

Open Meetings Policy

Purpose and Intent

The Board of Trustees of Brunswick Community Library is committed to conducting the public's business in an open and transparent manner consistent with article 7 of the Public Officers Law, commonly known as the Open Meetings Law.

It is the policy of the Board that meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and all other applicable provisions of law. This policy is intended to provide guidance to trustees, Library staff and members of the public regarding attendance at Board meetings and the conduct of Board business. This policy shall be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the Open Meetings Law, and any inconsistency shall be resolved in favor of the applicable law.

Meetings

A "meeting" means the official convening of a quorum of a public body for the purpose of conducting public business (Public Officers Law § 102 [1]). For purposes of this policy, meetings of the Board are subject to the Open Meetings Law whenever a quorum of the Board convenes to discuss or conduct Library business, regardless of whether a vote is scheduled or formal action is taken. Except as otherwise permitted by law, all meetings of the Board shall be open to the general public (Public Officers Law § 103). Notice of meetings shall be provided in accordance with Public Officers Law § 104.

Executive Sessions

An executive session is a portion of an open meeting during which the public may be excluded for one or more of the purposes authorized by Public Officers Law § 105. The Board may enter executive session only upon a majority vote of its total membership taken at an open meeting and upon a motion identifying the general subject or subjects to be considered (Public Officers Law § 105 [1]). Executive sessions may be conducted only for those purposes specifically authorized by Public Officers Law § 105. No formal action shall be taken in executive session except as permitted by law.

Public Attendance and Participation

Members of the public are welcome to attend and observe all open meetings of the Board. Attendance at a meeting does not confer a right to participate in Board discussions, deliberations or decision-making. The Board may, however, provide an opportunity for public comment as part of an open meeting. When public comment is permitted, the

President of the Board, or other presiding officer, may establish reasonable procedures governing public participation, including:

- a limit of three (3) minutes per speaker;
- a total public comment period not exceeding thirty (30) minutes; and
- reasonable requirements regarding the order of speakers and the subject matter of comments.

If any speaker does not have a chance to comment at the meeting, he or she may submit their comments in writing to the Board.

Comments shall be directed to the Board as a whole in a respectful manner. Personal attacks, harassment or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Public comment must refrain from profane language and from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or any other protected characteristic.

Public comment should not include personal or confidential information about individuals unless such information is already publicly available or required by law.

The Board is not required to respond to comments or questions during the meeting.

The President of the Board, or other presiding officer, may take reasonable measures necessary to maintain order and ensure the efficient conduct of the meeting. Any person who disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting, interferes with the ability of others to observe the meeting or refuses to comply with reasonable rules of order may be directed to cease such conduct. If the disruptive conduct continues, the presiding officer may declare a recess or adjourn the meeting.

Minutes

Minutes shall be taken at all open meetings of the Board and shall consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matter formally voted upon, together with the vote thereon, in accordance with Public Officers Law § 106. Minutes of executive sessions shall be prepared when required by law and shall consist of a record or summary of any final determination, action or vote taken, without disclosing matters that may properly remain confidential (Public Officers Law § 106 [2]). Minutes shall be made available to the public within the time periods prescribed by law.

Videoconferencing

The Board may conduct meetings through videoconferencing technology as authorized by Public Officers Law §§ 103 and 103-a. Any meeting utilizing

videoconferencing shall be noticed and conducted in accordance with applicable law and shall provide public access to the meeting as required by law. To the extent required by law, meeting notices shall identify locations where the public may attend in person and shall provide information regarding remote access to the meeting.

Amendments

The Board recognizes that the Open Meetings Law may be amended from time to time. Accordingly, references to specific statutory provisions shall be deemed to include any successor provisions, and applicable law shall govern in the event of any conflict between this policy and the Open Meetings Law.