



HSVPOA Open Meeting Policy Discussed by BOD

Description

By Cheryl Dowden, March 19, 2020

Open Meeting Policy change is discussed at BOD meeting

Included in the HSVPOA March Board Packet, there was a memo that proposed a revision of the Open Meeting Policy for Board and Committee Meetings. This Memo was listed under “New Business” on the agenda. According to Vice-chair, Tormey Campagna, the “original” Memo included in the packet was from November and uploaded to the Explore the Village website in error.

Frank Leeming sent out an email about the “original” memo

Not being aware of this error, Frank Leeming sent out an email, alerting folks about the “original” proposal. After all, it was very alarming that the POA would try to shut down Villagers from recording the Board and Committee Meetings. Frank did not make a mistake. He merely reported on the information that was made available by the POA. **Thank you, Frank, for continuing to be the honest and courageous voice that you are in alerting Villagers to the truth.** Franks’s narrative from his report follows:

***“Just when you think the pettiness and penchant for power will go away, our POA leadership shows it is back at it again. This time it is to clamp down on access to meetings in our Village.*”**

***“On the agenda for tomorrow’s POA board meeting (which ironically is closed to the public because of the virus scare) are proposed revisions to open-meeting rules covering board and committee gatherings.*”**

***“The big change would ban anyone except a POA employee from using a video camera or tape recorder at a meeting.*”**

“This is a measure aimed directly at Cheryl and Joe Dowden and their excellent HotSpringsVillagePeople.com website. It could also be used to stifle reporting tools used by Village Voice or KVRE reporters covering POA board or committee meetings.

“The Dowdens have filmed and transcribed many board and committee meetings and posted the videos and transcripts on their website. The details have not always been flattering to the POA leadership.

“That’s not the Dowdens’ fault. They’re just reporting what happened.

“If board members, POA executives or committee members take action on something property owners want or go off the rails on something else, we’re entitled to see and hear about both. Since very few of us attend these meetings, electronic devices are useful in letting us know what’s going on. That’s what we do in a free society. It’s what makes government work.

“In an era when most folks walk around with a phone that takes good video and makes excellent audio recordings, it is bizarre to tell Villagers to keep their devices in their pockets. If you want to see what’s going on, you’ll have to rely on Big Brother for the details.

“The Dowdens’ website is successful because Villagers want to know what’s going on. Along with Nextdoor, Facebook and other platforms, Villagers are looking wherever they can to find out what’s going on in the Village.

“The POA board should reject out of hand this latest effort to control how property owners get their information. – Former Board Director, Frank Leeming

Board Directors stated this “original” memo was an error

Quickly after Frank’s email was sent out, Director, Nancy Luehring contacted Frank Leeming. Also, Vice-chair Tormey Campagna contacted me (Cheryl Dowden). They both stated that the “original” memo in the March Board packet was a mistake. Please see the original memo below.

According to Campagna and Luehring, instead of the “original” memo, a “revised” or “corrected” memo should have been uploaded.

Original HSVPOA proposed revision of Open Meeting Policy for Board and Committee Meetings

[183-18-20_Chp-1-Art.-26_and-Chp-8-Art.-3_Open-Meeting-Policies_Memo-version-2](#)

Discussion on Open Meeting Policy at March 18, 2020 Board Meeting

At the regularly scheduled March 18, 2020 Board Meeting this is what was said about the Open Meeting Policy:

Chairperson Erickson: “Next item on the agenda- Proposed Revisions to Chapter 1, Article 26, Hot Springs Village POA Committee Open Meeting Policy and Chapter 8, Article 3, Hot Springs Village POA Board of Directors Open Meeting Policy. Director Luehring...”

Director Luehring: “Does everyone have the correct copies on this since there was a lot of confusion?”
[Please see the corrected memo below.]

Erickson: “So there was.”

CEO: “My apologies for that.”

Luehring: “Absolutely no apologies needed.”

Luehring: ” I think we got to the root of the problem, that it was previously in the November 20 meeting and we took it off the agenda. And that was the end of it, that particular day.”

Luehring: “This is a proposed revision to HSVPOA Committee Open Meeting Policy, Chapter I, Article 26, and HSVPOA Board of Directors Open Meeting Policy Chapter 8, Article 3.

Luehring: “The Governance Committee has revisited an issue regarding HSVPOA Committee Open Meeting Policy, Chapter I, Article 26 and HSVPOA Board of Directors Open Meeting Policy, Chapter 8, Article 3.

Luehring: “**This discussion was removed from the agenda of the November 20, 2019, regular Board Meeting.**

Luehring: “The purpose of these changes is clarification of “Official HSVPOA” recordings, videos and transcriptions of committee meetings and board of directors’ meetings.

Luehring: “The change is an addition to both of these policies and they are identical.

Luehring: “On Chapter 1, Article 26, if you’ll indulge me a moment, Item D was added. The following statement will be read by the attending Board Member or other designated individual prior to the beginning of all official HSV Board and Committee meetings. ‘Official recordings, videos, or transcriptions of HSV Property Owners’ Association Committee Meetings and Board Meetings will be done by authorized personnel only and can be viewed on the HSV Property Owners’ Association YouTube Channel and “Explore the Village dot com. Any other recording, video or transcription of HSV Property Owners’ Association Committee Meetings and/or Board Meetings is not considered the official record of the HSV Property Owners’ Association Committee Meetings and/or Board Meetings...’ ”

HSVPOA Committees are advisory in nature unless their charter states otherwise

The “corrected” memo also goes on to state that unless granted in their charters, HSVPOA Committees have no decision making authority. HSVPOA Committees are only advisory in nature.

Executive sessions for Committees

Executive sessions for HSVPOA Committees will only be permitted under certain circumstances.
(Please see the “corrected” memo below.)

CEO weighed in on this issue

When Director Luehring asked if there was any discussion on the Open Meeting Policy memo, the CEO weighed in.

CEO: "Just one quick comment because I know there are a few comments out there, concerns out there, that we're trying to limit transparency. I talked in my report about marketing, about how much we are being heavily searched on the web and this is one of our needs to be very, very clear with people who are searching to move here about what our "Official" Records are versus other things, so hopefully that clarifies."

Erickson: "And it in no way constraints anybody else from making a recording. This just designates the difference between "Official" and "Non-official."

Luehring: "Unfortunately, that was what went out in the packet and of course...Whaa!!!"

Erickson: "Hopefully, we can calm that down."

Campagna: "Yesterday I spoke to one individual because they are recording and made them aware that the packet had a mistake in it and that the packet, the other language what was in there. They absolutely had no problem whatsoever with this language."

Clarification from Cheryl: We have no problem with the POA calling their video the "Official" video, but our videos are not edited. Because of this, our videos and audio recordings provide accurate information. In the past, the POA has neglected to upload to YouTube three videos- a regular Board Meeting, a Let's Talk and a Zoom meeting. If they have subsequently uploaded these three videos, I am unaware.

"Corrected" memo

[183-18-20_Chapter-1-Art.-26_and-Chapter-8-Art.-3_Open-Meeting-Policies_Memo-version-2-1](#)

Thank you to HSVPOA staff & Board for providing the corrected memo

Kudos to HSVPOA staff/Board for providing the "revised: or "corrected" version of the memo in a timely basis on the "Explore the Village" website. We appreciate your fast work and transparency regarding this issue.

There will be further discussion on the Open Meeting Policy proposals in April

Most of you are aware of this, but in clarification, the Open Meeting Policy memo is only a proposal and there will be further discussion at the 2020 April Board Meeting. If you have an opinion on this proposed "Open Meeting Policy," you may contact the HSVPOA Board of Directors to voice your stance before the April Board Meeting. And as always, your comments below are welcome.

Thank you for reading. If you would like to submit an article for publication on this website, please contact Cheryl Dowden at pennywisebuys@gmail.com. Be sure to bookmark this site so you don't miss any updates.

[Click here to visit us at our Private Facebook Group.](#)

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