 .....43 3 .....02-12 ..227 6 .....104 7 .....125 13 .....14
Contractor: performance of contractor's individual employees, if public body authorized to terminate employees	9 .....132
Individuals over whom body does not have jurisdiction: discussion of personal attributes	1 .....93-11 ....53 4 .....188
Resume, applications of specific candidates for jobs	14 .....66
<b>3. Outside exception, discussion of</b>	
Advertising to fill vacant positions	14 .....66
Appointments not made by public body	7 .....112
Audit of department	6 .....92

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Compensation for class of employees:	
Compensation and employee classification study	17 .....73
Fringe benefits	1 .....94-5 .....73
Pay increases	3 .....03-17 ..335
Contract with utility company to improve employees' efficiency	1 .....94-5 .....73
Creation of new position	3 .....03-17 ..335 15 .....174
Deciding to allow employees to attend reception	1 .....94-5 .....73
Elimination of position	7 .....216
Governance matters:	
Changing reporting structure	3 .....02-12...227
Charter amendment to address mayoral powers	9 .....57
Department consolidation, severance packages, layoff timing, merits of reorganization generally	6 .....180
Department responsibilities	7 .....225
Elimination of county agency	7 .....49
Merging two departments	1 .....97-15 ..255
Outsourcing government services	6 .....104 7 .....49
Reclassification of class of employees	7 .....131
Reorganization	15 .....51
Hiring classes of employees	3 .....00-15 ....67
Job description not involving particular employee	7 .....125
Openings at police academy	1 .....94-5 .....73
Organizational restructuring	16 .....131
Policy matters	
Future, policy-oriented changes	13 .....27
Pay adjustment policy	1 .....94-5 .....73

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Personnel policy	8		86
	11		32
	12		69
	15		99
	15		174
Publication policy	2	99-4	43
Retention policy	1	94-5	73
Proposed layoffs	14		108
Staffing needs, generally	9		132
	14		66
Vacancies in department	14		66
Vendor's performance of contract to supply staff to provide services to body	9		132
<b>C. PRIVATE INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS: Section 3-305(b)(2)</b>			
Confidentiality: exception applies only to confidential personal info	8		166
	12		93
Personal attributes of candidates for public honor	9		71
<b>D. REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION: Section 3-305(b)(3)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Actual acquisition: not required for exception to apply	7		274
Property public body already owns: not covered by exception	9		29
<b>2. Within exception, discussion of:</b>			
Acquisition of:			
Interest in real property (e.g., easement)	7		225
Property known by public to be under consideration for acquisition	12		15
Property for public parking	2	99-16	80
Public property	7		274
Contract to acquire real property	15		37
Financial, policy issues related to acquisition	5		172
	17		42

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Lease:			
Acquiring property by lease, for public use	5	.....	10
	9	.....	160
Lease of property, if connected to public body's acquisition	15	.....	184
<b>3. Outside exception, discussion of:</b>			
Divestment of interest in real property	7	.....	208
Legal advice: obtaining counsel's advice on granting easement	12	.....	44
Property in which public body cannot legally obtain interest	1	.....97-8 ....	233
Transfer, sale, or lease of real property to another entity	6	.....	35
	7	.....	208
	7	.....	216
	7	.....	245
	9	.....	71
	11	.....	74
	12	.....	10
	12	.....	46
	15	.....	37
Personal property	1	.....94-5 ....	73
<b>D. PROPOSAL FOR BUSINESS RELOCATION: Section 3-305(b)(4)</b>			
<b>1. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Collateral matters when evaluating business proposal	6	.....	192
Financial incentives for specific business entity	7	.....	148
Negotiating strategy for attracting specific business	8	.....	99
Relocation: business's proposal to move from one site to another in State	1	.....93-3 ....	28
	2	.....99-16 ....	80
Retention of specific business	7	.....	225
Sale/lease of public body's land, if related to business relocation proposal	5	.....	72
	5	.....	86
<b>2. Outside exception, discussion of</b>			
Publicly known facts about identified site	9	.....	15
Legislation, even if connected to business's relocation	7	.....	148
	9	.....	15
Public entity's relocation	2	.....99-8 ....	56



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
<b>E. INVESTMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS: Section 3-305(b)(5)</b>			
<b>1. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Concrete investment opportunity	4	.....	114
<b>2. Outside exception, discussion of</b>			
Building project	11	.....	59
Corporate governance of corporation owned by public body	7	.....	195
Donation to another entity	7	.....	195
General discussion divorced from specific investment opportunity	4	.....	114
<b>E. MARKETING OF PUBLIC SECURITIES: Section 3-305(b)(6)</b>			
<b>1. Outside exception, discussion of</b>			
Characteristics of development site and project	9	.....	15
	10	.....	46
Legislation to authorize tax increment financing for development project	9	.....	15
Whether to recommend another body adopt legislation that would result in marketing of bonds	10	.....	46
<b>G. LEGAL ADVICE: Section 3-305(b)(7)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Counsel who must be present: lawyer designated by body to impart legal advice	5	.....	33
	8	.....	161
Definition of legal advice	4	.....	58
Dual role of counsel: exception may still apply when counsel serves Body in second, non-legal capacity	8	.....	1
Failure to seek advice in closed session after invoking exception: no violation if body had bona fide expectation of seeking advice	5	.....	172
Initiation by counsel: permissible if public body aware of general subject matter	6	.....	127
Litigation: need not be pending for exception to apply	6	.....	77
Multiple lawyers: exception applies to attorney's advice, even if other attorney has already addressed	7	.....	58
Non-lawyer's presence: allowed if assisting members of body to form question, or helping counsel understand issue, render advice	1	.....92-1	.....1

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	9		127
Policy discussions:			
Policy implications of counsel's advice generally outside exception	1	95-11	145
	5		130
	8		38
	10		98
	10		128
Policy discussion closely interrelated with litigation strategy may fall within exception	7		148
	9		186
	15		63
Public domain: exception can apply to counsel's presentation of info in public domain	4		58
<b>2. Within exception</b>			
Advice on legal issues related to:			
Advertising on buses	5		146
Assessment of fees	9		44
Bid process	1	92-1	1
Closed session: whether Act permits closed session discussion about particular matter	8		137
Contract extension/cancellation	3	03-19	345
	5		177
Councilmanic authority with respect to committee appointments	7		142
Employment law	7		49
Ethics:			
Ethics laws' application to individual members of body	1	92-1	1
Body's respond to ethics commission inquiry	9		156
Foreclosure notice	1	92-1	1
Leases	4		161
	5		160
	12		46
	9		243
Negotiations with developer	5		130

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Open Meetings Act compliance	4 .....58 4 .....114 8 .....137
Pending litigation	12 .....05
Personnel manual amendments to comply with law	9 .....243
Policy matters not clearly severable from receipt of legal advice	15 .....63
Proposed agreement with another entity	3 .....03-8 ....293
Settling claims	3 .....02-13 ..233 7 .....36 8 .....8 8 .....42
Statute's application:	
Endangered Species Act	9 .....127
Open Meetings Act	4 .....114 8 .....137
Public Information Act	9 .....127
Quitclaim deed	6 .....35
Zoning hearing requirements	1 .....97-6 ....224
<b>3. Outside exception</b>	
Absence of counsel: discussion for which counsel not present	1 .....93-6 .....35 1 .....94-5 .....73 1 .....94-7 .....96 3 .....00-5 .....16 8 .....86 9 .....167 12 .....46
Contract matters:	
Directing staff to explore lease agreement	6 .....104
Final instructions to counsel as to what substantive terms should be included	6 .....127
Whether to renew employee agreement	14 .....66
Corporate entity's request to change terms of franchise agreement	14 .....49
Discussing what to do in light of legal advice	6 .....151

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	13		68
	14		25
	15		136
Directing attorney to take action	5		130
	7		148
	17		124
Exchange with city administrator	17		117
Incidental legal ramifications: discussion of topic with incidental legal ramifications	1	93-11	53
Fact-finding: making findings crucial to resolving zoning applications	1	97-1	201
“Government-to-government” discussion about possible dissolution of agency	1	93-11	53
Legislative process:			
Crafting language of ordinance	1	95-11	145
Discussion about need for legislation	11		38
Proposing or ratifying charter amendment	12		69
Request to counsel to draft legislation	7		148
Negotiations: directions to counsel on how to proceed	5		130
Pending litigation, if discussion does not involve legal advice	3	00-5	16
Presentation by bank on plans for property under foreclosure	1	92-1	1
Vote on motion to not accept further comment on comprehensive plan	10		77
<b>H. PENDING OR POTENTIAL LITIGATION: Section 3-305(b)(8)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Counsel need not be present	1	94-5	73
Litigation under Act “potential” if Compliance Board complaint filed	14		25
Scope:			
Litigation must be pending, or claim/lawsuit realistic possibility	1	97-9	237
	13		8
Policy matters: if policy inextricably entwined with litigation, discussion may fall within exception	3	00-14	61
Written closing statement need not identify lawsuit if doing so would impair confidentiality of properly-closed session	8		8

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
<b>2. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Contract for litigation services in connection with lawsuit	8		8
Hearing requirements in controversial zoning matter likely to lead to litigation	1	97-6	224
How to handle anonymous letter alleging city police misconduct	13		27
Impact of proposed legislative findings on pending litigation	3	00-14	61
Policy matters not clearly severable from litigation consultation	15		63
Potential litigation about:			
City assessing stormwater management fee against county	9		44
Contract termination	9		110
Exit fee for university leaving sports conference	8		137
Light rail project	9		99
	9		127
	9		165
Settlement:			
Authorizing mayor to sign consent decree	7		36
Settlement to avert potential litigation	1	94-1	56
Update on negotiations to settle pending litigation	8		42
<b>3. Outside exception</b>			
Budgetary matters, merely because someone speculates lawsuit possible if funds not spent for some purpose	1	93-7	38
Mere prospect of citizen complaint to federal agency	3	02-13	233
Underlying policy issue not directly related to litigation	1	94-1	56
<b>I. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: Section 3-305(b)(9)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Direct involvement in negotiations: not required for body's discussion to fall within exception	3	02-15	245
	8		35
Written closing statement should identify which union involved	16		123
	16		144
	16		244

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
<b>2. Within exception</b>			
Briefing to body not directly involved in negotiations, when body tasked with advising on fiscal impact of collective bargaining agreement	8	.....	35
Discussion of:			
Availability of funds controlled by body to pay for benefits under potential collective bargaining agreement, even if body not directly involved in negotiations	3	.....02-15 ..	245
Health benefits, if part of collective bargaining negotiations	12	.....	13
Negotiations with union	7	.....	125
Reopening negotiations, in light of recent federal regulations	7	.....	58
Retroactive pay, if part of collective bargaining negotiations	11	.....	59
Ratification of collective bargaining agreement	9	.....	71
<b>3. Outside Exception</b>			
Discussion of whether excess reserve funds must be returned to employees under existing collective bargaining agreements	4	.....	104
Discussion of whether to recognize union or employee representative	7	.....	112
Negotiations with school bus contractors (conceded violation, no details)	12	.....	52
<b>J. PUBLIC SECURITY: Section 3-305(b)(10)</b>			
<b>1. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Location of 911 center involving security issues	7	.....	225
<b>2. Outside exception, discussion of</b>			
Appointees to sheriff's advisory body, when unrelated to emergency plans or deployment of officers	7	.....	112
Matters for which body has not determined open discussion would imperil public	15	.....	5
Procedures for handling petty cash	1	.....94-5 .....	73
<b>K. EXAMINATIONS: Section 3-305(b)(11)</b>			
Discussion of electrician's examination, as part of process for obtaining certificate of registration: within exception	1	.....92-4 .....	13
<b>L. CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION: Section 3-305(b)(12)</b>			
Town council's discussion of criminal investigation of mayor	3	.....00-11 .....	50

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Town council's discussion of criminal investigation of mishandling of Town funds	5		42
<b>M. LEGAL REQUIREMENT PROHIBITING DISCLOSURE: Section 3-305(b)(13)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Written closing statement must cite specific law requiring confidentiality	12		93
	15		37
<b>2. Within scope of exception</b>			
Attorney-client privilege	1	94-5	73
Open Meetings Act (discussion of sealed minutes)	9		160
Public Information Act	8		137
	12		93
Medical records confidentiality privilege	7		250
<b>N. COMPETITIVE BIDDING: Section 3-305(b)(14)</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Not applicable to any contractual negotiation, only competitive bidding	1	97-8	233
	3	02-13	233
Pending, impending competitive process must exist	9		160
	13		27
	14		49
<b>2. Within exception, discussion of</b>			
Audit matters related to RFP: performance of incumbent auditor, expected audit needs, whether to proceed with RFP	5		177
Competing proposals: presentations and/or discussion of merits	5		126
	7		125
	9		99
	12		6
	15		97
	17		73
Disposition of public body's property (probably within exception)	4		76
Naming rights, when done in competitive procurement process	9		71
Negotiations with selected bidder, before contract awarded	17		73
	17		98

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Procurement matter after bid opening but pre-award, when adverse effect of disclosure found	8		63
Sole source contract, only if intertwined with competitive procurement that would be adversely impacted by open discussion	8		8
	9		132
	9		110
Strategy for obtaining most favorable bids	1	94-5	73
Vote to select particular developer	5		126
<b>3. Outside exception, discussion of</b>			
Agreement for university to join specific athletic conference	8		137
Compensating well owners for adverse impact of new drilling	3	02-13	233
Contract negotiations that, if unsuccessful, could lead to future competitive procurement process	13		27
Contracts not involving competitive process	9		160
	17		28
Disposition of public property without competitive process	4		76
	12		10
Franchise agreement for city pier, when no request for competitive proposals or bids contemplated	14		49
Procurement procedures generally, not in context of specific procurement	9		160

**O. CYBERSECURITY: Section 3-305(b)(15) (No Opinions Yet)**

**TOPIC FIVE**

**5. Conditions for closing a meeting: Before closing a meeting subject to the Act, did the public body make the written disclosures required by the Act and vote publicly to exclude the public, in the presence of a member designated for training? Section 3-305(d).**

**A. CLOSED SESSION VOTE: Section 3-305(d)(1),(2).**

**1. Generally**

Motion to close: member of body must move to close session	3	02-8	209
Objections:			
Guidance on how to allow public to object during virtual meeting	14		92
	15		37



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	15 .....161
Public body must promptly provide Compliance Board copy of written closing statement	9 .....46 12 .....69 12 .....108
Open session: vote to close must occur in open session	1 .....96-12 ..191 1 .....97-1 ....201 1 .....97-4 ....218 2 .....99-13 ....74 8 .....1 8 .....86 9 .....141 12 .....117 15 .....5 18 .....52
Timing: vote must take place in same meeting as closure	3 .....00-2 .....4 11 .....12
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>	
Voice vote, if record reflects each member's vote	3 .....02-6.....197 6 .....23
Vote in open session to close, even if no member of public present	6 .....9
Vote to close on basis of written statement prepared before meeting, if statement still accurate	9 .....1
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>	
Lack of any vote	3 .....02-2.....173 3 .....03-11...307 7 .....186 12 .....19, 15 .....46
Objection: failure to promptly provide Compliance Board copy of written closing statement	12 .....108 17 .....18
Open session: failure to conduct vote in open session	8 .....46 9 .....99 10 .....35 10 .....126 11 .....52 15 .....5 15 .....19

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	15		136
	16		12
	16		81
Passive assent without actual vote	5		189
Recording each member's vote, failure to	7		112
Vote to adjourn, coupled with presiding officer's statement of intention to hold closed session	3	.....00-11	.....50
Vote at one meeting to close next meeting	1	.....94-5	.....73
	1	.....95-8	.....133
	5		160
	5		177
	5		184
	8		38
Voting without knowing topics to be discussed	9		46
<b>B. WRITTEN STATEMENT</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Agenda: not adequate substitute unless complete, adopted as closing statement	10		4
	11		22
	15		156
Citations to authority: should cite only exceptions public body expects to apply	12		93
	16		144
Compliance checklist: not adequate substitute	11		54
Content:			
Level of detail: cannot simply restate statutory language, but need not compromise confidentiality	10		128
	12		69
	13		1
Body should disclose as much information as possible	8		35
	9		167
Required elements: discussion topic, statutory authority, reason for closure	6		121
	8		63
	9		167
	13		5
	15		63

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Reason for closure sometimes implicit in topic description	7 .....216 8 .....95 15 .....99
Model form: use recommended but not required	8 .....166
Online posting: not required	5 .....165
<i>(But: see § 3-305(d)(6), eff. 10/1/22, requiring posting online</i>	12 .....117
<i>“to extent practicable”)</i>	16 .....69
Oral motion: written statement must reflect exceptions/topics cited in oral motion to close	9 .....132
Preparation:	
Presiding officer responsible for preparing	7 .....216
Staff can prepare statement, if presiding officer adopts/ratifies	7 .....225 9 .....1 10 .....85 13 .....27
Public access: body must promptly provide copy upon request	5 .....184 15 .....63
Body need not make available for inspection during business hours	16 .....144
Request for copies governed by Public Information Act	7 .....30
Timing: Must be prepared before, not in, closed session	8 .....35 7 .....112 7 .....250 11 .....1
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>	
Agenda: including statement in agenda, if adopted as closing statement	4 .....46
Confidentiality: preserving confidential information	1 .....92-5 .....16 1 .....93-2 .....23 1 .....97-10 .....242 10 .....4
Identities of individuals, omitting:	
Anticipated participants in closed session	1 .....93-9 .....47
Appointee discussed in closed session	6 .....127
Personnel discussed in closed session	7 .....142
Third party proposing action under discussion	5 .....72

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Preparation by staff, if accurate at time of closure and adopted/ratified	6 .....77
Reading aloud: not reading aloud contents of written closing statement	12 .....10 12 .....13 12 .....15 14 .....92 15 .....63 15 .....156 16 .....12
Reason for closing:	
Omitting if apparent from other parts of statement	4 .....188 7 .....216 8 .....95
Omitting if need for confidentiality acute, other details disclosed	15 .....63
Topic descriptions:	
Brief descriptions	4 .....188 5 .....165
Identifying topic in statement but not discussing in closed session	1 .....93-9 .....47
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>	
Alteration: altering written closing statement during/after closed session	5 .....105 12 .....55
Boilerplate recitation of statutory language for topic description, reason	7 .....112 7 .....245 8 .....150 8 .....99 12 .....41 12 .....69 12 .....93 13 .....27 15 .....37 15 .....156 16 .....224 18 .....105
Inadequate topic descriptions:	1 .....96-12..191 15 .....174
“Acquisition of real property for a public purpose”	1 .....97-11..245 5 .....33 5 .....149

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
“Before a contract is awarded, discussion of matters directly related to negotiating strategy”	5 .....149
“Business proposal”	18 .....105
“Business relocation”	4 .....142
“Confidential personnel matters”	17 .....83
“HR Report”	17 .....83
“Legal” or “Legal advice”	5 .....149 6 .....77 9 .....180 16 .....123
“Legal and contractual matters”	5 .....160
“Litigation”	16 .....224
“Maryland Law”	17 .....83
“Negotiations”	3 .....01-6....101 16 .....123
“Personnel,” “personnel matters,” or “personnel positions”	3 .....01-6....101 3 .....03-17...335 4 .....142 5 .....14 5 .....33 5 .....149 7 .....131 12 .....28 13 .....1 16 .....30 16 .....123 18 .....105
“Pending litigation” or “possible litigation”	1 .....97-10..242 5 .....14
“Potential real property acquisition”	15 .....37
“Security guidance”	17 .....83
Inadequate reasons for closure:	15 .....174
“Consider the investment of public funds”	4 .....114
“Consult w/ legal counsel”	4 .....114
“Discussion of matters relating to the acquisition of real	

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
property for a public purpose”	7 .....274
“Employee update”	16 .....123
“Legal”	9 .....180
“Legal and personnel”	1 .....93-2 .....23
“Negotiation update”	16 .....123
“Real estate contracts . . . are not public information”	16 .....97
“To discuss personnel matters”	13 .....1
“To obtain legal advice”	4 .....161
Collective bargaining exception: failing to identify union	16 .....144
Discussing topic not disclosed on written closing statement	7 .....131 10 .....85
Failing to prepare written closing statement	3 .....00-3 .....8 3 .....02-2 .....173 3 .....02-13 .....233 3 .....03-11 .....307 5 .....86 5 .....98 5 .....139 7 .....112 7 .....186 7 .....250 8 .....86 8 .....137 9 .....15 9 .....29 9 .....99 9 .....110 9 .....141 10 .....77 11 .....54 12 .....19 12 .....85 15 .....46 15 .....144
Omitting necessary information from written closing statement	11 .....51 12 .....9 12 .....13 12 .....35 12 .....41

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	12		52
	12		117
	13		5
Reason for closure	3	.....00-11	50
	3	.....01-12	136
	4		46
	7		208
	9		46
	9		110
	11		47
	11		59
	11		78
	12		01
	12		25
	12		62
	12		88
	12		108
	13		54
	14		19
	14		66
	15		5
	15		19
	15		99
	15		184
	16		30
	16		81
	16		144
	16		224
	17		83
	18		105
Statutory authority	3	.....00-11	50
	4		114
	5		149
	7		36
	11		59
	12		62
	12		69
Topic of discussion	1	.....92-1	1
	3	.....00-11	50
	4		38
	7		36
	7		49
	7		131
	9		46

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	10		4
	10		35
	10		46
	10		57
	10		85
	10		98
	11		85
	12		01
	12		25
	12		108
	13		1
	14		49
	15		5
	15		19
	16		30t
	16		224
Oral discussion of basis for closing session, later recorded in minutes: insufficient substitution for written closing statement	1	92-4	13
	1	92-5	16
Public access: delay in providing copy of written statement to requester	5		184
	9		46
Retention: failing to retain written statement	15		144
Statutory authority: citing wrong authority for closure	7		208
	7		245
	12		69
	16		97
	16		144
Timing: preparing written statement during or after closed session	3	00-2	4
	3	01-16	147
	7		112
	7		225
	7		250
	8		38
	9		57
	12		55
	14		66
Vote: failure to record vote of each member	15		99

#### C. POST-SESSION SUMMARY OF SESSION (see topic #6)



## TOPIC SIX

### 6. Minutes and other post-meeting disclosures: Did the public body prepare and retain the meeting minutes and other post-meeting summaries required by the Act and, to the extent practicable, post its minutes? Sections 3-302(d), 3-306, 3-104

#### A. ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION SUMMARY: Section 3-104

“Administrative matters” insufficient as topic description	6.....96
Content: must include date, time, place, persons present, subject matter	11 .....25
	16.....123
Violation to describe in insufficient detail	17 .....83
Violation to omit required detail:	
Location	11 .....25
	16.....123
Persons present	9 .....206
	14 .....19
	16 .....123
	16 .....203
Subject matter discussed	15 .....11
When required: when public body recesses open session to perform administrative function.	12 .....69
	13 .....1

#### B. MINUTES: Section 3-306 (see also Topic 6(C))

##### 1. Generally

Approval: body must formally approve minutes, not just prepare them	3.....03-10....303
	4 .....120
	6 .....47
	7 .....83
	14 .....3
Audio/video recording:	
If body prepares written minutes, must specify whether written minutes or audio/video recording are official minutes	11 .....47
	15 .....63
	15 .....123
If made, must be retained at least one year	4 .....74
(Note: Eff. 10/1/22, § 3-306(e) requires retention for <u>five</u> years)	

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Not required of most public bodies	4		74
<i>(Note: § 3-307 requires live, archived video of some bodies)</i>	13		65
	14		3
Online posting: YouTube adequate (need not be on body's website)	16		6
Written minutes required when recording fails	9		256
	13		65
Content:			
Accuracy: minutes must be accurate	6		145
	9		268
Documents discussed at meeting: need not be incorporated	8		122
	9		71
Level of detail: must be detailed enough for public to have appreciation of issue under discussion	6		164
	9		71
	15		174
	17		47
Required elements: each item considered, action taken, vote	6		164
	8		8
Meaning of "consider": guidance	18		32
Vote: must specify each member's vote	7		237
Terms that public can understand	9		71
	12		33
Delays:			
Routine delays of several months or longer violate Act	2	99-18	87
	2	99-19	92
	10		22
	10		112
Temporary, logistical delays do not violate Act, provided not pretext for hiding info, delaying public access	2	98-3	11
	2	99-18	87
	4		1
	10		22
	12		80
Email:			
Approval by email recommended if body meets infrequently	8		125
	13		36

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Body not required to provide minutes via email	8.....46 16.....18 16.....22
Final report of disbanding body: not substitute for minutes	7.....118
Method of preparing/approving:	
Discretion: bodies generally have discretion as to preparation, adoption, amendment	1.....94-2.....63 9.....71 9.....146 12.....112
Infrequent meetings:	
Body must find method for ensuring minutes available to public with reasonable promptness	6.....164 10.....112
Suggested method for bodies that rarely meet	8.....125 8.....173 8.....176 10.....93 10.....112
Monthly meetings: bodies meeting monthly should generally approve minutes at each meeting	6.....47 11.....25
Online posting: required, to the extent practicable ( <i>Note</i> : Bodies subject to § 3-307 <u>must</u> post online)	11.....57 12.....83 12.....93
How posted online: beyond Compliance Board’s purview	9.....226
Pre-2016: minutes not required to be posted online	3.....03-18.....340 6.....203 7.....225 7.....237 9.....199 9.....232
Timing: must post “to the extent practicable,” but no set deadline	14.....19 14.....111
Whether practicable to post online: Compliance Board generally will not second-guess	15.....168 16.....1

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Open and closed sessions: minutes required of both	4 .....74 4 .....120 5 .....98
Public inspection	
Body, not individual member, required to produce for inspection	11 .....57
Litigation: party to litigation entitled to inspect open session minutes	8 .....42
Public inspection request versus PIA request:	
In-person request to inspect minutes: not a PIA request	7 .....30 8 .....11
Written requests for documents: OK to treat as PIA request	9 .....218
Redaction generally not permitted	8 .....63
Review by counsel: permissible under Act	9 .....226
Temporary bodies: guidance on how to prepare/approve all minutes before body's dissolution	10 .....1
Timing: minutes to be prepared "as soon as practicable"	2 .....99-18.....87 6 .....161 6 .....164 7 .....80 7 .....118 7 .....264 8 .....32 8 .....71 8 .....111 8 .....150 8 .....173 8 .....176 8 .....180 12 .....62 12 .....83
Type of meetings: minutes required of all meetings subject to Act, regardless of how body describes meeting	5 .....50
Vote: must specify each member's vote	7 .....237
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>	
Approving portion of minutes	9 .....259
Closed-session minutes:	

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Delay in approving	4 .....1 7 .....8
Disclosing to public, if majority of body's members agree to unseal	2 .....98-4 .....16
Draft, unapproved minutes: prohibiting inspection of	2 .....98-3 .....11
Handwritten minutes	7 .....121
Joint meeting: not preparing written minutes if other body has made live, archived recording available	10 .....22
Live and archived video or audio streaming in lieu of written minutes	15 .....31
Online, not posting online:	
Because no requirement before Oct. 1, 2016	7 .....225
Because not practicable to post online	13 .....18 16 .....1 17 .....66
Preparation by staff: allowed, but body ultimately responsible	7 .....8
Public comment: not describing substance of public comments	16 .....234
Resignation: omitting member's resignation, which did not require action by body	8 .....8
Timing: approving minutes:	
Ten days after meeting	3 .....01-3 .....85
Eighteen days after meeting	9 .....230
Three weeks after meeting	7 .....237
One month after meeting	11 .....25
Five weeks after meeting	10 .....1 16 .....47
Six weeks after meeting	3 .....03-18...340
Two months after meeting	4 .....1 6 .....47
Three months after meeting, when not routine, attributable to staffing constraints	2 .....99-19 .....92 9 .....110
Four months after meeting, when attributable to staffing constraints	10 .....1
Transcript as minutes	1 .....96-4 ....162

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	6 .....110
	7 .....118
Video recording: gap in recording when written minutes prepared	18 .....70
Vote: not specifying how each member voted if recorded vote not required	8 .....137
<b>3. Practices in violation (see also topics C and D, below)</b>	
Audio recording in lieu of written minutes	2 .....99-18 ....87
<i>(Note: law changed June 1, 2011; see § 3-306(b)(2))</i>	3 .....01-5 .....96
	7 .....118
Failure to approve minutes	3 .....03-10....303
	4 .....120
	6 .....47
	7 .....83
Failure to approve as soon as practicable	15 .....113
Failure to prepare minutes:	4 .....120
	7 .....15
	9 .....195
	9 .....268
	11 .....54
	15 .....144
	16 .....1
	16 .....110
Closed session	3 .....00-3 .....8
	5 .....98
	5 .....105
	9 .....92
	11 .....47
	15 .....156
	15 .....174
	18 .....80
Open session	5 .....50
	5 .....70
	5 .....182
	7 .....42
	7 .....83
	7 .....121
	7 .....274
	9 .....175
Open session held only to enter closed session	12 .....28
Final written report of temporary public body, in lieu of minutes	7 .....118

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Omitting necessary details:	3	01-19	164
	7		95
Omitting sufficient description of what discussed in closed session	15		184
	18		94
Omitting sufficient description of what discussed in open session	15		113
	17		92
Omitting votes	8		32
	9		206
	15		99
Omitting dissenting vote	1	96-2	155
Online posting: failing to post online when practicable to do so	13		1
	13		34
	13		36
	15		113
	15		123
	15		174
	16		30
	16		129
	18		5
	18		101
Public access:			
Failing to make minutes available to the public	6		203
	7		83
In-person inspection: denying access to someone requesting to inspect minutes during ordinary business hours	17		47
Public Information Act: requiring someone asking to inspect minutes in person to submit written PIA request	3	01-3	85
	5		14
	8		27
	9		218
Redacting minutes to omit detail discussed in open session	7		64
	7		186
Retention: failing to retain minutes	15		144
	16		1
	17		129
Supplemental document: referring to document but failing to attach to minutes or provide sufficient summary of document's contents	17		92

## Timing: approving minutes:

Three months after meeting	4.....1
	13.....36
	15.....123
	16.....203
	17.....79
Four months after meeting	4.....1
	6.....85
	10.....9
	10.....112
	15.....123
	15.....184
	16.....69
	16.....178
	16.....203
Five months after meeting	3.....01-5.....96
Six months after meeting	9.....1
	10.....9
	17.....129
Seven months after meeting	7.....80
Eight months after meeting	10.....22
Nine months after meeting	17.....24
Nearly a year	16.....129
One year or more after meeting	2.....99-18.....87
	4.....24
	6.....118
	7.....11
	16.....178
	17.....129
Votes: failing to specify each member's vote, if recorded vote required	7.....237

**C. IN OPEN SESSION MINUTES, SUMMARY OF PRIOR CLOSED SESSION****1. Generally**

## Action taken

Encompasses more than just formal vote	15.....184
If no action taken, body not required to say so,	



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
though practice favored by Compliance Board	6.....171
Confidentiality: OK to withhold sensitive details for which Act permits closed session discussion	1 .....95-1 ....110 4 .....76 7 .....5 12.....05
Content:	
Plain language required	9.....132
Required elements: summarized	4 .....46 6 .....171 9 .....206 15 .....19
Topics of discussion:	
Need not list those body did not reach	11 .....59
But disclosure of topics not discussed advisable when meeting closed in part to discuss them	8 .....95 12 .....88
Level of detail: must be meaningful summary, demonstrate discussion stayed within bounds of claimed exception(s)	7 .....225 7 .....250 8 .....182 12 .....55 12 .....62
Persons present: can identify by titles, rather than name	16 .....30
Placement:	
Must appear in open session minutes	13 .....8 13 .....27 14 .....66
May appear in minutes of meeting at which closed session occurred, if public knows where to look	3 .....02-2....173 5 .....139 5 .....165 9 .....180 9 .....226 12 .....1 15 .....174 16 .....110
May appear in minutes of next open session	7 .....264 10 .....35 12 .....10

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	12		13
Required details must appear in one place within minutes	1	94-3	67
	6		127
Reading aloud: not required	17		66
Timing: summary must be prepared promptly	7		264
Vote: must record vote of each member to close	15		63
Written closing statement before closed session and subsequent disclosure in minutes: two distinct requirements	5		165
	16		110
<b>2. Practices permitted</b>			
Confidentiality: preserving confidentiality of info that justified closure	1	92-5	16
	1	94-5	73
	1	95-1	110
	2	98-5	18
	6		96
	10		4
Withholding details of legal strategy	1	94-5	73
Withholding identity of business considering relocation	2	99-9	60
Withholding identity of personnel discussed under personnel matters exception	8		182
Withholding identity of property considered for acquisition	1	95-2	110
	8		182
Duration: omitting from summary duration of closed session	7		225
Oral summary on meeting video, if video serves as official minutes	12		28
Persons present: not disclosing role of non-members in closed session	8		63
Votes:			
Omitting how each member voted on action in closed session	8		137
Omitting vote to adjourn	8		137
<b>3. Practices in violation</b>			
Boilerplate reference to statutory language for topic description	6		1
	6		96
	6		171
	7		112

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	7		140
	7		208
	8		86
	9		151
	11		12
	12		85
	12		108
	12		114
	13		1
	13		54
	15		156
	15		174
	16		30
	18		94
Checklist: omitting checklist from minutes when no member trained in Act's requirements present for closed session	13		54
Failure to prepare closed session summary	3	03-20	352
	5		98
	10		35
	11		78
	12		88
	13		1
	15		46
	15		174
	15		184
	16		110
	16		129
Inaccurate description of what transpired	15		174
Insufficiently detailed description of discussion topic	7		5
	7		125
	12		1
	12		41
	15		99
	15		174
	17		83
	17		142
	18		94
Omitting necessary details:	1	94-3	67
	7		225
	10		77
	11		38
	12		25
	12		93

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	15 .....19
Action taken	2 .....98-5 .....18
	4 .....38
	8 .....182
	11 .....85
	15 .....5
	15 .....46
Persons present	1 .....94-2 .....63
	3 .....02-15 ..245
	3 .....00-3 .....8
	5 .....86
	5 .....165
	6 .....1
	6 .....9
	7 .....5
	7 .....225
	8 .....8
	8 .....137
	10 .....35
	10 .....77
	11 .....74
	12 .....5
	12 .....55
	13 .....54
	14 .....19
	15 .....5
	15 .....46
	16 .....12
	16 .....123
	16 .....144
	17 .....83
	18 .....94
Place of closed session	14 .....19
	15 .....46
	16 .....123
	17 .....142
Purpose of closure	3 .....02-2...173
	11 .....12
	15 .....174
	15 .....184
	16 .....144
Statutory authority for closure	1 .....94-2 .....63
	1 .....94-5 .....73

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
	3 .....00-3 .....8
	3 .....02-2....173
	5 .....139
	6 .....23
	7 .....36
	12 .....5
	12 .....46
	15 .....46
	15 .....174
	16 .....81
Time of closed session	15 .....46
Topic(s) of discussion	1 .....94-2 .....63
	2 .....98-5 .....18
	3 .....02-2....173
	3 .....02-13 ..233
	4 .....76
	5 .....139
	5 .....165
	6 .....9
	7 .....5
	7 .....8
	7 .....125
	8 .....8
	8 .....182
	10 .....85
	12 .....44
	12 .....55
	15 .....5
	15 .....46
	16 .....123
	16 .....144
Vote to close	3 .....02-2....173
	5 .....139
	6 .....9
	12 .....5
	12 .....93
	13 .....9
	15 .....174
	16 .....197
	17 .....142
Oral summary on meeting video, if official minutes are written	11 .....47
Persons present: listing individuals in open session minutes but not specifying who attended closed session	13 .....54

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Placement			
Failing to place summary in open-session minutes	9		160
Failing to provide all details in one place in open-session minutes	6		127
Statutory authority:			
Changing justification for closed session, afterward	5		177
Citing wrong statutory authority	16		12
	16		81
	16		97
Timing: regularly taking three months or more to prepare	16		110
Vote: failing to specify how each member voted	15		63
Written closing statement: using statement in lieu of summary in minutes	3	02-7	202
<b>E. CLOSED-SESSION MINUTES: Section 3-306(c)</b>			
Content: must contain meaningful detail	7		245
	9		127
Failure to adopt: violation	9		156
Methods of adopting: three options	9		160
Public access: in body's discretion	5		105
Sealing and unsealing	7		195
Timing: belated adoption is violation, but not "substantial violation"	8		176
Written closing statement made before closed session: not a substitute	9		127

## TOPIC SEVEN

### **7. Guidance; training: What is the role of Compliance Board opinions, and who must take training? Sections 3-204 through 211; 3-213**

#### **A. GENERALLY**

Presumption that public body complied with Act:			
not applicable in Compliance Board complaint process	15		132
Sealed closed-session minutes: Compliance Board keeps confidential	6		192
	9		44

**B. COMPLAINT**

Actual interference with rights: complaint process most effective when involves actual interference with rights	12.....80 12.....83
Burden of proof: neither complainant nor respondent has burden	6.....69 6.....77 15.....132 16.....6 16.....197 18.....84
Content:	
Current practices: should focus on body's current/recent practice	12.....37
Date of alleged violation: exact date not required	15.....57
Good faith: should be based on good faith allegations after reasonable inquiry into facts	3.....01-14..143 8.....99
Hypothetical, speculative allegations: Board will not address	8.....99 8.....170 12.....23 12.....33 13.....64 15.....174 16.....69 16.....144
Open Meetings Act only: should not allege violations of other laws	6.....127 8.....73 9.....226
Practices addressed in prior opinion: complaint should not raise again	9.....304
Public body: must identify	6.....171
Dismissal:	
When allegations, taken as true, do not state violation of Act	8.....170 9.....53 9.....55 12.....24
When public body no longer in existence ( <i>Note</i> : law has changed; see § 3-206)	4.....111
Failure to provide basic details: Compliance Board will not consider	16.....192

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Public Information Act: complaint process not to be used to induce special treatment of PIA request	9	.....	218
Sufficient detail if public body can identify relevant acts/omissions	6	.....	69
	6	.....	74
Timing: limitations period/laches not applicable to complaints to Board	3	.....03-20 ..	352
	9	.....	199
	16	.....	197
	17	.....	142
<b>C. RESPONSE TO COMPLAINT</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Adequacy:			
General standards	9	.....	132
	9	.....	307
Inadequate if missing facts necessary to apply statutory standards	8	.....	8
Closed session: response cannot invoke justification for closed session not cited in written closing statement	1	.....93-11 ....	53
	1	.....94-5 .....	73
	1	.....94-7 .....	96
	4	.....	104
Lack of response: Board's opinion based only on complaint	9	.....	274
<b>2. Practices in violation</b>			
Failure to respond to complaint	3	.....00-1 .....	1
	4	.....	186
	9	.....	273
	10	.....	74
Incomplete response (failing to respond to each allegation)	7	.....	64
Supplementary documents: failure to provide to Board	5	.....	14
Failure to include closed-session minutes when requested	16	.....	144
Timeliness: failure to respond in timely manner	5	.....	1
	6	.....	203
<b>D. LIMITS OF BOARD'S AUTHORITY</b>			
Circuit court action:			
Does not affect Board's authority to review complaint	9	.....	186
Board may defer resolution of complaint to allow circuit court			



TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
action to proceed, establish facts necessary for Board opinion	7 .....89
Compelling production of documents: Board has no such power	8 .....42
“Curing” violation: Board cannot declare violation “cured”	9 .....199
Enforcement power: Board has no authority to enforce Act	1 .....95-2.....113 1 .....97-1 .....201 7 .....142 10 .....101 16 .....6
Fact-finding: Board not set up as fact-finding body	1 .....94-1 .....56 1 .....94-8 .....101 2 .....99-4 .....43 3 .....01-12..136 8 .....115 8 .....122 13 .....33 16 .....108 16 .....197 17 .....1 17 .....98 17 .....140
Laws other than Open Meetings Act: Board has no power to address alleged violations of other laws	2 .....98-6 .....21 2 .....99-6 .....49 9 .....146 13 .....33 15 .....1 16 .....197 17 .....34 17 .....111 18 .....161
County regulations	7 .....274
Education Article	16 .....133
Ethics standards	8 .....170
First Amendment to the United States Constitution	18 .....165 18 .....167
Judicial review provision of State Government Article	4 .....186
Municipal law	2 .....98-1 .....1 3 .....01-14..143 4 .....6

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
	5		1
	7		186
	17		34
	17		142
Other laws imposing notice requirements	3	.....01-15..	145
Public body's own rules	2	.....98-9.....	31
	17		142
Public Information Act	6		164
	7		284
	18		161
Wiretap statute	17		111
Penalties for violations of Act: Board has no power to impose	8		1
Public comment: Board has no power to review complaint that public body did not allow public comment	8		170
	14		83
	14		89
	14		111
	15		57
Board will not consider complaint about registration process for public comment	18		147
Public body's distribution of opinions to members not governed by Act ( <i>Note:</i> law has changed; see § 3-211 for current law)	8		71
<b>D. OPINIONS</b>			
Alternative findings: when available info reflects two possible inferences, Board will address both	9		156
	9		171
	9		239
	12		102
	13		21
	17		34
	17		57
Closed sessions:			
Board will consider only exceptions cited in written closing statement when deciding whether Act satisfied	9		132
Discretion to invoke exception: Board does not opine on public body's exercise of discretion	4		58

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL. OPN. PAGE
Public body's summary of discussion presumed accurate absent contrary evidence	4 .....104
Disputes of fact: not resolved	1 .....94-1 .....56 1 .....94-8 .....101 2 .....99-4 .....43 8 .....115 8 .....122 9 .....186 9 .....271 13 .....33 15 .....161 16 .....163 17 .....71 18 .....67 18 .....94
Insufficient information to reach conclusion: complaint unresolved	9 .....273 12 .....5 12 .....39 13 .....33 14 .....75
Administrative function: unable to say if meeting administrative	2 .....99-16 .....80 3 .....01-13 .....140 12 .....13
Closed session discussion: unable to say whether violated Act	10 .....128 15 .....156 15 .....174
Long-past events: unable to say whether violated Act	12 .....39
Public body: insufficient facts to determine if entity is public body	7 .....195
Practices addressed in prior opinion: Board will not address again	10 .....95 12 .....5
Reconsideration of prior opinion: standards	3 .....03-1 .....255 7 .....92 8 .....71 10 .....80 16 .....140
<b>F. ANNOUNCEMENT/ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VIOLATION</b>	
<b>1. Generally</b>	
Announcement must be by member of body	12 .....5 16 .....101

TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	VOL.	OPN.	PAGE
Disagreement with opinion: announcement may be accompanied by statement of disagreement	11	.....	72
Minutes:			
Referencing announcement in minutes preferable but not required	9	.....	127
Reflection in minutes can establish compliance	12	.....	112
Parent body and subgroup: if both violated Act, both must announce	12	.....	5
Request for reconsideration of opinion: does not extend deadline to announce	10	.....	80
<b>2. Practices in violation</b>			
Failure to announce	10	.....	80
	11	.....	57
	11	.....	59
Failure to sign opinion	10	.....	1
	10	.....	110
<b>G. TRAINING REQUIREMENT (see also Topics 5(A)(3) and 6(C)(3))</b>			
<b>1. Generally</b>			
Compliance established by certificates	11	.....	47
Body not required to provide certificates to public	18	.....	129
Designee:			
Should be current member, officer, employee	9	.....	195
	10	.....	77
Method of designation:			
Designation of trainee by board chair permissible	9	.....	304
If training received, method of designation immaterial	18	.....	105
Qualifying courses: only those specified in Act	9	.....	218
Timing: designation not required before newly created public body meets	9	.....	268
<b>2. Practices in violation</b>			
Failure to designate trainee	10	.....	74
Failure to provide name of designee to Compliance Board ( <i>Note:</i> no longer required, effective 7/1/17)	9	.....	234

[End of index]