

Audio file

[2025-11-19-BoC-Open-Meeting-Training.mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:04 Ella Arsement

All right.

00:00:05 Ella Arsement

Good afternoon.

00:00:05 Ella Arsement

Thank you, everyone, for coming today.

00:00:09 Ella Arsement

We will start with roll call for the Library Board of Control.

00:00:14 Ella Arsement

I don't have the names listed, so I'm going to have to sit here and think about everybody.

00:00:18 Ella Arsement

Rena Bradley.

00:00:20 Rena Bradley

Present.

00:00:20 Ella Arsement

Eric Bacquet

00:00:21 Eric Bacquet

Present.

00:00:23 Ella Arsement

Daniel Kelly.

00:00:27 Daniel Kelly

Present.

00:00:27 Ella Arsement

Ella Arsement

00:00:28 Ella Arsement

I'm present.

00:00:31 Ella Arsement

Christopher Holmes, he's not here.

00:00:38 Ella Arsement

Who am I leaving out, Guy?

00:00:39 Ella Arsement

Okay, Allan Moore is on his way, so he should be here shortly.

00:00:46 Ella Arsement

Can we start with the Pledge of Allegiance?

00:00:48 Ella Arsement

And I'd ask Eric, if you'd please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance, please stand.

00:00:56 Ella Arsement

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation.

00:01:04 Eric Bacquet

Under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

00:01:10 Ella Arsement

Thank you.

00:01:11 Ella Arsement

And Mr.

00:01:12 Ella Arsement

Allen Moore just walked in, so I appreciate you.

00:01:15 Ella Arsement

Mr.

00:01:16 Ella Arsement

Allan.

00:01:18 Ella Arsement

We're on.

00:01:21 Allan Moore

Put you on the.

00:01:22 Ella Arsement

Spot there?

00:01:23 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:01:24 Allan Moore

Apologize I was late.

00:01:34 Allan Moore

Okay, awesome.

00:01:36 Allan Moore

Well, good afternoon, everyone.

00:01:37 Allan Moore

And again, I apologize, I was a little bit late.

00:01:40 Allan Moore

Mr.

00:01:41 Allan Moore

Ottinger, hello, how are you y'all this afternoon?

00:01:44 Allan Moore

We're going to move directly into our new business for this afternoon, which is a presentation.

00:01:51 Allan Moore

I assume Mr.

00:01:53 Allan Moore

Ottinger is going to come up and introduce Ms.

00:01:54 Allan Moore

Karen here.

00:01:56 Allan Moore

So Mr.

00:01:56 Allan Moore

Ottinger, if you would.

00:01:59 Pat Ottinger

Thank you very much, and thank you very much, and good afternoon.

00:02:03 Pat Ottinger

I'm Pat Ottinger, the city parish attorney, and I'm pleased that you're able to attend on a very, very important topic, particularly to boards and commissions and those public bodies that exist in our community.

00:02:15 Pat Ottinger

We've also extended an invitation to the five municipalities, whether they're here or not.

00:02:21 Pat Ottinger

Anyone from one of the five municipalities here?

00:02:24 Pat Ottinger

Okay, thank you.

00:02:25 Pat Ottinger

We're glad to have you here.

00:02:27 Pat Ottinger

This topic, of course, is very important.

00:02:30 Pat Ottinger

to public bodies, but also to the public.

00:02:32 Pat Ottinger

Its purpose is to enhance transparency and openness in government.

00:02:36 Pat Ottinger

I certainly think that at Lafayette consolidate government with our very capable council office that we accomplish that.

00:02:42 Pat Ottinger

But all boards and commissions of any magnitude or purpose or objective are also under that law.

00:02:49 Pat Ottinger

A couple of things, would you please silence your cell phones so that we don't disrupt the speaker?

00:02:55 Pat Ottinger

To the lawyers in attendance, we do have MCLD credit.

00:02:59 Pat Ottinger

See me afterwards.

00:03:01 Pat Ottinger

And now I will mention that this is being filmed by AAOC and will be posted in due course on the library's website as well as on the Lafayette Consolidated Government Legal Department page of the website.

00:03:19 Pat Ottinger

So with that being said, I'm pleased to introduce

00:03:23 Pat Ottinger

Karen Day White, who is our speaker today from Baton Rouge.

00:03:27 Pat Ottinger

I've known her for many, many years, particularly through her involvement with the Louisiana Municipal Association, where she, before retiring from that, was the general counsel.

00:03:38 Pat Ottinger

Karen's an accomplished writer, lecturer, lobbyist, and advocate, very active in the municipal space, if you will, graduate of LSU Law School, my alma mater, been practicing law since October of 1998.

00:03:51 Pat Ottinger

She is taught over 300 hours of substantive content that runs the gamut from local government operations and transparency laws to the workplace adequate issues and professionalism.

00:04:04 Pat Ottinger

She filled an important role in establishing local support services under Governor Jeff Landry as the Director of the Office of Rural Development and the Governor's designee to the Delta Regional Authority.

00:04:16 Pat Ottinger

She was previously with the Louisiana Municipal Association, as I indicated, which is an association of governments in the city space, in contrast to the Police Jury Association, which covers the parish governments.

00:04:32 Pat Ottinger

But for 20 years, she was at the LMA, ultimately assuming roles in legislative advocacy, events, government, and public relations, education, and training.

00:04:42 Pat Ottinger

Prior to joining the LMA, Karen was an assistant

00:04:45 Pat Ottinger

Attorney General at the Louisiana Department of Justice in the Gaming Division.

00:04:50 Pat Ottinger

She now leverages her three decades of governmental experience as owner and operator of Karen White Consulting, LLC, which empowers Louisiana public officials and employees with multifaceted operational and technical support.

00:05:05 Pat Ottinger

So we're pleased to have her.

00:05:06 Pat Ottinger

I will say that I would ask that we run through her presentation and we'll have an opportunity for questions and answers

00:05:13 Pat Ottinger

after a presentation.

00:05:15 Pat Ottinger

So with that, I turn it over to Karen White.

00:05:18 Pat Ottinger

Thank you.

00:05:19 Karen White

Thank you so much, Pat, and good afternoon, everybody.

00:05:23 Karen White

Oh, silence.

00:05:25 Karen White

Good afternoon, everybody.

00:05:26 Karen White

Good afternoon.

00:05:27 Karen White

Thank you.

00:05:28 Karen White

I appreciate that.

00:05:29 Karen White

I know that after lunch, the energy can wane a little bit.

00:05:33 Karen White

So we're going to talk about some very important topics today.

00:05:37 Karen White

I'm going to try to keep it certainly informative, but as lively as possible so that we can all

00:05:43 Karen White

stay awake.

00:05:45 Karen White

So as Pat said, my entire adult career has been in the space of municipal government, local governments, right?

00:05:54 Karen White

I continue to work with them today.

00:05:56 Karen White

This is an incredibly important issue.

00:06:00 Karen White

It's one that you see in the headlines occasionally.

00:06:04 Karen White

There's been some recent press about it that we'll talk about.

00:06:07 Karen White

And so my hope is that you walk away equipped with all the great information that you need to do your job best.

00:06:16 Karen White

So first things first, what's the idea here?

00:06:19 Karen White

Well, the right of the people to participate in their government is rooted in our constitution.

00:06:26 Karen White

It is the same provision that allows

00:06:30 Karen White

the folks and the public to access public records, right?

00:06:34 Karen White

So if you look at this provision, the people have a right to observe the deliberations of their public bodies and examine documents.

00:06:41 Karen White

So this one section of the Constitution has birthed the open meetings law and the public records law.

00:06:48 Karen White

They're called sunshine laws sometimes.

00:06:51 Karen White

They're just good government measures, right?

00:06:53 Karen White

So that government is accountable for what it's doing.

00:06:57 Karen White

Always, always, always, these transparency laws, if there's ever an issue when you're on the fence, we always interpret them in favor of disclosure, right?

00:07:07 Karen White

We err on the side of giving people more access, not less.

00:07:12 Karen White

So that's kind of the foundational concept here.

00:07:16 Karen White

Justice Brandeis, I think, had a great quote, and it's a short one, so it's easy to remember, that sunshine is the greatest disinfectant.

00:07:23 Karen White

And I agree with him, right?

00:07:26 Karen White

It's very hard to get away with the nasty things.

00:07:31 Karen White

And look, the folks who have bad intentions in the governmental sphere, thankfully, are very, very few and far between.

00:07:40 Karen White

But unless there's good scrutiny as to government operations, it's hard to catch those people and to get them out of the government space and, you know, back over wherever else they may belong.

00:07:52 Karen White

All right, so where would you find this?

00:07:55 Karen White

The open meetings law is actually found in Louisiana's revised statutes.

00:07:59 Karen White

It's in Title 42.

00:08:01 Karen White

And if you've ever gotten a public records request before, you may see that people will cite FOIA, the Freedom of Information Act.

00:08:12 Karen White

I'm not entirely sure why they do that, because that is a federal transparency measure, and you're not a federal entity.

00:08:21 Karen White

None of you are, I don't think.

00:08:24 Karen White

And so, you know, if you see FOIA, just know that they're trying to get at Louisiana's transparency laws, but the stuff that matters to us lives here in Title 42.

00:08:37 Karen White

I'm going to give you a brief caveat, and I'm sorry that the big screen isn't functioning with us today because the writing may be a little small here.

00:08:47 Karen White

But what I'm going to be talking about today are fundamental concepts that apply to the lion's share of

00:08:54 Karen White

agencies and political subdivisions in the state, including entities like the library board.

00:09:03 Karen White

But there are some specialized rules in the open meetings law that I want to make you aware of.

00:09:08 Karen White

For school boards, for judicial or court proceedings, the Louisiana legislature carved out a little something special for themselves.

00:09:19 Karen White

Tax propositions, if we're talking about private citizen advisory groups,

00:09:25 Karen White

There are special rules for them.

00:09:29 Karen White

Any municipality, parish, or school board that lives in a parish that is big enough has a streamlined process called a consent agenda.

00:09:40 Karen White

And if we're talking about purchasing of gas or gas utilities, oof, all of those little niche things have specialized rules.

00:09:49 Karen White

And so I want you to walk away very well informed, but what I don't want to happen is you start chatting a week from now with a friend of yours who works for a school board, and you tell them, Karen White said you can't do that, or Karen White said you could do that, because school boards have special rules.

00:10:07 Karen White

If you have questions about that, we can dig into that in the Q&A section, or after we're done today, I can always provide you with those resources if you need them.

00:10:17 Karen White

But just know,

00:10:19 Karen White

There are special rules for some folks.

00:10:22 Karen White

So the core concepts here is that if you look at it summarized neatly into one sentence, the open meeting meetings law provides that every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public unless there is some exception to that.

00:10:40 Karen White

And that usually means an executive session.

00:10:44 Karen White

So I've underscored the concepts of public body and meeting, because obviously, if those two elements aren't triggered, then the open meetings law doesn't apply.

00:10:54 Karen White

Without question, the library board, Lafayette consolidated government, every other town, village, and city and parish in the state, the state itself, and all those political subdivisions, boards and commissions,

00:11:07 Karen White

are considered to be public bodies.

00:11:10 Karen White

And the definition that captures a board or commission would be this language that says, essentially, if it's any other subset of a government that has the ability to make rules, to make advisory policy decisions, those are all going to be considered to be public bodies.

00:11:31 Karen White

They paint with a really, really broad brush.

00:11:34 Karen White

And again, if you're ever on the fence, we err on the side of transparency.

00:11:38 Karen White

We err on the side of more.

00:11:41 Karen White

Meeting is a more interesting concept.

00:11:45 Karen White

It is very simply defined as a quorum, a simple majority of that public body coming together to discuss a matter that is under their supervision or control.

00:11:56 Karen White

There is a specific carve out for things like chance meetings, right?

00:12:02 Karen White

If we are out at lunch together, or let's say we're at a festival and all the members of the body happen to be there enjoying the festival.

00:12:13 Karen White

That is in and of itself is not going to trigger the open meetings law.

00:12:19 Karen White

Educational sessions are generally considered to not be a public meeting.

00:12:23 Karen White

However,

00:12:24 Karen White

As I said, if you're ever on the fence about whether or not a meeting of a quorum of the body is going to trigger the open meetings law, I always recommend that you treat it like a meeting.

00:12:36 Karen White

It's better to cast the net and say, hey, we're not hiding anything public, come on down and hear what we're saying if you want to, than to go the other direction and have the public optics look like you're trying to do something behind closed doors that people don't know about.

00:12:52 Karen White

So again, let's be cautious, but without question, if a quorum of the body, no matter where they are, is discussing a matter of

public business, something that they have control of supervisory authority over, that's going to trigger the open meetings law.

00:13:10 Karen White

And that meeting has to be dealt with in accordance with all of these mandates we're going to talk about today.

00:13:16 Karen White

When in doubt, always there on the side of transparency.

00:13:18 Karen White

All right, so let's check through some of these mandatory elements for compliance, starting with a very simple one.

00:13:25 Karen White

The law requires that you post a copy of the open meetings law at the space where there is going to be a meeting.

00:13:32 Karen White

And it's meant to be posted liberally.

00:13:35 Karen White

So I always suggest that you have a copy at your city hall or wherever your headquarter office is, have a copy there and available.

00:13:46 Karen White

And then certainly at the meeting itself, have, if not a full copy plastered on the wall, an easy means by which the public could access that information at the meeting if they wanted to.

00:13:59 Karen White

The idea is that we want people to be able to see what laws govern the meeting that I'm sitting in if I have a question about what's happening.

00:14:10 Karen White

All right, so this is the one we're going to spend a little time on today because it is probably one of the more controversial areas in the open meetings law and one that people tend to complain about a lot.

00:14:22 Karen White

It is the right to public participation in that meeting.

00:14:26 Karen White

The law requires that

00:14:28 Karen White

before the body takes action on an agenda item, whatever that agenda item may be, that the public has a right to comment on that agenda item.

00:14:40 Karen White

This is often misunderstood, not only by members of the public, but by members of public bodies as well as to what this means.

00:14:49 Karen White

So I'll state first of all that a public body may adopt A reasonable restrictions on public comment.

00:14:56 Karen White

What they cannot do is limit public comment to a certain set of people or to certain persons, right?

00:15:04 Karen White

Everybody in attendance has the right to comment on an agenda item that the board's going to take action on.

00:15:12 Karen White

They can, however, restrict the time that each speaker has.

00:15:17 Karen White

So some people will adopt A three-minute rule or a five-minute rule.

00:15:21 Karen White

That's perfectly acceptable as long as, A, it is adopted by a majority of the public body, right?

00:15:29 Karen White

This is going to be the rule of the day.

00:15:30 Karen White

And B, it has to be equitably applied.

00:15:34 Karen White

You can't get to an agenda item, let speaker number one go on for 20 minutes, and then decide, oh, I think we need to curtail this, and apply a three-minute rule to every other speaker.

00:15:44 Karen White

You can't do that.

00:15:45 Karen White

It has to be everybody.

00:15:47 Karen White

So as long as those restrictions are objective, they don't discriminate against a particular group, and they, again, are equitably applied, you're fine.

00:16:00 Karen White

I also wanted to point out that this right to public comment, the right to public participation does not mean that you have to allow someone who is disruptive to the point that government can't conduct this business.

00:16:15 Karen White

You don't have to allow them to remain.

00:16:18 Karen White

And so we're going to walk through a few considerations about how you balance those two things.

00:16:24 Karen White

in just a second.

00:16:26 Karen White

But I want to be sure that I'm being very clear.

00:16:29 Karen White

It does not mean that members of the public have the right to plunge your public meetings into chaos.

00:16:36 Karen White

They have to be orderly.

00:16:37 Karen White

And if a member of the public is disrupted to the point that you can't conduct your meeting, that you can't conduct your business, then there is a way that they can be removed from that space.

00:16:49 Karen White

So not for the first time.

00:16:51 Karen White

I'm going to make reference to First Amendment protections, which we all know as being the both federal and state protection for freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

00:17:02 Karen White

So I've cited the law for you here.

00:17:06 Karen White

And within the context of a public meeting, again, I want to make sure that we're being very clear on what the public's right

00:17:17 Karen White

to engage really, really means.

00:17:21 Karen White

I'm not going to ask for a show of hands, but I know that there are some public bodies that along with their agenda items that are very specific, they have a bullet or an agenda item that says public comment.

00:17:37 Karen White

And they just sort of open it up for whatever anybody wants to say.

00:17:43 Karen White

If I ruled the world, I would not have that on my agenda.

00:17:48 Karen White

The law does not require that you have that on your agenda.

00:17:52 Karen White

You do not have to just open up the forum for anybody who wants to say anything about anything.

00:17:58 Karen White

That is not what the law requires.

00:18:01 Karen White

The law requires that, again, on an agenda item, and only if the public body is taking action on that agenda item,

00:18:11 Karen White

does the public have the right to comment on that agenda item?

00:18:15 Karen White

So let's suppose that, we're talking about on this particular agenda, sewer district #5, right?

00:18:24 Karen White

Agenda item comes up, council or board has a robust discussion and they decide we're not taking any action.

00:18:31 Karen White

We're not enacting an ordinance or a resolution.

00:18:33 Karen White

Nobody's made a motion.

00:18:35 Karen White

We've just had the discussion and we're moving on.

00:18:38 Karen White

The public does not have a right to comment in that situation.

00:18:41 Karen White

situation.

00:18:42 Karen White

Why?

00:18:43 Karen White

The board's not taking action.

00:18:45 Karen White

But if the board is going to take an action effectively, if there's a motion of any kind to do anything before that vote is taken, the public has a right to comment.

00:18:54 Karen White

And they have a right, again, to comment on that item.

00:18:57 Karen White

If we're talking about Sewer District #5, the member of the public who comes to speak certainly can talk about Sewer District #5, maybe under the three-minute or five-minute rule.

00:19:10 Karen White

What the law does not enable them to do is talk about their neighbor's trees and how they hate the roads and everything else that has nothing to do with Sewer District #5.

00:19:22 Karen White

All right, so very clear on that.

00:19:26 Karen White

And again, the concept of a catch-all, I leave it to each body to figure that out.

00:19:31 Karen White

I will tell you your meetings will be much more orderly and much shorter if you take that off.

00:19:37 Karen White

But again, completely up to you.

00:19:41 Karen White

All right, so how do we then sort of balance these profound protections for free speech, right, the right of the public to express themselves, to express their opinions, and the right to engage in a public meeting?

00:19:59 Karen White

Well, there's a few, again, things that we want to be mindful of.

00:20:05 Karen White

Under federal law, and I've cited a case for you in the slide deck here called Ortega versus Parks and Commission of East Baton Rouge.

00:20:14 Karen White

It's BREC, basically, if you're familiar with Baton Rouge, that has a really, really good discussion about the concepts that we're talking about here.

00:20:23 Karen White

But under federal law, a meeting of a public body is considered to be a limited public forum, meaning there is a right

00:20:34 Karen White

for the public to engage and participate, but it's limited.

00:20:38 Karen White

It's not like you have had a, catch-all town hall where people can talk about whatever they want to talk about.

00:20:49 Karen White

There is an agenda.

00:20:50 Karen White

That agenda contains particular items.

00:20:52 Karen White

So it is a limited public forum.

00:20:55 Karen White

And in that circumstance, any restrictions on the right of the people to participate only have to be, again, reasonable, right, and objective.

00:21:05 Karen White

They can't be discriminatory.

00:21:07 Karen White

They have to apply to everybody, and they have to be reasonable.

00:21:11 Karen White

Setting A 20-second time limit on public comment, not reasonable, likely.

00:21:17 Karen White

Three minutes, yeah, you're probably okay there.

00:21:19 Karen White

So

00:21:22 Karen White

Again, the right to free speech exists, but in a limited fashion when we're talking about public meetings.

00:21:28 Karen White

Again, the Ortega case gives a really great example of this and a really good discussion on it.

00:21:37 Karen White

In that instance, a former employee of BREC started showing up at their public meetings

00:21:44 Karen White

and was making threats, was being generally disruptive, at one point brought a weapon, brought a firearm into the meeting.

00:21:53 Karen White

And so the powers that be at BREC thought, this guy's dangerous, right?

00:21:58 Karen White

We're scared for ourselves.

00:22:00 Karen White

We're scared for the other people who are attending this meeting.

00:22:03 Karen White

And so they ejected him from a meeting and they barred him from attending any subsequent meetings.

00:22:11 Karen White

And

00:22:12 Karen White

the person who was ejected filed the lawsuit saying, you can't do that.

00:22:17 Karen White

I have a right to participate, and you're impinging on my First Amendment right to free speech.

00:22:22 Karen White

Well, the court said, we don't agree with you, sir.

00:22:26 Karen White

You are a threat, and you presented a threat to public health, safety, welfare, all that good stuff.

00:22:34 Karen White

So as long as there's a means for you to fix your bad behavior and apply to be readmitted to those meetings, we're upholding the fact that they ejected you and the fact that they barred you from the meeting.

00:22:50 Karen White

Because again, it's not an absolute right.

00:22:53 Karen White

They have a right to participate, but it is limited.

00:22:55 Karen White

So take a look at that case if you want to be a nerd like I am and get into the real meat and potatoes of what that means.

00:23:02 Karen White

Some key takeaways.

00:23:04 Karen White

when we're balancing First Amendment rights with the right to participate.

00:23:09 Karen White

Comments, even salacious, unpopular, inflammatory comments must be allowed, right?

00:23:15 Karen White

Unless they are completely off topic, unless they are threatening, right, harm to a member of the public or a member of the public body, you have to allow them to say those things.

00:23:29 Karen White

I know you have to grit your teeth sometimes when somebody comes in and starts saying

00:23:34 Karen White

nasty things, but that is protected by the right to free speech.

00:23:40 Karen White

Again, restrictions have to be objective and equitably applied.

00:23:44 Karen White

I always recommend that public bodies develop a policy for how you're going to deal with disruptive people.

00:23:50 Karen White

It is infinitely better to have a step up protocol in place so that you know, right?

00:23:57 Karen White

We have, for example, a

00:24:01 Karen White

two warning rule, and then you're out.

00:24:04 Karen White

So the presiding official of the board, commission, or entity will warn that person, you're being disruptive.

00:24:10 Karen White

I need you to stop whatever it is you're doing, or I need you to stay on topic.

00:24:16 Karen White

And I'm going to warn you once.

00:24:18 Karen White

I'm going to warn you twice.

00:24:19 Karen White

And the third time you do it, I'm going to ask law enforcement to escort you out of the room.

00:24:25 Karen White

There's a ton of different models that you can look at.

00:24:29 Karen White

I have a few of those model policies myself.

00:24:32 Karen White

I'm happy to share with anybody, but having that policy in place gives you that objective in writing, go to.

00:24:41 Karen White

So you don't have to try to make it up as you go along.

00:24:44 Karen White

You know exactly what you do in that situation, and we do that for everybody who's being disruptive.

00:24:51 Karen White

So I would suggest you talk to your learned counsel about

00:24:54 Karen White

potentially putting together a policy.

00:24:57 Karen White

And then if there is a particular hot button issue and everybody and their mom is going to show up to talk about it, you might consider calling a special meeting just for that topic.

00:25:11 Karen White

So that when your regular meeting rolls around, all those sort of pedestrian things, not that they're not important, right, but the things that aren't necessarily quite so sexy,

00:25:22 Karen White

Those can go forward and not get hung up in all this inflammatory stuff.

00:25:28 Karen White

Tax propositions, that's a big one.

00:25:31 Karen White

You may think about calling a special meeting just to talk about that and let that go on for as long as it needs to go on.

00:25:38 Karen White

Let everybody get it out of their system.

00:25:40 Karen White

And that way you've handled that.

00:25:42 Karen White

When regular meeting rolls around, now we're talking about paying the bills, we're adopting minutes, right?

00:25:48 Karen White

We're doing all those necessary things.

00:25:50 Karen White

Just a suggestion.

00:25:52 Karen White

It may help to get you out of your regular meeting a little quicker as well.

00:25:58 Karen White

All right, so that's the public comment portion.

00:26:02 Karen White

The people also have a right to record the meetings.

00:26:07 Karen White

Audio or video recording must be permitted.

00:26:11 Karen White

If they are doing it from a handheld device, they can do it from their chair.

00:26:16 Karen White

If they're using something like a video camera, if it's a member of the press, for example, that's got some big equipment

00:26:22 Karen White

equipment, I would suggest that there needs to be good rules, good policies in place for how that recording can take place.

00:26:32 Karen White

And so not only does the law provide that a body may adopt rules, it actually is mandatory.

00:26:40 Karen White

Every public body shall adopt rules as to how the public's recording of the meetings should happen.

00:26:50 Karen White

I have a good model policy

00:26:52 Karen White

policy on that, I'm happy to share.

00:26:54 Karen White

But we're talking about things like where can the camera be set up?

00:26:59 Karen White

How bright should the lights be?

00:27:02 Karen White

We don't want, you know, someone who's got a super bright camera light blinding the members of the public body or blinding the members of the public so that they can't see what's going on or having so much equipment stacked up and in the way that they're impeding

00:27:18 Karen White

disabled access or the pathways that members of the public use, right, to walk in and out.

00:27:25 Karen White

So all of those types of things, you should have adopted in a policy somewhere.

00:27:31 Karen White

And again, it's mandatory.

00:27:33 Karen White

So we want to make sure that we're fully complying with all those mandates.

00:27:39 Karen White

When it comes to the public body recording or broadcasting its own meetings, generally it is completely discretionary.

00:27:48 Karen White

You may broadcast your meetings.

00:27:50 Karen White

You may choose to audio or video record your meetings.

00:27:54 Karen White

There are a couple of exceptions in their recent legislative additions.

00:27:58 Karen White

If you are a parish with a population of 25,000 or over, if you are a school board in a parish with a population of 25,000 or over,

00:28:08 Karen White

Or if you're a municipality with a population of 10,000 or over, you have to live broadcast your meetings.

00:28:16 Karen White

Note, the requirement is only for live broadcasting.

00:28:20 Karen White

So that still doesn't place an obligation for them to record their meetings.

00:28:26 Karen White

The idea being, no matter who you are, you do not have to record your meetings.

00:28:31 Karen White

If you choose to record your meetings, you have just created a public record.

00:28:36 Karen White

And that public record has to be maintained for at least two years from the date that it's produced.

00:28:43 Karen White

And that would be, of course, in accordance with your comprehensive public records retention schedule, right?

00:28:50 Karen White

But again, if you choose to, bully on you, but please have good protocols in place so that the audio or video recordings are maintained in accordance with the public records law.

00:29:05 Karen White

So what do you do then?

00:29:06 Karen White

You can see on the graphic here a very, the bright light that might be disruptive to members of the public.

00:29:12 Karen White

And if you flipped it around, it would probably be disruptive to members of the board.

00:29:17 Karen White

But again, how do you provide the constitutional access to the public while keeping them in check?

00:29:23 Karen White

Well, this is the first page of the policy I was talking about.

00:29:27 Karen White

So I think that is

00:29:28 Karen White

incredibly important is having those objective policies in place.

00:29:32 Karen White

So things like this don't happen.

00:29:35 Karen White

Look at the clutter in the walkway.

00:29:37 Karen White

People can't walk through there.

00:29:39 Karen White

And goodness, if there was somebody who was, you know, wheelchair bound, they would not be able to get past that guy.

00:29:46 Karen White

So that's the importance of those policies.

00:29:50 Karen White

So to recap, do you have to record your meeting?

00:29:54 Karen White

No, you do not.

00:29:56 Karen White

Do you have to live broadcast?

00:29:58 Karen White

The answer is a resounding maybe.

00:30:01 Karen White

I would say that the library board here would not need to live broadcast its meetings.

00:30:06 Karen White

But if you're big enough as a parish or school board or a municipality, you do have to live broadcast your meetings.

00:30:16 Karen White

And again, you're creating public records here.

00:30:19 Karen White

All right, so that's the recording stuff.

00:30:21 Karen White

What about this requirement to meet in person?

00:30:24 Karen White

For years and years and years, it was rock solid, no other option.

00:30:31 Karen White

Every public body, when they conduct a meeting, they have to meet in person, period, end of story.

00:30:38 Karen White

And then COVID happened.

00:30:41 Karen White

And around 2020,

00:30:44 Karen White

the legislature adopted a very reasonable provision that says if there is a gubernatorial or presidential declaration of disaster or a public health emergency, then public bodies may meet electronically, but it has to be with regard to things that are urgent.

00:31:07 Karen White

So it can't just be any old, I would say, for example,

00:31:12 Karen White

pedestrian matters like adopting of minutes, probably not urgent.

00:31:17 Karen White

But if it's something that's time sensitive or that public body really has to get to it pretty quickly, then yes, electronic participation would be allowed.

00:31:27 Karen White

Now please note that if we're talking about remote participation because of a disaster or public health emergency, it is an all or nothing proposition.

00:31:37 Karen White

So it's not like a few people can be at the physical location, a few are attending remotely.

00:31:44 Karen White

Nay, nay.

00:31:45 Karen White

The idea is if it's so dangerous out there that we need to meet remotely, then everybody is going to be

00:31:53 Karen White

remote attendance, right?

00:31:55 Karen White

All or none.

00:31:56 Karen White

Either everybody's there or everybody's not.

00:31:59 Karen White

So that is that the first exception that I've listed for you here.

00:32:04 Karen White

And oh, I did want to point out, sorry, just to circle back very quickly.

00:32:09 Karen White

If there is no exception and we're under this general rule that everybody has to be there in person,

00:32:17 Karen White

It is not out of the realm of possibility that a member of that public body could tune in using remote means, a Zoom or a Skype, but you have to construct it so that they, first of all, don't count towards a quorum and they cannot participate in any way.

00:32:36 Karen White

If they're just a ride along just to hear what's happening, that's fine, but keep them muted, keep them

00:32:43 Karen White

out of any discussions, it's almost like they're not there.

00:32:46 Karen White

They're just there to listen in so they don't miss out on anything.

00:32:51 Karen White

But again, that's under that, you know, in-person mandate.

00:32:55 Karen White

So on the exceptions, just talked about the natural disaster or public health issue.

00:33:02 Karen White

There is another provision that would apply, and I would say it's

00:33:08 Karen White

just to let you know in advance, would not apply to the library commission here or the library control board here.

00:33:16 Karen White

But if it is a border commission that has statewide jurisdiction, right, they're not limited to a region.

00:33:24 Karen White

Their business runs the gamut from, you know, shore to shore, from border to border, statewide.

00:33:31 Karen White

And if they

00:33:33 Karen White

meet certain other qualifiers under the statute, they may conduct some of their meetings electronically.

00:33:41 Karen White

It is a unfortunately convoluted statute.

00:33:45 Karen White

So if you find yourself on one of those boards or commissions and you want to know, hey, can we meet remotely sometimes?

00:33:52 Karen White

Then just let me know or do a deep dive on this section of the statute.

00:33:57 Karen White

But there are some that can conduct some of their meetings remotely

00:34:02 Karen White

Usually the idea is around six of them per year, hopefully not back-to-back.

00:34:09 Karen White

All right, so that's another exception.

00:34:11 Karen White

The last one is going to be ADA compliant remote attendance.

00:34:18 Karen White

And I'm going to talk about that in more depth later, but I wanted to point out to you here, that is an exception to this everybody has to be there rule.

00:34:26 Karen White

All right, so everybody's got to be there except

00:34:30 Karen White

natural disasters, you're a specialized board or commission, or somebody has an ADA disability, which again, we'll talk about more in just a minute.

00:34:40 Karen White

All right, this spoken vote, live voice is what it translates to.

00:34:48 Karen White

The Latin phrase is viva voce.

00:34:51 Karen White

This is something that's been in the press a little bit.

00:34:54 Karen White

I don't know if you saw that the attorney general was complaining that an action undertaken by the city of Shreveport was not valid because they did electronic voting only.

00:35:10 Karen White

No voice vote.

00:35:12 Karen White

And if you look at the letter of the law, it very clearly says it has to be voice vote.

00:35:18 Karen White

Viva Voce.

00:35:20 Karen White

It doesn't mean that you can't do electronic voting as well for recordation purposes.

00:35:25 Karen White

That's often easier when you have a system, you press a button, the system tracks the voting.

00:35:31 Karen White

But the open meetings law says you still have to vocally articulate what your vote is in yay or nay form usually.

00:35:40 Karen White

I personally,

00:35:43 Karen White

I think that the spirit of this law is more than complied with by electronic voting.

00:35:49 Karen White

It's meant to be a transparency measure where you can tell who is voting which way, which you can do with electronic voting.

00:35:58 Karen White

I don't know that saying yay or nay adds anything to that.

00:36:03 Karen White

The law technically requires it, though.

00:36:06 Karen White

I think if ever challenged, that strict viva vote requirement might actually fail because there are people who are non-verbal.

00:36:16 Karen White

So what do we do about those people?

00:36:18 Karen White

They can't actually voice their vote at all.

00:36:22 Karen White

So are we then going to preclude them from public service because they can't speak?

00:36:27 Karen White

I think that might be discriminatory.

00:36:29 Karen White

So I don't know.

00:36:30 Karen White

Nobody's ever challenged it.

00:36:32 Karen White

and maybe they never, will, but just know that voice vote requirement is there in person.

00:36:40 Karen White

And then the votes, of course, are recorded in the minutes.

00:36:44 Karen White

And those minutes, of course, are public documents.

00:36:49 Karen White

Written minutes of the meeting, you know very well that for every meeting of a public body, minutes have to be kept.

00:36:57 Karen White

Those minutes are then published in the official journal.

00:37:01 Karen White

And I wanted to

00:37:02 Karen White

kind of do a little bit of a bunny trail when I talked about this because this is often misunderstood.

00:37:08 Karen White

I've heard many people say that the minutes of a public body have to be published in the official journal within 20 days of the meeting.

00:37:16 Karen White

No, not exactly.

00:37:19 Karen White

They have to be forwarded to the official journal for publication within 20 days.

00:37:24 Karen White

They don't actually have to be published within 20 days.

00:37:27 Karen White

So as long as your clerk or secretary or whoever handles that, as long as they have finished the meetings, minutes rather, and within 20 days send it over to the newspaper, you've done your job.

00:37:39 Karen White

When the newspaper actually publishes it, or if they ever do, that's not your problem.

00:37:44 Karen White

You send it over within 20 days.

00:37:46 Karen White

As to what is in those minutes, the law only provides 4 things, really three, 3 1/2, we'll see, as to what has to be in your meeting minutes.

00:37:57 Karen White

date, time, and place of where the meeting occurred, of course, the members of the public body who were there and those who were absent.

00:38:06 Karen White

And then on the substantive matters that were voted on, if the board or commissioner body took an action item, then that has to be recorded as to what the action was, who voted yes, who voted no, and who abstained.

00:38:24 Karen White

All right, so daytime place, who was there, who was not, and then what'd y'all do, basically?

00:38:31 Karen White

Who voted how on the things that happened there?

00:38:34 Karen White

That's really it.

00:38:35 Karen White

This #4 is where people start to get in trouble and get into really lengthy minutes.

00:38:42 Karen White

And it says any other information that the public body requests to be included or reflected in the minutes.

00:38:49 Karen White

that is theoretically by a majority vote that the board would say we would like, and normally this would be done contemporaneous in the meeting.

00:38:57 Karen White

Okay, so we've discussed something that's really sensitive.

00:39:01 Karen White

We want to make sure that it is properly recorded.

00:39:05 Karen White

So Madam Clerk, Madam Secretary, by majority will of this board, we want the minutes to detail XYZ.

00:39:16 Karen White

What has happened, however,

00:39:19 Karen White

over time in many places is that the clerk or the secretary ends up doing a word for word, almost, transcript of what happened.

00:39:31 Karen White

So now you have minutes that are 5, 6, 10, 15 pages long.

00:39:36 Karen White

Holy moly, please don't do that.

00:39:39 Karen White

For a couple of reasons, one of the biggest of which being you have to publish your minutes in the journal.

00:39:46 Karen White

So your minutes, they're called minutes, not hours, ha ha ha.

00:39:51 Karen White

Your minutes should be half a page long, a page tops, if you had a really busy agenda.

00:39:58 Karen White

If your public body wants that blow-by-blow description of what happened, my suggestion is that you do a standalone document.

00:40:08 Karen White

You can call it meeting transcript or action summary.

00:40:13 Karen White

You can call it whatever you want to call it.

00:40:14 Karen White

Just don't call it your minutes.

00:40:16 Karen White

do something separate that gives that detailed description.

00:40:20 Karen White

It's a public record that anybody can access if they want to.

00:40:23 Karen White

It can be provided to the members of the body afterwards so they can see what it says and be satisfied.

00:40:30 Karen White

But the minutes themselves only contain those things, those three things there.

00:40:34 Karen White

That's what you got to publish.

00:40:36 Karen White

And unless you just have limitless amounts of money,

00:40:40 Karen White

Official journal publications can rack up really, really quickly.

00:40:43 Karen White

So let's keep them short, kids.

00:40:45 Karen White

Minutes, not hours.

00:40:46 Karen White

Less is more.

00:40:47 Karen White

All right, now we're going to get into the ADA accessibility portion.

00:40:54 Karen White

This is all fairly new.

00:40:57 Karen White

I don't want to give you the wrong year here, but I'm thinking it was 2023.

00:41:01 Karen White

Pretty sure it was.

00:41:05 Karen White

And there's

00:41:06 Karen White

two elements to these new requirements for those with disabilities to engage in meetings.

00:41:14 Karen White

One is a disability of a member of the public, right, John Q.

00:41:19 Karen White

Public.

00:41:20 Karen White

The other is a disability of a member of the public body itself.

00:41:26 Karen White

So we're going to handle them in that order.

00:41:28 Karen White

If a member of the public has a disability that is recognized by the federal law,

00:41:36 Karen White

the Americans with Disabilities Act as being a legitimate disability.

00:41:42 Karen White

And they request that they have some type of assistance or accommodation in order to participate in the meeting.

00:41:51 Karen White

You have to give them that accommodation within reason.

00:41:56 Karen White

How do you do that?

00:41:57 Karen White

Well, if you have the capability under the law here, and again, I realize it is small print for you, my live attendees, sorry about that.

00:42:06 Karen White

If you have the capability to allow that disabled member of the public to participate electronically, so that would be by telecommunications, by telephone, or by video communications, something like Zoom or Skype or GoToMeetings, if you have that capability, you have to allow them to access the meeting that way.

00:42:29 Karen White

Many, many, many, if not most jurisdictions have that capability in this day and age because it's pretty easy to do.

00:42:37 Karen White

And most people did something like it during COVID anyway.

00:42:41 Karen White

And so most people have already figured that out.

00:42:43 Karen White

But look, if you're a really small community or you're a brand new board, you haven't had to do this before, maybe you don't have that capability.

00:42:53 Karen White

Law says if you don't have the ability

00:42:56 Karen White

to allow the public to access electronically, then you have to adopt rules that provide, quote, other viable alternatives.

00:43:06 Karen White

What does that mean?

00:43:07 Karen White

We don't know.

00:43:09 Karen White

I would suggest there's a few different things you can look at doing.

00:43:12 Karen White

You might develop a process where that person is provided with advanced notice of the agenda items.

00:43:21 Karen White

and told, please give me your comments.

00:43:24 Karen White

And when it comes to that agenda item, we will read your comments into the record or provide us an audio recording of what you want to say, subject to a three-minute limit.

00:43:37 Karen White

Something like that, right?

00:43:39 Karen White

Other viable alternatives, as long as they have some ability to engage, you're good.

00:43:45 Karen White

Electronically, though,

00:43:47 Karen White

if you have that ability, and I suspect that most people do in this day and age.

00:43:53 Karen White

It should be noted that it doesn't give them the right to access executive sessions.

00:43:59 Karen White

Those are still closed.

00:44:01 Karen White

Just because they're participating electronically or remotely does not mean they get to peek into executive sessions.

00:44:07 Karen White

Those are still closed down.

00:44:10 Karen White

So that is a member of the public that is disabled.

00:44:15 Karen White

What is a disability?

00:44:16 Karen White

Well, broad, broad brush here, right?

00:44:20 Karen White

It's all the things that you would traditionally think about and some that you haven't.

00:44:25 Karen White

So pretty much any condition that you might see a medical doctor for is probably going to be considered a disability in this day and age.

00:44:34 Karen White

Even things like post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorders, all those things are disabilities.

00:44:44 Karen White

So when we walk through this sort of decision tree, first thing is they have to request accommodation.

00:44:51 Karen White

You don't certainly don't want to be looking out in the crowd and walk over and say, hey, you look like you're disabled.

00:44:58 Karen White

Do you need electronic access?

00:45:00 Karen White

No, we don't want to do that.

00:45:01 Karen White

We're going to wait for somebody to request that accommodation.

00:45:06 Karen White

When it comes to verifying that they have a legitimate disability,

00:45:11 Karen White

I want to be very clear.

00:45:12 Karen White

You cannot ask them what their disability is.

00:45:16 Karen White

You can't poke around in their medical problems or their medical history.

00:45:20 Karen White

That's HIPAA protected.

00:45:22 Karen White

We don't want to get into the business of doing that anyway.

00:45:24 Karen White

But what you can do, and there's a form for it that I'm happy to provide for you, is give them a form that they will bring to their medical doctor where the doctor certifies without saying what it is,

00:45:39 Karen White

that I treat this person and I verify that they have a disability that is recognized by the ADA, period.

00:45:46 Karen White

I don't need to know what it is.

00:45:48 Karen White

I don't need to know what's wrong with you.

00:45:49 Karen White

I just need to know that it's a legitimate issue that you have.

00:45:53 Karen White

On top of that, you're going to need to know how to accommodate them, right?

00:45:57 Karen White

So we're still not prying.

00:45:59 Karen White

I don't need to know what the nature of your problem is, but I need to know what accommodation you need.

00:46:06 Karen White

Is it that you need to participate electronically?

00:46:11 Karen White

Do you need closed captioning?

00:46:15 Karen White

What level of accommodation will essentially mitigate whatever your disability is?

00:46:21 Karen White

The one that I don't want to know about.

00:46:23 Karen White

So let's verify that there's a disability, figure out how you may accommodate them, and then

00:46:34 Karen White

The law provides, if they have a disability, the only option is to allow them to participate electronically.

00:46:42 Karen White

You can't give them other viable alternatives.

00:46:46 Karen White

It has to be electronic.

00:46:48 Karen White

So again, hopefully everybody's got that process in place by now.

00:46:52 Karen White

But if you don't and you have a disabled member of your public body, you're going to have to come up with it.

00:46:57 Karen White

You're going to have to figure out how to make that happen.

00:47:00 Karen White

And frankly, it says video or telephone, telephonic means.

00:47:06 Karen White

So, putting a speakerphone in the middle of the room would really comply with that.

00:47:12 Karen White

So if it came down to it, you could do that.

00:47:15 Karen White

But it's kind of the same language.

00:47:18 Karen White

If they have an ADA recognized disability, then they must be allowed to participate in the meeting as if they were there.

00:47:27 Karen White

So that means that they count towards a quorum as if they were physically there.

00:47:32 Karen White

It also means that they have to be privy to executive sessions as if they were there.

00:47:39 Karen White

That makes me very, very nervous.

00:47:43 Karen White

There's nothing I can do about it, but it makes me nervous that somebody participating electronically is going to be in executive session participating electronically.

00:47:54 Karen White

It is way too easy, even though they're not supposed to.

00:47:58 Karen White

It is way too easy for somebody to hit record and capture what's going on behind closed doors, right?

00:48:04 Karen White

So nothing for us to do about it other than worry about it.

00:48:08 Karen White

It's what the law compels.

00:48:09 Karen White

You just have to do the best you can and hope that people do the right thing.

00:48:13 Karen White

But as you well know, when we go into executive session, there's no recordation back there.

00:48:19 Karen White

It's like, leave your cell phones out, put your pins down,

00:48:23 Karen White

It is meant to be exclusive to a conversation among those members that are behind closed doors.

00:48:31 Karen White

But I recommend the same process, i.e.

00:48:34 Karen White

give them a form, have them bring it to their doctor who will verify they have an ADA-recognized disability, and then figure out, you know, specific to your electronic participation, is there anything in particular that you need to accommodate whatever your disability is?

00:48:54 Karen White

And I just said all the rest of that stuff.

00:48:57 Karen White

Because their participation is so critical, if you encounter some type of technical glitch with your electronic communications, which, happens, am I right, IT guy?

00:49:09 Karen White

It does, Jeremy.

00:49:11 Karen White

If that happens, you then have to press pause on the meeting and try to figure out how to fix whatever that problem is.

00:49:19 Karen White

Now, it doesn't

00:49:20 Karen White

provide really strict guidance as to what you do from there.

00:49:26 Karen White

How long do we have to pause?

00:49:29 Karen White

Is it half an hour?

00:49:30 Karen White

Is it an hour?

00:49:31 Karen White

What if we can't get the electronic communications back up?

00:49:37 Karen White

Does that stop the meeting?

00:49:38 Karen White

Do we have to go home?

00:49:40 Karen White

It doesn't really say in this instance.

00:49:42 Karen White

I would say you have to act reasonably.

00:49:45 Karen White

If their participation

00:49:47 Karen White

gives you your quorum, then yeah, you're done, right?

00:49:51 Karen White

If they can't, they're not connected anymore, you've lost a quorum, there's nothing else you can do.

00:49:58 Karen White

Are you at the end of the agenda where the only thing left is to adjourn the meeting and you still have a quorum of people there?

00:50:05 Karen White

I would say losing your tech at that point, probably not a big deal.

00:50:09 Karen White

So there's no bright lines, you just have to be reasonable.

00:50:12 Karen White

Act reasonably under the circumstances.

00:50:15 Karen White

Ask your attorney is what I'll tell you.

00:50:18 Karen White

Okay, so that's the ADA stuff.

00:50:20 Karen White

And again, any particular questions about that, we're going to have time in just a minute under Q&A to talk about those, all those good questions you may have.

00:50:31 Karen White

One of the biggest complaints with regards to public bodies and their lack of compliance with open meetings law mandates is the notice.

00:50:41 Karen White

Notice is huge here.

00:50:44 Karen White

And getting it right matters.

00:50:45 Karen White

So of course I've thrown in a quote from one of my favorite quotable folks, Mr.

00:50:51 Karen White

Mark Twain.

00:50:53 Karen White

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

00:50:58 Karen White

I love that.

00:50:59 Karen White

It's true.

00:50:59 Karen White

We don't want to get it almost right when it comes to your notice.

00:51:03 Karen White

You want it right.

00:51:03 Karen White

You want it bang on right every time.

00:51:06 Karen White

Because if it's not right, all the actions that happen at that meeting may be nullified.

00:51:12 Karen White

You don't ever want to be in that situation.

00:51:15 Karen White

So once per year, if you are a body that has a set schedule of meetings, most do, right?

00:51:24 Karen White

Most will sit down, usually at the end of the prior year and figure out when are we meeting next year, right?

00:51:30 Karen White

You're going to put your schedule together.

00:51:33 Karen White

The law requires that once a year you post whatever that schedule may be.

00:51:38 Karen White

It doesn't mean that it can't be changed when you have to move a meeting around for one reason or another, or doesn't mean that you can't add as many special meetings as you need to.

00:51:49 Karen White

You certainly can.

00:51:50 Karen White

But whatever your set schedule is, go ahead and let them know.

00:51:54 Karen White

It doesn't actually say how you're supposed to do that.

00:51:57 Karen White

So I suggest that you hit the trifecta of posting it

00:52:02 Karen White

at your physical space, sending it to your official journal at the beginning of the year, and if you have a website, posting it online on your website.

00:52:13 Karen White

That one is important.

00:52:14 Karen White

I don't want to give short shrift to that.

00:52:15 Karen White

It is important, but it's not nearly as important as the per meeting notices.

00:52:21 Karen White

This is where the sacred space is here.

00:52:24 Karen White

for every meeting that a public body has, they have to post notice at least 24 hours before the meeting.

00:52:31 Karen White

And that 24 hours is exclusive, meaning it does not, it doesn't count if there is a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday in there.

00:52:41 Karen White

So if you meet on Tuesday and Monday happens to be a holiday, you have to post your agenda by XPM

00:52:53 Karen White

on Friday, because Saturday didn't count, Sunday didn't count, and Monday didn't count, right?

00:52:58 Karen White

So you have to back it up 24 hours, but don't include holidays and weekends.

00:53:04 Karen White

And people misunderstand that sometimes.

00:53:06 Karen White

They'll end up, you know, posting on Friday at 4 P.m.

00:53:12 Karen White

for a meeting, Monday at 10 A.m.

00:53:15 Karen White

Nope, you haven't done it 24 hours in advance, because Saturday and Sunday don't count.

00:53:20 Karen White

So make sure you're not including those weekends and holidays.

00:53:23 Karen White

How do you post that notice in accordance with the law?

00:53:28 Karen White

It provides either you place a copy of the notice at your sort of central headquarters, right?

00:53:36 Karen White

City Hall is what they envision, or your chief place of business, or wherever the meeting is going to be held.

00:53:46 Karen White

Or you can publish it in the official journal,

00:53:50 Karen White

but that publication has to be at least 24 hours before the meeting.

00:53:54 Karen White

I don't know of anybody who does this, mainly because we're all scrambling to get our agendas together, and it's normally not until 25 hours before the meeting that our agenda is set.

00:54:11 Karen White

So how am I going to get that into the paper 24 hours before the meeting?

00:54:16 Karen White

I don't know of anybody who does this, but it's there.

00:54:18 Karen White

Maybe you're an overachiever.

00:54:20 Karen White

If you are, bravo.

00:54:21 Karen White

That is 1 alternative means of posting.

00:54:24 Karen White

But most people are going to be placing a copy of the agenda at the place where the meeting's going to happen.

00:54:30 Karen White

So you have to do that.

00:54:32 Karen White

And if you have a website, you've got to put it on your website at least 24 hours beforehand, not including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.

00:54:40 Karen White

And

00:54:41 Karen White

If you have members of the public or members of the press that have requested notice of your agenda, notice of your meeting, you have to send it to them in the same manner and at the same time as you send it to the members of the public body.

00:54:58 Karen White

So some, you know, clerks or secretaries will send emails out to members of the public body saying, please see, attach the agenda for next week or

00:55:10 Karen White

tomorrow or whatever.

00:55:12 Karen White

However it is that the members of the body are notified, that's how the members of the media and the public have to be notified too.

00:55:19 Karen White

Same time, same manner.

00:55:22 Karen White

I recommend blind copying everybody.

00:55:25 Karen White

Get it done in one e-mail.

00:55:27 Karen White

But

00:55:28 Karen White

make sure that that's done.

00:55:29 Karen White

And it's pretty common that members of the media will let public bodies know, hey, I don't want to have to seek out all your meetings.

00:55:38 Karen White

Just let me know.

00:55:39 Karen White

Let me know when you're going to have a meeting.

00:55:41 Karen White

So that is the publication, excuse me, or the posting requirement.

00:55:46 Karen White

What's the exception to having that posted 24 hours in advance?

00:55:51 Karen White

Only in cases of dire, extraordinary emergencies.

00:55:54 Karen White

We're talking about

00:55:56 Karen White

A zombie apocalypse has happened, right?

00:55:59 Karen White

And we have to meet immediately, and we don't have 24 hours to let the public know.

00:56:04 Karen White

It's that type of dire emergency.

00:56:07 Karen White

Everything else, you probably got 24 hours to spare.

00:56:10 Karen White

It's pretty rare that you don't have 24 hours.

00:56:12 Karen White

But if you truly don't, there is an exception.

00:56:15 Karen White

You have to be ready to stand and defend your decision to have a meeting without 24-hour notice in a court of law, but there you go.

00:56:25 Karen White

What's going to be on that notice that you're going to post timely?

00:56:29 Karen White

Obviously, date, time, and place of the meeting, that's a no-brainer.

00:56:33 Karen White

Your agenda for that meeting is going to be there.

00:56:36 Karen White

Each item will be listed separately, and it has to be listed in a way that it gives reasonable specificity as to what the agenda item is.

00:56:49 Karen White

I always recommend that you forget about

00:56:53 Karen White

what forget that you're a member of the body or forget that you're in the inner circle.

00:56:57 Karen White

If you were just John Q.

00:56:59 Karen White

Public picking up that agenda and you looked at that agenda item, would you know what was about to happen or what they were going to talk about?

00:57:06 Karen White

It's sort of like the reasonable man standard, right?

00:57:10 Karen White

If you can't figure out what it is or what's going to be the subject matter of that discussion, then we need to do better.

00:57:17 Karen White

We need to add more detail.

00:57:19 Karen White

And again,

00:57:21 Karen White

We always err on the side of more and not less.

00:57:25 Karen White

But when it comes to certain descriptions, and we'll get to those in a sec, you have to be very, very detailed.

00:57:35 Karen White

Things like executive session, which we'll cover in a sec.

00:57:40 Karen White

All right, if you have one of the circumstances we talked about, you have to live broadcast because you're big, or you have electronic participation,

00:57:51 Karen White

You have to include that, the details on how to join on that agenda.

00:57:57 Karen White

And once that agenda and the notice have posted, it essentially freezes in place that agenda.

00:58:06 Karen White

So it is what it is, and that's what's going to be discussed at the meeting, with one exception.

00:58:13 Karen White

You've probably heard of this one already.

00:58:15 Karen White

How do we change the agenda once we get to the meeting?

00:58:18 Karen White

You can't change it before.

00:58:19 Karen White

You can't change it in that 24-hour window.

00:58:22 Karen White

Once we get to the meeting, how do we change it?

00:58:24 Karen White

is by unanimous vote of those present, not unanimous vote of the body, unanimous vote of those present, which has to be at least a quorum, right?

00:58:34 Karen White

Otherwise you wouldn't be able to do anything.

00:58:37 Karen White

And then it has to be described.

00:58:40 Karen White

What is it that we're adding and why are we adding that?

00:58:44 Karen White

And then there's a motion, presumably a second.

00:58:48 Karen White

And if all the members there unanimously vote to add that matter to the agenda, then it gets added.

00:58:55 Karen White

You want to use this very carefully.

00:58:57 Karen White

It cannot be used to circumvent the open meetings law.

00:59:00 Karen White

So you don't want to be acting nefariously, right, and sneak one in on the public.

00:59:06 Karen White

It's, I say it's reserved for things that really aren't important at all, or things that are so critically important that we can't wait.

00:59:16 Karen White

So either, oops, we forgot to add adoption of the minutes, or oops, we forgot to add this ballot measure that we have to get approved by Friday.

00:59:28 Karen White

We have to do it right now.

00:59:29 Karen White

We have to do it today.

00:59:31 Karen White

So use it sparingly, but there is

00:59:34 Karen White

this balance on all the mandates that you can use unanimous vote of those present to add a matter that's not on the agenda item.

00:59:42 Karen White

Sidebar, I don't know if any of you have affiliation with like municipal governments, Laurison Act governments in particular,

00:59:53 Karen White

But in those instances, the mayor controls the agenda.

00:59:57 Karen White

This is the check and balance to that in those small communities, right?

01:00:01 Karen White

The mayor says what's on the agenda, but the council by unanimous vote can say, plus whatever we want to be on the agenda.

01:00:09 Karen White

Just a little sidebar there.

01:00:11 Karen White

As with every action of the board commission entity, there has to be an allowance for public comment before you take a vote.

01:00:21 Karen White

Anytime you're going to take a vote, I always tell presiding officials and chairmen, if you are about to say all in favor, stop and ask, did I allow public comment?

01:00:32 Karen White

Because no matter what the vote is, something silly or something really important, whatever it is, every time they're going to take an action on an agenda item, public has to be allowed to comment.

01:00:46 Karen White

Ditto here, right?

01:00:47 Karen White

We're about to add an item to the agenda.

01:00:49 Karen White

Motion, second, public comment on us adding an item to the agenda.

01:00:55 Karen White

Then once public comment is wrapped up, then you take your vote.

01:01:01 Karen White

All right, everything is open except executive sessions.

01:01:06 Karen White

And this is the last thing we're gonna go through, then we'll open it up for some Q&A.

01:01:10 Karen White

These are often misunderstood.

01:01:12 Karen White

I see people go into executive session all the time for the wrong reasons or without any valid reason.

01:01:20 Karen White

They are itemized in the open meetings law.

01:01:23 Karen White

When can you go behind closed doors, out of public earshot, and out of public view?

01:01:29 Karen White

And as I mentioned a little bit earlier, when we say behind closed doors in private, we mean it.

01:01:36 Karen White

I always suggest people drop cell phones at the door.

01:01:40 Karen White

I don't want a device back in there.

01:01:41 Karen White

I don't want pins.

01:01:42 Karen White

I don't want anything, right?

01:01:45 Karen White

No recordation of what happens back there.

01:01:48 Karen White

It has to be listed on your agenda and you have to give a reasonable description as to why.

01:01:54 Karen White

are you going to executive session?

01:01:56 Karen White

How many times have I seen personnel?

01:02:01 Karen White

What does that mean?

01:02:02 Karen White

That gives me no idea of what you're doing back there.

01:02:06 Karen White

You could say consideration of hiring John Doe.

01:02:10 Karen White

Okay, now I know what you're going to be talking about back there.

01:02:14 Karen White

But these very vague

01:02:17 Karen White

Police matters.

01:02:19 Karen White

What does that mean?

01:02:21 Karen White

If you, again, picked up that agenda, you didn't know anything from anything, would you be able to tell what they were going to talk about back there?

01:02:29 Karen White

If not, then we need to do better.

01:02:31 Karen White

We need to add more detail.

01:02:33 Karen White

The law says when it comes to, and I'm going to talk about this exception in a little bit more depth in a second, but

01:02:42 Karen White

If we're going behind closed doors to talk about either potential litigation or pending litigation, the law carves out specific requirements for how those are described.

01:02:54 Karen White

If it's a pending lawsuit, you have to list who the parties are, the full citation, you know, essentially the full legal description, what you were right in a legal brief, that's got to be there.

01:03:07 Karen White

It's not enough to say litigation.

01:03:10 Karen White

Tell me what litigation you're talking about.

01:03:12 Karen White

List the full citation.

01:03:15 Karen White

Prospective litigation, which is sometimes tricky.

01:03:18 Karen White

This is, you know, we think we're going to be sued.

01:03:21 Karen White

The law says, not only is it that you think you're going to be sued, but somebody has put you on notice.

01:03:27 Karen White

I'm demanding money from you, or I'm demanding relief from you, and if you don't give it to me, I'm going to sue you.

01:03:32 Karen White

That's what prospective litigation means.

01:03:35 Karen White

So if you have a

01:03:37 Karen White

active lawsuit, you can go behind closed doors.

01:03:40 Karen White

If you have somebody who has given you a formal demand or else they'll sue you, can go behind closed doors.

01:03:48 Karen White

Both have to be described pretty robustly on your agenda in order for you to have a valid executive session.

01:03:58 Karen White

Even though it is properly noticed, you've given your reasonable specificity as to why you're going back there, you still have to, at the meeting itself, articulate why you're going into executive session.

01:04:11 Karen White

I get it.

01:04:12 Karen White

It's redundant.

01:04:13 Karen White

It's right there on the agenda.

01:04:14 Karen White

You still have to say, and now we're going into executive session for the purpose of, well, read whatever's on the agenda.

01:04:23 Karen White

And then the members of the body have to take a vote to do that.

01:04:28 Karen White

Two-thirds majority vote to go into executive session.

01:04:32 Karen White

And because you're about to take a vote, the public has a right to comment.

01:04:36 Karen White

There you go.

01:04:37 Karen White

So motion and 2nd to go into executive session, public comment on going into executive session, then you take your vote to go back there.

01:04:48 Karen White

Who gets to be behind those closed doors?

01:04:51 Karen White

Also often misunderstood.

01:04:53 Karen White

The members of the public body itself.

01:04:55 Karen White

So it would be city council members, members of the parish council, members of the board, commission, whatever.

01:05:04 Karen White

They are the only ones that have a right to be in executive session.

01:05:10 Karen White

Period.

01:05:11 Karen White

Mayor doesn't have a right to be there.

01:05:14 Karen White

Lawyer doesn't have a right to be there.

01:05:16 Karen White

The only ones who have a right to be there are the members of the body.

01:05:20 Karen White

Anybody else back there is because the body, by majority will, is allowing them to be back there.

01:05:28 Karen White

Obviously, if it is a matter involving litigation, potential litigation, and these days, anything, really, you're going to want your attorney back there.

01:05:39 Karen White

So you want your attorney back in executive session with you.

01:05:42 Karen White

Practically speaking, you want your mayor back there, your parish president back there, but the law does not require them to be back there.

01:05:52 Karen White

Just FYI.

01:05:55 Karen White

Here's the big one that people talk about a lot when it comes to executive session.

01:06:00 Karen White

And again, there's 10 instances listed in the law.

01:06:04 Karen White

This is #1.

01:06:05 Karen White

We're talking about the character, professional competence, physical and mental health of, quote, a person.

01:06:14 Karen White

This has been used to discuss either a, usually, sorry, a current employee who may not be performing very well, right?

01:06:25 Karen White

We don't want to embarrass them, but we need to talk about their deficiencies.

01:06:29 Karen White

And so we're going to go behind closed doors to talk about their competence as an employee.

01:06:36 Karen White

That's perfectly permissible under this exception.

01:06:41 Karen White

However, if you're going to talk about an employee's competence, you have to give them notice that they receive, not mail to them, that they receive at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

01:06:55 Karen White

I suggest if you don't have time for like a certified return receipt, green card type of notification,

01:07:03 Karen White

send out one of your officers to serve them, but you want proof that they have it in their hands at least 24 hours before the meeting.

01:07:12 Karen White

At that point, that person who's going to be talked about can do a couple of things.

01:07:18 Karen White

They can do nothing and let you go behind closed doors and talk about them.

01:07:23 Karen White

Or they can say, hey, if you're going to talk about me, you're going to talk about me in the public so that I can hear what you're saying.

01:07:32 Karen White

because before you come out and do any type of action or take a vote about me, I am going to make a comment.

01:07:40 Karen White

And so I'm not going to let you go behind closed doors.

01:07:43 Karen White

I'm going to make you talk about me in the public.

01:07:45 Karen White

They have the right to do that.

01:07:47 Karen White

And they can exercise that right up until the point that the council or board takes a vote to go back into executive session.

01:07:55 Karen White

Does that make sense?

01:07:57 Karen White

So if you're going to talk about a current employee, got to give them 24 hours written received notice.

01:08:04 Karen White

What about applicants?

01:08:07 Karen White

That's another reason people go back into executive session.

01:08:10 Karen White

It's okay to go behind closed doors to talk about an applicant for a position unless it is an appointed position.

01:08:20 Karen White

So within the structure of municipal governments, we're talking about like the city clerk,

01:08:27 Karen White

city attorney, public works director, those are all positions where like a mayor will recommend and the council will affirm.

01:08:34 Karen White

They're appointed officials.

01:08:37 Karen White

You cannot talk about those people behind closed doors.

01:08:40 Karen White

They have to be out in the public.

01:08:42 Karen White

But an applicant for any non-appointed position, it's fine.

01:08:46 Karen White

You can go behind closed doors and talk about them.

01:08:48 Karen White

How do you describe that on the agenda?

01:08:51 Karen White

You put their name down there.

01:08:52 Karen White

I know it's not popular.

01:08:54 Karen White

People don't like it.

01:08:55 Karen White

But

01:08:56 Karen White

unless there's some real confidentiality issues, you're going to want to describe why we're going behind closed doors to talk about Jane Doe.

01:09:08 Karen White

And then if it is an issue involving a public contract under the public bid law, you cannot discuss that in executive session.

01:09:18 Karen White

You have to do that again in the open meeting.

01:09:23 Karen White

The requirement, by the way, for 24-hour notice, if you're going to talk about somebody, has the same emergency exception to it.

01:09:32 Karen White

Pretty rare, but there may be a compelling reason why we don't have the time to get this person notice.

01:09:42 Karen White

We have to go behind closed doors and talk about them and take action now.

01:09:48 Karen White

So that's the most common one.

01:09:49 Karen White

This is the one I was talking about for litigation, prospective litigation.

01:09:52 Karen White

We've already hit on that.

01:09:53 Karen White

You have to give a reasonable description as to what you're going to be talking about back there.

01:10:01 Karen White

And then these are all the other ones.

01:10:05 Karen White

Certainly, if you have your strategies for securing the facility, securing your employees,

01:10:14 Karen White

things like where the cameras are located or structural layouts, all those things, there's compelling reasons why the public should not be privy to that.

01:10:24 Karen White

So you want to go behind closed doors to talk about that.

01:10:27 Karen White

Investigative proceedings, if you have an employee or an official that's being investigated and we need to talk about that, you can go behind closed doors for that.

01:10:37 Karen White

And then these very sort of niche

01:10:40 Karen White

matters.

01:10:40 Karen White

You'll see there from 5 to 9.

01:10:43 Karen White

The one that intrigues me, though, is the last one, which has this kind of vague language, or as provided by the legislature.

01:10:53 Karen White

I don't know what that means, but I've never tried it yet, but I might not, I'm not quite dead yet, so I may one of these days.

01:11:03 Karen White

The public records law,

01:11:05 Karen White

shields from public view certain documents, right?

01:11:09 Karen White

Certain things the public doesn't have access to.

01:11:12 Karen White

What if the council needs to talk about those documents that the public doesn't have access to?

01:11:18 Karen White

How do you meet in a public meeting and talk about

01:11:22 Karen White

documents the public shouldn't see.

01:11:25 Karen White

I think that falls under #10.

01:11:28 Karen White

That's what I would argue, that the legislature has said those documents are private.

01:11:34 Karen White

Therefore, if the body's talking about those documents under #10, I'm going behind closed doors to do it.

01:11:40 Karen White

I haven't tried it yet, but like I said, one of these days, maybe.

01:11:45 Karen White

I'll get the opportunity.

01:11:47 Karen White

All right, so that's your executive session stuff.

01:11:50 Karen White

Lastly, well,

01:11:52 Karen White

Almost lastly, technology is a beast.

01:11:57 Karen White

Just know that no matter how a quorum of the body is communicating with each other, you could potentially be violating the open meetings law, right?

01:12:07 Karen White

So e-mail communications.

01:12:10 Karen White

If you are just sending out information and you don't want to risk people violating the open meetings law by starting a discussion through an e-mail chain,

01:12:22 Karen White

Use the tools on your e-mail platform to turn off replies.

01:12:26 Karen White

That's what I do.

01:12:27 Karen White

If I send something out to my council members, I disengage their ability to reply to all.

01:12:33 Karen White

So all they can do is reply to me or not reply at all.

01:12:37 Karen White

But they can't start a group discussion because I've taken away their ability to do that.

01:12:42 Karen White

Same thing on texting.

01:12:43 Karen White

If you do a group text, disable their ability to reply to everybody on the text.

01:12:48 Karen White

It just takes the temptation away.

01:12:52 Karen White

Rolling quorums, you've heard a lot of discussion about that.

01:12:56 Karen White

It can happen, right?

01:12:58 Karen White

Even if I don't have a quorum of the body in one place, if I talk to one and then go over here and talk to the next one and then talk to the next one, I've done the same thing, right?

01:13:09 Karen White

I've used that to subterfuge the open meetings law.

01:13:13 Karen White

So walking quorums, rolling quorums, you want to be mindful of those as well.

01:13:17 Karen White

It is not how

01:13:20 Karen White

the body gathers, but what they're doing when they're there, that matters.

01:13:25 Karen White

So even on a social media platform, there could be a potential violation.

01:13:31 Karen White

If A quorum of the body, through commenting on a social media post, starts exchanging information, thoughts, opinions, polling each other on a matter of public business, you may have a problem.

01:13:45 Karen White

So

01:13:46 Karen White

Just be aware, technology is great, but technology can get you in trouble because we didn't envision all of this stuff back in, 18, whatever, when the open meetings law was first conceived of.

01:14:02 Karen White

This is the nastiness, but I have to let you know that there are penalties for non-compliance.

01:14:08 Karen White

They increased it within the past five, six years to \$500 a pop per person.

01:14:16 Karen White

per violation.

01:14:19 Karen White

You really, I don't know, until the Shreveport thing, I can't think of a prior case where a violation of the open meetings law has been alleged.

01:14:31 Karen White

Like, you really have to be trying to get yourself in trouble here.

01:14:35 Karen White

If it's inadvertent, I can't imagine a court in this state hit me with nasty sanctions.

01:14:41 Karen White

You really have to be trying to subvert

01:14:44 Karen White

the open meeting and doing it intentionally, maliciously, to keep the public out of the loop of what you're doing.

01:14:51 Karen White

But obviously there's all these injunctive reliefs and mandamus relief.

01:14:56 Karen White

The big one though, from my perspective, is if you have a meeting that doesn't comply with the open meetings law, arguably everything that happened is no bueno.

01:15:07 Karen White

It's null.

01:15:08 Karen White

It's void.

01:15:10 Karen White

So it's like it never happened.

01:15:11 Karen White

And now you have to start over.

01:15:13 Karen White

again.

01:15:14 Karen White

So that's the big sanction in my opinion.

01:15:17 Karen White

And if you don't think that my prior quotes from Mark Twain and Justice Brandeis are good, I give you a founding father who agrees that the people have to be able to observe what's going on in their government in order for their liberties to be secure, right?

01:15:37 Karen White

So

01:15:38 Karen White

As we take all these little nuggets of wisdom away today, I want you to try to embrace these transparency laws as not being a nagging, incidental part of your job, right?

01:15:52 Karen White

It is a core part of our job in the public service world to be fully transparent about what we're doing.

01:16:00 Karen White

That's how you build trust in the community.

01:16:02 Karen White

right?

01:16:04 Karen White

And when you establish that, when you forge that bond of trust with your constituents, annoying though some of them may be, that is, that's always going to serve everybody better, right?

01:16:16 Karen White

They're not going to be, you're going to have people looking for conspiracy behind every corner, no matter what you do.

01:16:22 Karen White

Bearing in mind that a not quite yet debunked study from 2017

01:16:28 Karen White

says that 7% of Americans believe that chocolate milk comes from brown cows.

01:16:34 Karen White

But people can sometimes be crazy, is my point.

01:16:38 Karen White

But generally, if you are transparent, if you let them know, I'm trying to serve my community, I'm not trying to hide anything from you, everybody wins in that situation.

01:16:49 Karen White

I'm now going to open the floor for any questions that you may have, any additional

01:16:56 Karen White

thoughts or comments that Mr.

01:16:58 Karen White

Ottinger has?

01:16:59 Karen White

Yes, ma'am.

01:17:00 Karen White

And I'll repeat the question so that it picks up on recording.

01:17:03 Margaret Oelkers

My question is regarding, you just kind of dotted the I regarding emails and texts between volunteer board members.

01:17:16 Margaret Oelkers

And what my question is, does the law provide for encrypted, encrypted, disappearing,

01:17:26 Margaret Oelkers

text, does it prohibit that between, in the open meetings law, Ms.

01:17:33 Margaret Oelkers

White, is my question.

01:17:37 Karen White

I'm not entirely sure what the context is, and context matters here.

01:17:40 Karen White

The open meetings law does not have any provision one way or the other with regard to encryption.

01:17:47 Karen White

Again, there's nothing wrong with the entirety of the body chit-chatting.

01:17:55 Karen White

right?

01:17:55 Karen White

There's absolutely nothing wrong with that.

01:17:57 Karen White

It may not trigger the open meetings law.

01:17:59 Karen White

What matters is what they're doing, right?

01:18:01 Karen White

So if the entire body is sitting around talking about their grandkids, it's not a matter of public business.

01:18:07 Karen White

That's not an open meeting.

01:18:10 Karen White

But if they are using e-mail to talk about what's on the agenda next week and how they're going to vote or what their thoughts are, now we have a problem.

01:18:20 Karen White

And so it's, again,

01:18:22 Karen White

not how they're convened or even when or where they're convened, it's what they're doing.

01:18:28 Karen White

But there's...

01:18:28 Margaret Oelkers

And I understand that part.

01:18:31 Karen White

Yep.

01:18:31 Margaret Oelkers

I'm talking about this, and you can have a meeting and it would be disappeared.

01:18:43 Karen White

So that is more of a public records issue.

01:18:47 Karen White

I'm not saying that it couldn't have open meetings law implications,

01:18:50 Karen White

But that would be the other half of the sunshine that brings us over into the public records law.

01:18:58 Karen White

So in that instance, you would always want to get with your IT and cybersecurity computer folks with regard to any software and always, always rely on the advice of your counsel.

01:19:17 Karen White

Yes, sir.

01:19:18 Karen White

And I'll come over to you.

01:19:20 Danny Gillane

The live streaming with regard to the Lafayette Public Library Board, you had indicated that it probably wouldn't apply to us because since we serve a population of 240,000 in Lafayette, we would be.

01:19:38 Karen White

Required to live stream.

01:19:39 Karen White

And after saying I was going to repeat the question, I didn't the first time, and so I lied.

01:19:43 Karen White

So let me repeat the question for the recording.

01:19:46 Karen White

The question was specific to a library board that serves a population of over 240,000, is there a mandate for live broadcasting?

01:19:55 Karen White

No, there is not, because the law specifically says if you are a parish governing authority of 25,000 or more, if you are a school board in a parish that has 25,000 or more, or you're a municipality with 10,000 or more, period.

01:20:11 Karen White

So it wouldn't apply to boards necessarily.

01:20:14 Karen White

I applaud you, however, for live broadcasting.

01:20:17 Karen White

I think it's a very smart decision.

01:20:21 Karen White

I've heard a lot of good things from public entities who have initiated, whether they have to or not, live broadcasting because people get to be privy to what's happening without feeling like I got to put on my shoes.

01:20:35 Karen White

Right, and it's so it cuts down on the amount of people who are in your physical space and maybe think, I put on pants, I might as well get up and make a ruckus, as opposed to just being able to sit at home and observe the meeting quietly from their own computer.

01:20:51 Karen White

Great question, though.

01:20:52 Karen White

Yes, ma'am.

01:20:53 Rena Bradley

It's been suggested that not all of us attend certain library events, whether it's a reception or a book talk or programming, because we might inadvertently create a meeting.

01:21:10 Rena Bradley

But I, that makes me confused because we may need to show up at those events to show our support and interest.

01:21:22 Karen White

So for the recording, the question was, in the past there have been

01:21:29 Karen White

not public meetings, right?

01:21:31 Karen White

Instances for community get-together type of thing, where members of the body may have been advised, please don't come because you may inadvertently create a quorum.

01:21:43 Karen White

Again, the letter of the law says that it's not the fact that you're together, it's what you're doing.

01:21:50 Karen White

So for

01:21:52 Karen White

again, chance meetups or social situations, there's nothing wrong with the entire body being there.

01:21:59 Karen White

That being said, however, you know, every circumstance is a little different and public optics can be brutal.

01:22:08 Karen White

And so depending on your particular situation, your attorney, for example, may have said, look, it's not that you can't legally come, but

01:22:19 Karen White

If you do, the optics on this are going to be awful.

01:22:23 Karen White

That people, members of the public are going to see, even if you are trying to stay away from them, you may end up in a huddle with your other board members.

01:22:32 Karen White

And now, next thing you know, there's pictures on social media saying board had an unlawful meeting at the fair to talk about whatever.

01:22:40 Karen White

So I think if you've been told that or heard that, it's probably more of a practical consideration than a legal one.

01:22:47 Karen White

if that makes sense.

01:22:48 Karen White

But look, I have told people before, here's what the law provides, right?

01:22:56 Karen White

There's art and science outside of that.

01:22:58 Karen White

So if you want to have a social gathering, but you're concerned about the optics, set it up so that the members are in physical spaces far apart from one another, right?

01:23:10 Karen White

Or maybe even coming at different times.

01:23:12 Karen White

You can juggle that

01:23:15 Karen White

those practical implications to just stop the people who may see conspiracy behind every corner from thinking you're doing more than just showing up to interface with the public.

01:23:28 Karen White

Yep.

01:23:29 Karen White

Yes, sir.

01:23:29 Speaker 1

I have just a very technical question.

01:23:32 Speaker 1

You said, as far as getting notice for meetings, that holidays don't count as time.

01:23:37 Speaker 1

So, you know, it's a Monday holiday.

01:23:39 Speaker 1

Which holidays?

01:23:43 Karen White

Look at my guy.

01:23:46 Karen White

Great question.

01:23:47 Karen White

The question was when we're taking out Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays for notification purposes, what holidays count?

01:23:55 Karen White

It is the holidays that are recognized by the state as a baseline.

01:24:01 Karen White

However, some communities adopt holidays over and above.

01:24:06 Karen White

So whatever jurisdiction you're in, you look at those holidays.

01:24:10 Karen White

So as a baseline, all the ones that are recognized by the state, and those are in statute, plus any special holidays that you may have locally.

01:24:20 Karen White

Like I know some northern jurisdictions don't have Mardi Gras off.

01:24:26 Karen White

Everything south of Elick we do.

01:24:27 Karen White

And so in those instances, you would want to zoink Mardi Gras day out of your calculation.

01:24:32 Karen White

Yes, ma'am.

01:24:34 Speaker 1

I have two quick questions.

01:24:35 Speaker 1

Okay, the first one is about going into executive summary.

01:24:40 Speaker 1

Is there any sort of time constraint or time limit for that?

01:24:45 Speaker 1

And the reason I ask is because recently, for example, like the UO systems, they went into executive session like well over 2 hours to talk about the next UO president and all.

01:24:57 Speaker 1

It just seems like that's really long.

01:25:00 Karen White

Is there a time limit on executive sessions?

01:25:03 Karen White

She asks.

01:25:03 Karen White

There is not a time limit on executive session.

01:25:07 Karen White

Normally, those things kind of self-level because of availability and whether or not the public body can maintain a quorum, right?

01:25:18 Karen White

People don't have 8, 9 hours usually to go into those things.

01:25:21 Karen White

And so practically speaking, I guess the legislature didn't see a need for a time limit.

01:25:27 Karen White

But no, there is not.

01:25:28 Karen White

They can be back there 20 minutes.

01:25:30 Karen White

They can be back there 7 hours.

01:25:31 Karen White

Thank you.

01:25:31 Speaker 1

And then my second question.

01:25:34 Speaker 1

My question is for public records request.

01:25:38 Speaker 1

Is there a limit on how long the state should take to get back to us on that request?

01:25:45 Karen White

Oh, we have a non-open meetings law question that I'm happy to answer.

01:25:49 Karen White

Public records request, what's the turnaround?

01:25:53 Karen White

It was for many, many, many years, three days.

01:25:58 Karen White

People throw that one at you all the time.

01:25:59 Karen White

And just so trivia, it is not three days anymore.

01:26:04 Karen White

A few of us local government junkies got it into the legislature, merci, Michelle Pierre, and changed it to five.

01:26:12 Karen White

So there are five days now in order to respond.

01:26:16 Karen White

And it is not five days for production necessarily, it is five days for response.

01:26:23 Karen White

Meaning, if it's something that is clearly public, immediately available, they should turn that over within, either immediately or within five days.

01:26:32 Karen White

If it's something that they have to go find, dig through, revise, redact, send to the attorney,

01:26:38 Karen White

then the response has to be received within five days.

01:26:42 Karen White

And that response will say, I got your public records request.

01:26:46 Karen White

We're going to have to look at it.

01:26:47 Karen White

I think some exceptions apply.

01:26:48 Karen White

And here is the reasonable amount of time within which you may expect me to disclose those records to you.

01:26:54 Speaker 1

So I did that and I was told it would be 60 days.

01:27:00 Karen White

That may not be unreasonable.

01:27:01 Karen White

I don't know what the circumstance is.

01:27:04 Karen White

My personal strategy is I do a two-week rolling disclosure.

01:27:08 Karen White

So every two weeks I'm going to give you what I've been able to get through, but I'm not shutting down City Hall to go through the records for you.

01:27:15 Karen White

So every two weeks I'm going to give you what I got and we'll keep doing that until I'm done.

01:27:19 Karen White

It might take a year, it might take two, I don't know.

01:27:21 Speaker 1

So the person has a right, reasonable right to say, hey, I see you've said it's been 60 days, but can you give me some updates?

01:27:30 Karen White

I always suggest trying to work with the custodian.

01:27:33 Karen White

Most of them are trying to do the right thing and get you the records.

01:27:36 Karen White

Oftentimes, they're constrained by being terrified that somebody's going to get sued.

01:27:43 Karen White

And so the hangup might be with the attorney.

01:27:47 Karen White

And I'm an attorney, so I'm taking one for the team when I say that.

01:27:51 Pat Ottinger

Karen, I have a couple of questions, if I might.

01:27:54 Karen White

Sure.

01:27:55 Pat Ottinger

You just spoke about the chance meeting and that word is in the open meetings law, which essentially says it doesn't apply to chance meetings where no business is discussed.

01:28:06 Pat Ottinger

The word chance to me conjures 3 councilmen accidentally run to each other at a dinner at a restaurant after a meeting.

01:28:19 Pat Ottinger

If they don't discuss business,

01:28:22 Pat Ottinger

That's not problematic.

01:28:23 Pat Ottinger

But then you also said earlier the having a social event.

01:28:28 Pat Ottinger

What if they wanted to have a Thanksgiving dinner where they pledged that they will not discuss business?

01:28:33 Pat Ottinger

Is that, how does that play into being, chance to me seems accidentally not pre-planned to be in the same place at the same time.

01:28:40 Karen White

You're absolutely right.

01:28:43 Karen White

And I should have been more clear on that.

01:28:45 Karen White

The letter of the law says chance meetings.

01:28:48 Karen White

There are myriad attorney general opinions that have interpreted that provision to say, we're going to say that chance meetings, right, meetings that don't trigger the open meetings law, may also include social events.

01:29:05 Karen White

They may include purely educational events.

01:29:08 Karen White

So that is been distilled down through attorney general opinions.

01:29:13 Karen White

that those are allowed.

01:29:14 Pat Ottinger

Could this have been without a formal public meeting if it's limited to...

01:29:20 Pat Ottinger

Sorry about that, Danny.

01:29:20 Pat Ottinger

We wasted your time.

01:29:21 Karen White

No, I'm glad you did, because as my slide pointed out, if you're ever feeling some kind of way, especially if there has been litigious issues in the past or, you know, a lot of very hot button, you know,

01:29:38 Karen White

topics or conversations around it, always err on the side of doing it this way.

01:29:42 Karen White

Always.

01:29:42 Karen White

You did the right thing.

01:29:44 Pat Ottinger

Another one.

01:29:45 Pat Ottinger

Under the executive session, the one that we encounter the most is to go into executive session about litigation.

01:29:51 Pat Ottinger

But that's pending litigation.

01:29:53 Pat Ottinger

It also, 42 colon 17B, talks about prospective litigation not yet filed after formal demand.

01:30:02 Pat Ottinger

It doesn't say who issues the formal demand, and I've heard it said, and I disagree with it.

01:30:08 Pat Ottinger

Well, I'm a public body.

01:30:09 Pat Ottinger

I can demand and then go into an executive session.

01:30:12 Pat Ottinger

Do you, would you agree that formal demands means that the public body itself has been demanded against, has received a demand, and that would only be the basis to trigger?

01:30:23 Karen White

I would say that after formal demand, in my opinion,

01:30:29 Karen White

is applying to the plaintiff as applicant, right?

01:30:33 Karen White

So if the public body happens to be standing in the shoes of a potential plaintiff and they make demand, I don't see a problem in the world with that.

01:30:44 Karen White

But it's essentially a demand is, as you well know, it has connotations in the legal world.

01:30:52 Karen White

You make a legal demand, that means I'm asking you to give me something that you owe me.

01:30:57 Karen White

If that has happened,

01:30:59 Karen White

whichever way it goes, I'm fine with it.

01:31:02 Karen White

But I don't believe it's proper to send a letter to somebody who's about to sue you and say that constitutes a demand.

01:31:10 Pat Ottinger

Okay.

01:31:11 Pat Ottinger

I have a couple more, but I will ask one more because I know they're for you.

01:31:14 Pat Ottinger

Your example of sewer district #5, where there's a topic discussed and a motion is made to defer.

01:31:24 Pat Ottinger

That must have

01:31:26 Pat Ottinger

public comment because it's a vote on deferral.

01:31:29 Pat Ottinger

Is that public comment limited on whether or not they should defer or not or to the substance of that would have been brought up in an open meeting?

01:31:38 Karen White

That's such a good question, Bet.

01:31:41 Karen White

So I am a fan of liberal construction.

01:31:44 Karen White

So even if the motion has very limited procedural context,

01:31:51 Karen White

I think that as long as their comments are cogent to the topic on the agenda, that they should be allowed to render their comment.

01:31:58 Pat Ottinger

So you should not be denying the opportunity to comment if they want to talk about the broader subject, and you should not be saying you can only discuss as to whether we should or should not defer.

01:32:11 Karen White

I absolutely believe that is the case.

01:32:13 Pat Ottinger

Okay.

01:32:15 Pat Ottinger

I'll yield the floor to the back over there.

01:32:16 Karen White

Oh, yes, ma'am.

01:32:18 Ella Arsement

First of all, I want to thank you for being here.

01:32:20 Ella Arsement

I am enjoying your presentation.

01:32:22 Ella Arsement

Oh, good.

01:32:24 Ella Arsement

Are you suggesting that we hold a special meeting to create the policy for public meeting?

01:32:49 Speaker 1

And forum, or should the meeting that we do at the beginning of.

01:32:52 Ella Arsement

Our meeting be good enough.

01:32:55 Karen White

So there is a requirement that every public body must, you shall.

01:33:02 Karen White

Shall means you gotta, right?

01:33:03 Karen White

Miss Barbara Norton, I'll tell you that.

01:33:05 Karen White

Shall means you gotta.

01:33:08 Karen White

that you have to have regulations with regard to recording.

01:33:14 Karen White

So you have to have those.

01:33:16 Karen White

Any other provisions about public decorum at a meeting, what's expected, that type of thing are entirely appropriate.

01:33:24 Karen White

Do you have to hold a special meeting to do that?

01:33:27 Karen White

No, I wouldn't say it's that emergent.

01:33:30 Karen White

I, again, am happy to provide you with the model.

01:33:33 Karen White

And what I would suggest is that you provide it individually to your members and tell them at date to be determined, we're going to discuss this.

01:33:44 Karen White

Please have your individual thoughts together, and then we'll discuss what we want those policies to look like when we get there.

01:33:59 Ella Arsement

Does that mean that they can call us fascist, racist, evolved, and cut status without having that removed from the meeting?

01:34:08 Karen White

So, fascist and racist, racist, probably.

01:34:13 Karen White

I mean, it's a horrible thing to say, but it is protected speech generally.

01:34:20 Karen White

If they are using obscenities, especially if you have decorum rules that say we don't tolerate obscenities, you're in a little better place.

01:34:33 Karen White

You know, again, I would certainly advise if we're talking about words, right, they're not being physically threatening.

01:34:42 Karen White

They're not trying to walk up to the dais.

01:34:44 Karen White

They're not threatening to take you outside and kick your tail or anything.

01:34:48 Karen White

If we're just talking about words, I would suggest that you have a scale, a, incrementally increasing scale of response that says we don't tolerate obscenities.

01:35:01 Karen White

That is your first warning, right?

01:35:03 Karen White

And you give them two, 3 warnings and then you tell them, you know, if there's if they're still talking, we're going to have to ask you to leave.

01:35:10 Ella Arsement

Does the freedom of the right to constantly mock others and make comments that are not enough?

01:35:33 Karen White

Okay, so for the recording, for posterity, the question was comments, snarky, mocking comments that are made under the breath, whether it be a member of the public or a member of the public body.

01:35:48 Karen White

that are distracting, loud enough to be heard, but maybe not heard by everybody kind of thing.

01:35:56 Karen White

So let me first say, I wish, and when I teach classes on, workplace professionalism and how to prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace, I always say, I wish there was a law that said, don't be a jerk.

01:36:12 Karen White

There is not.

01:36:13 Karen White

So jerky behavior, it may be protected behavior depending on the circumstances.

01:36:20 Karen White

If it's a member of the public and they're doing it at the proper time and place, that's probably protected.

01:36:27 Karen White

But assuming, and I think I'm understanding you to say, it's under the breath, snarky comments in between things, it depends on how disruptive they are.

01:36:37 Karen White

And so

01:36:40 Karen White

If the meeting is able to continue, as it seems it has, it would be hard, you'd be a little hard pressed to say it's so disruptive that we can't conduct our business because you have.

01:36:53 Karen White

So I don't have a bright line answer for you.

01:36:56 Karen White

I'm going to give you the legal answer of it depends.

01:37:07 Karen White

No, I'm not, please do not say Karen White said I could kick you out.

01:37:11 Karen White

I am saying that you

01:37:14 Karen White

Yeah, whatever those policies are, you want to have them like as precise as possible.

01:37:20 Karen White

You want to have all those details in your policy.

01:37:25 Karen White

If it's a murmuring under the breath that one person overhears, I don't think that's going to make the case for disruptive.

01:37:32 Karen White

Right?

01:37:33 Karen White

Disruptive means everything has to come to a grinding halt because we can't carry on.

01:37:38 Karen White

And A snarky

01:37:40 Karen White

common under the breath.

01:37:41 Karen White

I don't know that it rises to that level.

01:37:42 Karen White

But it's so case specific that I can't, I couldn't even tell you.

01:37:47 Karen White

I'd have to be sitting in it at the moment and then probably even then there'd be 5 different opinions about what it means.

01:37:54 Karen White

So you got it.

01:37:56 Karen White

Mr.

01:37:57 Karen White

Pierre.

01:38:07 Karen White

Okay.

01:38:07 Speaker 1

But legislators and senators can go to any executive session.

01:38:13 Karen White

So, legislators have their own rules, as I said.

01:38:17 Karen White

So we're going to set them aside because they have specialized rules and it's smattered throughout the open meetings law.

01:38:24 Karen White

So in the context of a municipal government, let's say, the members of the board of aldermen or the council are the only ones who have a right, who are entitled to be in executive session.

01:38:36 Karen White

Practically speaking, the mayor is always back there because as CEO,

01:38:41 Karen White

as presiding officer over the meeting, they kind of help to conduct things.

01:38:45 Karen White

But I have seen circumstances where maybe the mayor is under investigation for wrongdoing.

01:38:51 Karen White

And so the council will go behind closed doors to talk about what's going on with the mayor and exclude the mayor.

01:38:58 Karen White

And that's allowable.

01:38:59 Karen White

Council's the only one that has the right to be there.

01:39:03 Karen White

have also been cases where there's been controversy over who's going to come back.

01:39:08 Karen White

So for example, maybe the clerk is being

01:39:12 Karen White

discussed.

01:39:12 Karen White

And the clerk doesn't want you to do it in the public, so I'm cool with y'all doing it behind closed doors.

01:39:18 Karen White

But a member of the council feels strongly about that clerk and says, I want the clerk to come back with us so she can help explain herself.

01:39:27 Karen White

And another member says, I don't like that idea.

01:39:29 Karen White

What do you do then?

01:39:30 Karen White

It is by majority will.

01:39:33 Karen White

And that's something that would actually happen in the open meeting where a member would move

01:39:39 Karen White

As we go into executive session, I want Jane to be in the room with us, and they would have to get a second, allow for public comment, take the vote, and if they have majority will, then Jane gets to go into executive session.

01:39:53 Karen White

But council's the only one with a right.

01:39:56 Pat Ottinger

Karen, let me ask one more, and then we'll wrap it up.

01:39:58 Karen White

But I'm here for as long as you can hear me.

01:40:00 Pat Ottinger

Walking quorum.

01:40:02 Pat Ottinger

It's not defined in the open.

01:40:03 Pat Ottinger

It's not even, those words are not used.

01:40:06 Pat Ottinger

As I can determine, the first use was in a 1990 Attorney General's opinion, even before a court case, and you've got the Mabry case from Baton Rouge.

01:40:14 Pat Ottinger

The Mabry case, I take away is that open quorum is when all the councilmen are under the same roof at the same time, and perhaps they walk in, not any two together, talk to me one at a time in sequence.

01:40:30 Pat Ottinger

That's a walking quorum.

01:40:31 Pat Ottinger

That's not permitted.

01:40:32 Pat Ottinger

What if

01:40:34 Pat Ottinger

sought to speak to each council member on different days, such they're not under the same roof at the same time.

01:40:42 Pat Ottinger

Is that a walking quorum?

01:40:44 Karen White

Yes, so that gets us into the other little catchphrase, which is a rolling quorum, right?

01:40:52 Karen White

And that one has kind of been developed in the context of technology, where you are using e-mail or text communications to accomplish the same end.

01:41:02 Karen White

I wish

01:41:03 Karen White

I don't know how the legislature would define that.

01:41:05 Karen White

So it's very, very difficult.

01:41:07 Karen White

You are 100% right that that's how it was originally envisioned, that if you are, if you're sending an envoy in between you to connect you, you're having the same discussion.

01:41:18 Karen White

So I think a court would, what they have historically done as is to look at

01:41:25 Karen White

the end result, what has been accomplished.

01:41:27 Karen White

So if I'm using e-mail in a rapid fire sequence of correspondence with a singular or maybe 2 council members at a go, if I'm figuring out where we're having lunch tomorrow, who cares?

01:41:42 Karen White

But if the purpose and the end of this whole chain of discussions was, I know that four out of five of them are going

to vote yes on this agenda item tomorrow, I've probably committed something that would be constituted, that would be defined as a rolling corn.

01:42:01 Karen White

So I don't have a bright line answer for you, but I think you're very mindful of all the qualifiers that come into play for sure.

01:42:08 Pat Ottinger

Thank you very much.

01:42:10 Karen White

Yes, sir.

01:42:10 Allan Moore

I have a question.

01:42:12 Allan Moore

If we have the public catch-all comment section at the end of our meeting, as you had referred to, and we do for the library, what are the board's authorities with regards to what is covered in that catch-all?

01:42:27 Allan Moore

As long as it's about the library or is it public bandstand, do whatever you want.

01:42:33 Karen White

Yeah, that's the day about the catch-all public comment agenda item, which is

01:42:40 Karen White

This is why I discourage them.

01:42:43 Karen White

If you want to allow members of the public to vocalize their opinions on infrastructure issues, you could, under that agenda item, you could list the criteria, right?

01:43:02 Karen White

If you do that, then you can limit them to that subject matter.

01:43:05 Karen White

If it just says public comment, about the only thing you can do is limit how long they can talk.

01:43:11 Karen White

If it's you've cast the net that broadly, they can come up and talk about Thanksgiving turkey.

01:43:16 Allan Moore

What if we give more specificity that says in regard to library business can be a little bit more?

01:43:22 Karen White

That gets you closer.

01:43:24 Karen White

That certainly gets you closer.

01:43:26 Karen White

Again, I would just take it off there, quite honestly.

01:43:32 Karen White

It just, if you have the, if you have

01:43:37 Karen White

a lot of members of the public who have a lot of time on their hands, it creates more problems than it solves, right?

01:43:45 Karen White

And I try to remind members of the public, you have, 27 to 30 other days during the month to talk to the members of this board or just, you know, we're not, we don't disappear when the meeting's over.

01:43:58 Karen White

So we want to hear all these things from you, but this is the meeting of the council, the meeting of the board to conduct our business.

01:44:08 Karen White

So that's the whole goal.

01:44:09 Karen White

We're trying to get through our agenda and get our business done.

01:44:12 Karen White

We want to hear from you.

01:44:14 Karen White

We are adjourned.

01:44:16 Karen White

Let's go talk.

01:44:17 Karen White

You can talk to me any other day, any other time.

01:44:19 Speaker 1

One quick question.

01:44:21 Speaker 1

Sure.

01:44:28 Karen White

So you have either voluntarily allowed members of the public to attend electronically, or they have an ADA disability and they're attending electronically.

01:44:40 Karen White

Is that right?

01:44:42 Karen White

So they have to be allowed to engage if they have an ADA disability as if they were there.

01:44:51 Karen White

If you are just being kind and say, yeah,

01:44:57 Karen White

That's a whole different thing.

01:44:58 Karen White

You do not have to allow public comment in that circumstance because you're not compelled to allow them to connect electronically.

01:45:06 Karen White

They feel strongly they can show up.

01:45:08 Karen White

Yes, ma'am.

01:45:18 Karen White

That's correct.

01:45:21 Karen White

That is correct.

01:45:21 Karen White

Some of them have to live broadcast, but you don't have to record it.

01:45:25 Karen White

Many do, and I applaud that.

01:45:29 Karen White

but it creates a mandate to keep up with it.

01:45:33 Karen White

Any other questions?

01:45:34 Karen White

Well, if anybody has anything they want to talk about kind of offline, I'm not running out of the room.

01:45:38 Karen White

So thank you for being a wonderful crowd and for your attentiveness.

01:45:46 Pat Ottinger

Thank you very much, Karen, and we appreciate it.

01:45:48 Pat Ottinger

It's a lot of material and you covered it very well, and I'm sure we could have gone another hour or two in terms of the material.

01:45:55 Pat Ottinger

But

01:45:56 Pat Ottinger

We appreciate it very much and it's very, very, very, very helpful.

01:45:59 Pat Ottinger

So at this point, I thank you for attending.

01:46:00 Pat Ottinger

I'll turn it over to the board to conclude the meeting.

01:46:06 Speaker 1

Best part of the meeting?

01:46:07 Pat Ottinger

Yes.

01:46:07 Allan Moore

I just want to echo Mr.

01:46:10 Allan Moore

Ottinger's sentiments.

01:46:11 Allan Moore

Thank you so much.

01:46:12 Allan Moore

It was very engaging and definitely answered a lot of questions.

01:46:16 Allan Moore

Obviously, people continue to bring more questions.

01:46:19 Allan Moore

And Mr.

01:46:19 Allan Moore

Ottinger, Mr.

01:46:20 Allan Moore

Bro, thank you all for putting this together.

01:46:22 Allan Moore

It's been very helpful.

01:46:23 Allan Moore

If you'd all stand, we're going to close with a quick word of prayer.

01:46:29 Allan Moore

Lord, we thank you for this time together.

01:46:30 Allan Moore

We ask that you would just be with us as we go from this place, as we take the knowledge and the understanding that we've been able to garnish here today.

01:46:38 Allan Moore

Help us to apply it properly in our roles, wherever it may be across the city, to better serve the citizens of Lafayette.

01:46:45 Allan Moore

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

01:46:47 Allan Moore

Thank you all.

01:46:48 Allan Moore

Meeting is adjourned.

01:46:48 Allan Moore

Thank you so much.

01:46:54 Speaker 1

I appreciate it.

01:47:02 Allan Moore

Yeah.