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MEMO TO: Board of Directors  
FROM: Leslie Bednar  
DATE: October 25, 2023  
RE: Meetings via Electronic Means Policy Update (Second Read)

We are pleased to share this policy draft that has garnered lots of good input.

In the attached policy draft, the language in blue is new since the September board meeting version and the bold black language is a point of discussion for the board. Section 4 was misnumbered on the first draft. We updated this latest version with the correct numbering and refined the procedures outlined in Section 4.

This was reviewed by both the Policy and Membership Committee and the Executive Committee. I look forward to your deliberations on October 31. Thank you.



# Meetings via Electronic Means

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Whereas, the Illinois Heartland Library System believes it is in the best interest of its members, the System, and patrons that the fullest participation and attendance in all meetings be achieved whenever possible; and

Whereas, the use of electronic conferencing for meeting attendance and voting requirements, at least in some governmental meetings, is permissible so long as the meeting is conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act; and

Whereas, the Open Meetings Act has been amended to allow attendance at public body meetings through audio-conference, video-conference, or by any other electronic conferencing without physical attendance; and

Whereas, the Open Meetings Act has been amended to allow library systems with jurisdiction over specific geographic area of more than 4,500 square miles [5 ILCS 120/7(d), such as the parties here, to permit members to attend meetings by other means than physical presence so long as they adopt specific procedural rules therefore; and

Whereas, the Illinois Heartland Library System in all of its regular and special meetings complies and intends to comply with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Illinois Heartland Library System, having considered the aforesaid matters hereby adopts this policy, to be used when needed, to make use of the capabilities for conferencing by electronic means or any other type of conferencing for its meetings as more specifically set out in this Resolution, and to adopt, establish, and set forth these Rules of the Illinois Heartland Library System applicable thereto:

1. All pertinent provisions of the Open Meetings Act must be complied with, including specifically the proper notice of any regular or special meeting, the proper record keeping or minutes of each meeting, the appropriate agenda preparation for each meeting, which in addition shall be posted along with the notice of the meeting; and, in particular, any use of closed sessions shall be in compliance with the provisions of the Act.
2. That sufficient security and identification procedures be employed, either at the outset of any meeting or at any time during the meeting as appropriate, to ensure that any and all members attending for discussion or voting purposes are in fact authorized members with the right to speak and vote.

3. Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, *“A quorum of members of a public body must be physically present at the location of an open meeting. If, however, an open meeting of a public body that is an Illinois Library system with jurisdiction over a specific geographic area of more than 4,500 square miles...is held simultaneously at one of its offices and one or more other locations in a public building, which may include other of its offices through an interactive video conference and the public body provides public notice and public access as required under this act for all locations, all count toward determining a quorum. “Public Building, as used in this Section, means any building or portion thereof owned or leased by any public body.”*. All Illinois Heartland Library System Trustees attending meetings by electronic conferencing shall be entitled to vote as if they were personally and physically present at the meeting site so long as a quorum is, in total, present and accounted for. Their votes shall be recorded by the Secretary as done by electronic attendance.

4. *Board members must provide notice at least 24 hours prior to the meeting regarding the location from which they will attend unless such advanced notice is impracticable. This notice is given through the system’s online registration system. A board member who is unable to attend a board meeting must provide notice to the executive director and executive assistant via [attendance@board.illinoisheartland.org](mailto:attendance@board.illinoisheartland.org).*

5. **Beyond those Members necessary to establish a quorum and thus attending in a public building, a member may attend a meeting at a location other than a public building**

6. As soon as it becomes apparent to the secretary that a meeting will include electronic conferencing, all subsequent notices of the meeting shall indicate that one or more members will or may be attending by electronic means. In the event that the notice of the meeting has already been disseminated and posted, a follow-up notice indicating the above shall be placed as soon as possible. In the event any news media have filed the annual request for notice of meetings, they shall receive an updated notice in the same manner as given to all members of the Illinois Heartland Library System.

7. The meeting minutes shall include, but need not be limited to; i) the date, time and place of the meeting; ii) the members who were either present or absent from the meeting and whether those members in attendance were physically present or present by audio conference, video conference or by other electronic means; and iii) a summary of discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and iv) a record of any votes taken.

8. The location of the meeting included on the notice shall be equipped with a suitable transmission system (that could include, but not be limited to phone and video conferencing options) in order that the public audience, the members in attendance and any staff in attendance will be able to hear any input, vote or discussion of the conference and that the member attending by electronic means shall have a similar capability of hearing and participating in such input, vote or discussion.

8a. In open sessions, when video conferencing equipment is in use, in the event that video conferencing equipment fails, the substitute deployment of speaker phones at all sites where either board members, staffers and/or public citizens are in attendance will be done and, if done, at all sites where someone is present.

8b. In closed sessions, when video conferencing equipment is in use, in the event that video conferencing equipment fails, the substitute deployment of speaker phones at all sites where either board members and/or invited participants are in attendance will be done. In the event that all board members and invited participants are in one location, the substitute deployment of speaker phones will not be necessary.

9. When a motion is made, and seconded, and discussion regarding the motion begins, the chair will check that the connection with remote location(s) with System member(s) is active and not muted. Prior to closing discussion and taking any vote, the chair will ask all remote location(s) with System member(s) present whether there are any additional comments, questions, or information to be added to the discussion.

*10. In the case of all meetings, either of the Board or any committee, as provided and required by the Open Meetings Act, an opportunity for public comment, as provided for and regulated by the System rules for such comment, shall be included. In the event a meeting will include electronic attendance, the meeting notice or agenda shall include satisfactory avenues (e.g. an email address, a phone number, or a conference attendance address) and instructions for a member of the public to attend the meeting and submit any public comment for the meeting whether by email, phone call, or video/audio conference attendance or if they prefer, they may use, at any time, the public comment email opportunity on the System website.*

~~11. The rules set out above shall also apply to each committee and each sub-committee meeting which include electronic attendance of members conducted under the System's Meetings via Electronic Means~~

*Adopted by the IHLS Transition Board March 29, 2011*

*Adopted by the IHLS Board of Directors July 29, 2011*

*Amended by the IHLS Board of Directors October 23, 2012*