

Minutes of the meeting for ALL Boards and Commissions in attendance

FOI Training for Commissioners and Department Heads

March 7, 2016, 6PM

In attendance: Mark Nickerson, S. DiGiovanna, D. Murphy, F. Ghersi, D. Cunningham, C. Wilson, R. Palazzo, J. Palazzo, L. Picarazzi, C. Alberti, L. Blais, B. Johnson, W. Mulholland, C. Ward, W. Dwyer, M. Foley, N. Bender, C. Relliga, N. Peck III, T. Donovan, M. Keser, K. Scott, D. Jacques, K. Attall, P. Berger, H. Clarke, H. Cheeseman, R. Hardy, M. Salerno

Training conducted by Tom Hennick, of the FOI Commission, Hartford, CT

- FOI Act is 41 years old with very little update
- It gives public access to public meetings and public records
- The dictionary definition of a meeting was given
 - o Subcommittees and ad hoc committees generally count
- There is an ambiguous ruling about "quorum" definition by the statute and legislature
- Types of meetings:
 - o REGULAR – 24 hr notice of agenda, specific times and dates, can add items to agenda by 2/3 vote
 - o SPECIAL – 24 hour notice given, must be posted on website, cannot add items to agenda at the meeting
 - o EMERGENCY – unnoticed meeting prior to meeting, must post meeting notice after meeting with certain # or days/hrs. extreme cases only. Must be emergency
- Anyone can come to public meetings. Audio and video taping is allowed.
- FOIA does not give public the right to speak at a meeting. The board can limit the time that individuals or the public group and speak. Local rules prevail.
- Executive sessions – are always a part of a regular/special meeting.
 - o Must vote to come into Exec session
 - o No motions can be conducted in meeting. No consensus.
 - o 5 reasons to go into executive session:
 - o Personnel, litigation, security, property being leased or purchased, other items that are not public information
- Commission members creating any public record on personal phone or personal computer is considered public information . Be warned.
- Minutes: need not be a complete narrative.
 - o It is a record of who voted and for what. That is all that is required.
 - o Minutes should be short, crisp, summary of content
 - o Must be available in 7 days
 - Regular meeting = 7 calendar days
 - Special meeting 7 business days