

SECTION I – GENERAL COMPLIANCE
CHAPTER 2

MEETINGS AND MINUTES

Meetings of Public Bodies - The Sunshine Law

In enacting the Open Public Meetings Act, the legislature declared that secrecy in public affairs undermines public faith in government and that the right of the public to witness in full detail all phases of the deliberation, policy formulation and decision-making of public bodies is vital to the proper functioning of the democratic process. (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.)

In general, the statute requires that the public be given advance notice of and the right to attend meetings of public bodies and that all discussions and official actions, unless specifically exempted, take place in public.

Minutes must be kept of all meetings, which at a minimum must include the announcement of the presiding person at the commencement of the meeting, the time and place of the meeting, and the names of the members present, the subjects considered, the actions taken and the vote of each member on any items voted upon. The following should be detailed in the minutes.

- a. A list of all employees, salaries and wages approved by the board.
- b. The final approved budget upon which taxes were based and details of the public hearing on the budget.
- c. Details of the annual organization meeting of the board, including the results of the election.
- d. Lists of claims approved for payment by the board.
- e. Summary of monthly financial statements of the secretary and the treasurer.
- f. Authorization for advertising for bids, with summary of the bids received and subsequent award of same.
- g. Full detail of budget transfers.
- h. Capital Improvement Authorizations, Proposals and/or Adoptions.
- i. Requests for Local Property Taxes.
- j. Resolutions for deposits into and withdrawals from a capital reserve account.

Minute Records

The proceedings of the meeting of the board of education or board of school estimate should be recorded in a bound or an acceptable loose-leaf type minute book and signed by the secretary. The minutes should be reviewed by the auditor. This procedure is necessary to check on the actions of the board of education, particularly with respect to the proceedings of the annual or special district meetings (elections) in Type II districts, the submission of monthly financial reports, the approval of claims, request for taxes, adoption of the budget, budget amendments, advertisements for bids and other financial matters of importance to the auditor. Minutes must include as a minimum the requirements of the “Sunshine Law” per N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.