

# Public Meetings in the Age of Zoom

**What Board Members Need to Know**

September 7, 2024 – OCCA Board Training

# Finding Your Way to Sunshine

Public decisions in Oregon are made in public.

- Not a public participation law.
- Public comment allowed with limits.



- Community College Governing Boards – 7 members
  - A Quorum is 4 members
  - Action Requires at Least 4 members
- Authority to take action lies in Board, not individual board members

# Changes to OR Public Meetings Law

## **HB 2560 (2021) - Publicly Accessible Meetings**

- Public must be allowed to access and attend the meeting “to extent reasonably possible” by phone, video, or other electronic or virtual means.
  - *This requirement does NOT apply to executive session.*

## **HB 2805 (2023) – Enforcement and New Training Requirements**

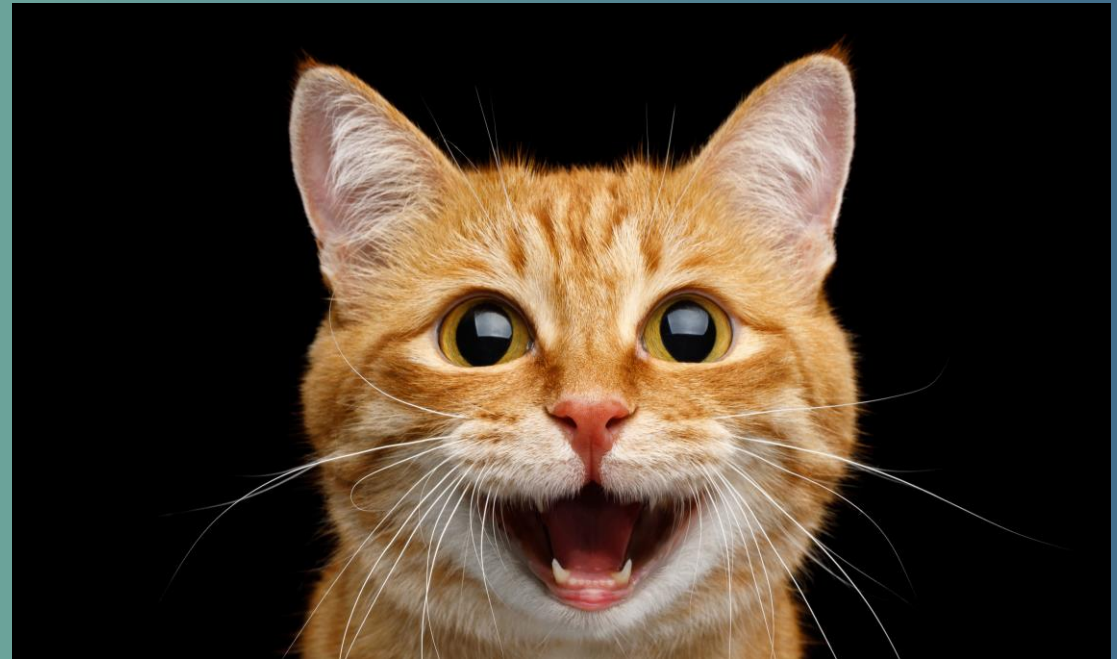
- Adds new definitions for “convening” and “deliberation” to clarify law.
- Public complaint process is created, and Oregon Government Ethics Commission given authority to enforce public meeting laws.
- Training required for board members at least once during term of office.

## **SB 1502 (2024) – Post Video Recordings of Public Meetings on Website**

- Applies to school districts, ESDs, community colleges, and public universities – January 1, 2025

# Zoom “Bombers”, Profanity, and More

Managing public comment during  
board meetings...



# Managing Public Comments

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- **Adopt a policy or procedure on public participation during regular meetings.**
  - ***Set time, place, and manner limits on public comments***
    - *Time limits – e.g. 3 minutes*
    - *Sign up prior for in-person and on-line commenters*
    - *Consolidate comments if all saying the same thing*
    - *Limit comments to agenda topics*
- **Listen attentively but do not respond to commenters.**
- **Allow Board Chair to manage public comment period. Be prepared in advance.**
- **Set an example by how you engage with each other in your discussions.**



# Recorded Meetings Bring Risks to Boards too!

# Making Decisions in Public on Video

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## How to Avoid a Meeting That Goes Viral

- **Remember your role. You set the tone for the College community.**
  - *Students, employees, faculty, and community members are watching.*
- **Discuss and establish Code of Conduct for board members every year.**
  - *Check in regularly and evaluate yourselves.*
- **No surprises!**
  - *Give a heads up to the Board Chair and President BEFORE the meeting.*
- **Bring your perspective to the discussion BUT speak with one voice after the vote is taken.**



# | QUESTIONS?

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