



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Policy Number GV2.21	Policy Section Governance	Effective: November 29, 2023 Amended: Reviewed:
Title: Open Board Meetings Policy		Executive Sponsor: VP, Governance and Communications

Summary:

CLBC has Board meetings that are open to the public.

CLBC sends out information about Board meetings and people can sign up to attend online or by phone.

People who attend Board meetings can ask questions. The questions must be sent at least 5 business days before the meeting.

Board members try to answer all questions at the Board meeting but if they can't, they will answer them at the next Board meeting or in writing. The Board Chair may ask management to respond on behalf of the organization.

1. PURPOSE

This policy supports CLBC's transparency and public accountability by establishing the requirement to hold meetings of the Board of Directors that are open to the public. It describes the procedural requirements for doing so and aligns CLBC with its requirements under the *Community Living Authority Act*.

2. DEFINITIONS

Open Board Meeting: A requisite of the *Community Living Authority Act* that the business of the Board be conducted in the open and the public may attend. The right to attend does not include the right to participate or to comment.

Closed Board Meeting: A part of a Board meeting that must be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to information that must be withheld from disclosure under the *Community Living Authority Act*, Section 2.9, or another enactment.

3. POLICY

Pursuant to the *Community Living Authority Act*, CLBC Board meetings are open to the public and are an important tool to promote transparency and community engagement. Open Board meetings are conducted through participatory online platforms. In the event that a member of the public is unable to participate online, CLBC will seek to provide alternative ways for them to attend the meeting. CLBC invites the public to submit questions to meetings of the Board.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Notice of Meetings

CLBC provides notice of upcoming Board meetings through its existing communication channels to individuals, families and support networks, partners, and service providers. When notice is given of an upcoming Board meeting, it will include an invitation to sign up to attend the meeting and how to request disability accommodations (i.e., captioning, etc.). Notice will include the process for submitting questions to the Board. Attendees may submit questions up to five business days in advance of the meeting.

4.2 Questions from the Public

4.2.1 The Board takes questions from the public on topics over which the Board has authority, including CLBC's:

- Board governance;
- *Strategic Plan, Service Plan, or Annual Service Plan Report*;
- Board and Governance policies;
- Budget;
- Strategic projects and initiatives;
- Strategic communications; and
- Other topics related to the Board's authority as outlined in the *Community Living Authority Act* and the *CLBC Board Governance Manual*.

The Board is bound by privacy and confidentiality requirements and cannot answer questions about specific individuals' situations or circumstances.

4.2.2 The Senior Executive Assistant to the Board and CEO, in consultation with the Board Chair and CEO, gathers responses to questions submitted by the published due date. Notice is given to the public that questions will not be addressed if they are received after the published due date. If a response is to be debated by the Board in a Closed Board meeting, it is so noted. A Board member who wishes to discuss the designation of an agenda item in a Closed Board meeting or *in camera* may discuss this with the Board Chair prior to the meeting.

4.3 Procedures at Meetings

4.3.1 An Open Meeting of the Board will require the electronic equivalent of a sign-up sheet for online meetings and attendee notice of any needed accommodations.

4.3.2 Attendees at Open Board meetings will be automatically muted, and their cameras turned off using the online platform software.

4.3.3 Questions submitted to the Board are answered by the Board Chair or designated by the Chair to other Board members or management present.

4.3.4 All persons attending Open Board meetings on the online platform are expected to follow the *Open Board Meetings Policy* and procedures.

4.3.5 If a meeting of the Board cannot be held due to a lack of quorum or if the Board meeting agenda does not allow for all questions to be addressed, questions submitted by members of the public will be addressed at the next meeting of the Board or in writing at the discretion of the Board.

4.4 Closure of Board Meetings

The Board will exclude the public from a meeting or a portion of an Open Board meeting if the matter relates to one or more of the exceptions outlined in the *Community Living Authority Act* and as described in section D of the *Board Manual*.

Where possible, prior notification will be provided to the public that a portion of the meeting will be closed.

4.5 Public Engagement

The Open Board meeting provides opportunity for strengthening community ties. The Chair of the Board (or designate) may develop plans to organize speakers at Open Board meetings to support the work of CLBC and its Board of Directors.

5. REFERENCES

Best Practice Guidelines – Governance and Disclosure Guidelines for Governing Boards of British Columbia Public Sectors Organizations (2005).

CLBC Board Governance Manual

Community Living Authority Act

Roberts' Rules of Order

Treasury Board Secretariat – Guidance for Crown Corporations