



Best Practices for Open Government

- ◆ **1. Advance Meeting Notices**
 - We will provide notice of all meetings **at least one week in advance**.
 - Notices will be posted on our **website** and sent via **email** to the media and the public.
- ◆ **2. Public Access to Agendas & Documents**
 - Meeting **agendas and related documents** will be posted **at least 48 hours before meetings**.
 - An **online archive** will be maintained for easy access to past documents.
- ◆ **3. Timely Meeting Minutes**
 - Meeting **minutes** will be **posted online within two weeks** after each meeting.
- ◆ **4. Public Participation**
 - Members of the public will be allowed to **speak before votes** on both agenda and non-agenda items.
 - Participation will be allowed **in person or remotely**.
- ◆ **5. Live-Streaming & Video Access**
 - We support **live-streaming** meetings and posting **video recordings online**.
 - If not already implemented, we are **committed to making this happen** as soon as possible.
- ◆ **6. Limited Use of Executive Sessions**
 - Government meetings should be conducted **in public**.
 - Executive sessions will only be held **in rare cases** and in full compliance with the **New York State Open Meetings Law**.
 - We support requiring a **two-thirds vote** for executive sessions instead of a simple majority.

◆ **7. Financial Transparency**

- **Elected officials** should complete an **Annual Financial Disclosure Form**.
- Forms will be **posted publicly** on our government website, just as state officials do.

◆ **8. No Private Political Caucus Meetings**

- While legally allowed, **we will not hold private political caucus meetings**.
- There is no valid reason for local governments to discuss **public business in private**.

◆ **9. Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Compliance**

- **FOIL information** will be prominently displayed on our website.
- We will proactively post as much public information as possible to **reduce the need for FOIL requests**.
- A **user-friendly online FOIL request form** will be available.

◆ **10. FOIL Request Processing & Reporting**

- We are committed to **timely responses** to FOIL requests.
- **Quarterly status reports** on pending FOIL requests will be requested from the **Town Clerk or appropriate staff**.

 **Transparency matters!**

We encourage **other government entities** to **adopt these best practices** for a more **open and accountable democracy**.
