

## **Cohocton Public Library Open Meeting Policy**

The library is subject to New York's Open Meetings Law pursuant to Article 7 of the Public Officers Law. The law requires that board meetings be properly posted and advertised and open to the public if a quorum of the board is expected to attend. A copy of New York's Open Meetings Law is available at <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/coog/openmeetlaw.html>.

### **1. Notice of Meetings**

- a. Notice of board meetings is posted in the library, on the library's online calendar of events and on the website.
- b. Regular meetings are monthly on the third Monday at 4 pm. When this date falls on a holiday, the meeting will be held the next day. In the event that it is necessary for the board to hold a special or emergency meeting, it will be posted on the library website and in the library.

### **2. Meeting Location**

- a. Board meetings take place in the library. Board members or the public may join through videoconferencing if prior arrangements were made.
- b. Meetings may not be conducted by telephone, email or mail. Trustees may confer individually or by telephone, email or other means as long as a series of communication among trustees does not result in a decision or a meeting being held.
- c. Trustees who are not physically present in person or through video conference may not vote.

### **3. Executive Sessions**

- a. During an open meeting of the board, the board may go into executive session during which the public is excluded. An executive session is convened only as part of a public board meeting.
- b. The board must vote to enter executive session and state the general purpose of the session in its minutes. The board may take formal action and vote on any matter in the executive session except the appropriation of public monies.

### **4. Public Participation**

- a. New York's Open Meetings Law confers the right of the public to observe the performance of public officials and listen to the deliberations and decisions that go into the making of public policy.
- b. It does not give the public the right to speak or participate in board meetings outside of public comment periods; once after approval of previous minutes and again before adjournment. The board is under no obligation to brief the public on matters before the board or to take or respond to their questions. The public are observers and may participate only if recognized by the board.
- c. The president of the board reserves the right to set a time limit on any public comment.

- d. If unable to attend a meeting, comments from the public to the Library Board of Trustees are welcome in writing addressed to the Library Board President.

5. Minutes

- a. As required by the Open Meetings Law, minutes are taken at all board meetings. Minutes of a regular session of the board must consist of “a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matter formally voted upon and the vote thereon.” Although not required by law, minutes will also include a summary of discussions relating to the issues covered.
- b. The minutes, along with statements and other official records, are kept in a secure but accessible place and available to the public upon request to the director. Minutes must be on hand for public inspection two weeks after the meeting, even if they have yet to be approved.
- c. Minutes of executive sessions are required only if the board took formal action in the executive session. If no vote or other action is taken, no minutes are required.

6. Access

- a. Members of the public with a physical disability who wish to attend a board meeting should notify the library director in advance to ask about an accommodation that may be available.

Adopted by the Cohocton Board of Trustees on June 20, 2023