

On 8/30/2016 4:15 PM, Arlene Goss wrote:

Dear Mr Kelly,

I apologise for the delay in responding to your email. Unfortunately it was assigned to someone who has since been away sick. It was brought to my attention after you followed up with customer services.

You have asked for information on whether Community Boards are required to minute all meetings and if they can meet as a board in an unofficial capacity with private companies.

Under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 all formal meetings of community boards must be advertised and have an agenda available at least two days in advance to notify the public of the topics for discussion and the decisions that will be made. Formal meetings must also be minuted and these minutes must be available to the public. So the answer to your first question is yes, minutes must be taken at all formal meetings.

My understanding from my experience working with community boards at two different councils is that community board members can phone each other, group email each other, and meet informally to discuss issues, but cannot make decisions as a board unless this is done at a formal meeting following the process above. Sometimes community board members meet informally to workshop complicated matters such as the writing of a community plan. However decisions on the plan itself must be resolved by majority at a formal meeting, with minutes. Informal workshops are not minuted because no resolutions or decisions are made.

Applying your example of the full membership of a community board meeting with a private company, this would be very unusual and I have not heard of anything like this taking place before. It is common, however, for the chairs of community boards, or individual members, to meet privately with people and companies to discuss matters of interest or concern.

If it did happen, the community board would not be allowed to make any resolutions or decisions without the matter coming to a formal, public meeting at a later date. Council staff would strongly advise a community board not to meet informally with a private company, and would instead recommend that a representative of the company be invited to a formal meeting to speak the board instead. This would allow a full discussion and the making of decisions by majority vote in a public meeting.

That is my best understanding of the rules. I hope that answers your questions. Get back to me if you need to.

Regards
Arlene Goss

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