

TO ALL ELECTED AND APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

FOI Meeting Policy

While a meeting is in session, the following protocols should be followed:

1. Personal devices should not be used to communicate through any means including text message, email, instant message, social media post, or conversation. An exception will be made if the device is being used as part of the meeting session i.e. a member is participating in the meeting via phone conference. If there is a need to communicate regarding personal business during the meeting, the member should excuse himself/herself from the meeting and exit the meeting room, or request the chair to move for a meeting recess.
2. Any conversations by members or questions should be addressed to and through the chair. Talking, asking another member a question, or whispering any comments to another member should not take place.

At public meetings, the public generally expects that the business being conducted **is public business**. Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 1-200 *et seq.*), as amended (“FOI Act”), the public has a right to know what public officials say at public meetings on topics related to the public’s business, unless such statements are made during a proper executive session or are otherwise exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act.

Failure to adhere to the business of the meeting and/or the aforementioned protocols could subject public officials to a FOI request, requiring the disclosure of information that may be sensitive or inappropriate for public knowledge. In addition, a subsequent proceeding could be commenced with the FOI Commission, which may result in a significant expenditure of time and resources, a fine, board or commission actions being set aside, etc.

Thank you and please keep the above in mind at all times while you are participating in a board or commission meeting.

Daniel E. Carter
First Selectman