

Open Meeting Policy/Open Records Policy

The Allegheny County Library Association, by its Board of Directors, has adopted the following policy on meetings open to the public and public inspection of its books and records.

A. Open Meeting Policy

1. Except as to the matters listed below in Paragraph 5 of this Policy Statement, all regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors of the Association, the meetings of the Membership and, in the sole discretion of the Board, certain meetings of its standing committees, shall be open to the general public.
2. Under specified conditions, established and managed by the Board to assure a business-like and courteous public meeting atmosphere, with appropriate rules, such meetings shall be open to the participation, presentations, and comments by members of the general public.
3. The regular meetings of the Board of Directors and the Membership of the Association shall, as completely as practical, be set at or near the beginning of each calendar year (with public meetings of standing committees to be scheduled as soon as practical), and the dates, time, and places of such meetings shall be published in one or more newspapers of general circulation throughout Allegheny County. (Note: Notice of the regular and special meetings will also continue to be provided to Members of the Association and of the Board of Directors in advance of the meetings.)
4. Public notice of the time and place for rescheduled meetings that were previously adjourned or cancelled and which were the subject of prior public notice, will be given in as timely and in as practical a fashion as circumstances allow.
5. Unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors, the Membership, and the standing committees shall be closed to the general public when the topics of discussion involve the matters listed below, and, for such closed discussions, the Board of Directors may declare an “executive session” during such meetings:
 - a. All personnel issues as respects employees of the Association or specific employees of any Member of the Association;
 - b. Matters concerning particular Members of the Association, which, in the sole discretion of the Board, should be privately discussed to assure full and uninhibited discussion and to protect any private interests of such Member;
 - c. Development and discussion of strategies for the following matters:
 - i. Securing and developing funding sources for the Association from private individuals and organizations and public agencies;
 - ii. Planned or ongoing presentations of Association business and concerns to private individuals and organizations and to public agencies and public officials;
 - iii. Certain policy issues, as determined by the Board, in its sole discretion, involving other public agencies and private organizations; and

- iv. Issues involving certain public and private individuals, including volunteers of the Association or of its Members, and of other organizations or agencies, when such meetings, in the sole opinion of the Board, involve personal or private matters.
 - d. Legal advice and legal opinions presented to the Board by the Association's legal counsel.
 - e. Matters pertaining to strategies and negotiations related to collective bargaining agreements or arbitration.
 - f. Considerations of the purchase, sale, or lease of real estate.
 - g. Discussions that could lead to the disclosure of information recognized as confidential or privileged under law.
6. Meetings of the Board of Directors which are specifically for planning, Board development, for informing the Board on certain issues affecting the Association and its Members, and other educational sessions, at which no action by the Directors will be taken shall not be public meetings and public notice of such meetings will not be given. The Board may, in its sole discretion, invite representatives and employees of the Members of the Association, consultants, experts, government officials, and others that it believes are able to contribute to the discussions at such meetings.

B. Open Records

Upon reasonable notice to the Executive Director of the Association, any citizen of Allegheny County may request to review the books and records of the Association, during normal business hours and, at this or her expense, make copies of such records; however, books and records containing references to our discussion of or facts pertaining to the above matters in Paragraph 5 that are excluded from public discussion, shall not be made available upon such requests. Likewise, the Association may not provide inspection, review, or copying of documents provided to the Association by other persons, organization, or agencies that have requested that they not be publicly disclosed or disseminated, or documents, information, and other records specifically declared by the Board, based upon the advice of the Association's counsel to be confidential, or otherwise to be excluded from public information.

January 1999