

Marked to show changes from May 2022 draft

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM

POLICY #16

Subject: Board Meetings ~~Participation~~

Application: WLS Trustees, employees and members of the public

The participation of trustees, employees and members of the public in the Board meetings of the Westchester Library System (WLS) is necessary for the effective operation of WLS on behalf of the residents of Westchester County and its libraries. This policy sets forth procedures for participation by trustees and members of the public that both serve the needs of WLS and are in compliance with the New York State Open Meetings Law (OML).

All meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be open to the general public, except that an executive session may be called as provided by the OML. Meetings will be held in a facility that permits barrier-free physical access and can adequately accommodate members of the public who wish to attend.

The Board of Trustees allows public meetings to be photographed, broadcast, webcast or otherwise recorded by means of audio or video, in a non-disruptive manner.

~~Participation by Trustees~~

~~Subject to the rules specified below, trustees may participate in Board meetings using videoconferencing, provided that (a) a trustee may participate remotely only when she/he is not physically present in Westchester County or is unable to be physically present at the meeting location due to extraordinary circumstances including disability, illness, caregiving responsibilities, or any other significant or unexpected factor or event that precludes such trustee's physical attendance at such meeting; (b) a quorum is present in the physical location where the public can attend; (c) minutes of the meeting indicate which members participated remotely; (d) the public notice of the meeting indicates that videoconferencing will be used, where the public can view and/or participate in the meeting, and the physical location of the meeting; (e) any meeting using videoconferencing is recorded and made available on the WLS website as required by the OML; and (f) members of the public have the opportunity to participate via videoconference in real time where public comment is authorized.~~

~~Any trustee wishing to participate in a Board meeting remotely must follow these rules:~~

- ~~1. In order to comply with public notice requirements, a trustee wishing to participate in a meeting remotely must notify the Board President and the Executive Director of his/her/their intent to participate remotely at least eight (8) days before the relevant Board meeting, unless such advanced notice is impracticable.~~
- ~~2. The trustee must use an Internet connection that supports video and audio functionality.~~

~~3. The trustee must ensure that participation in properly convened executive sessions will be secure from outside observation.~~

~~All trustees attending meetings by video conferencing shall be entitled to vote as if they were personally and physically present at the meeting site.~~

~~In addition, sufficient security and identification procedures shall be employed, either at the outset of any meeting or at any time during the meeting as appropriate, to ensure that any and all trustees attending for discussion or voting purposes are in fact authorized members with the right to speak and vote.~~

Participation by Members of the Public

The Board of Trustees encourages public expression at public meetings and has designated a specific portion of its meeting agenda for public comment. Members of the public, upon identifying themselves, are permitted to address the Board for a period of not more than three minutes. Statements by the public should be kept as brief as possible and relate to library matters. Statements relating to the competence or personal conduct of individual trustees or employees are not appropriate and will not be permitted at a public meeting. All comments must be made in a civil and respectful manner. Topics raised by the public will generally not be discussed by the trustees but may, if appropriate, be placed on a future board agenda.

Last Approved: _____, 2022