

Township Policy on Video/Audio Recording for Meeting Minutes

Policy Title: Use and Retention of Meeting Video/Audio Recordings for Minute Clarification

Adopted by the Township Board on 12-9-25

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the creation, use, retention, and disposition of video or audio recordings made by the Township for the sole purpose of assisting the Clerk in drafting and clarifying the official written minutes of public meetings. This policy is intended to ensure compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (OMA), the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and the State of Michigan's authorized retention and disposal requirements under General Retention Schedule #24 (GS 24) for local government records.

II. Official Record Designation

1. The official, permanent legal record of all Township public meetings shall be the written minutes, as transcribed by the Township Clerk (or designee), and approved and signed by the Township Board (or other governing body). This is consistent with the requirement under Michigan Compiled Laws Section 41.66.
2. Video or audio recordings produced under this policy are working materials used only to support the accurate preparation of written minutes, and do *not* themselves constitute the permanent, official record of the meeting.

III. Recording Procedures

- A. The Township may utilize video or audio recording equipment during public meetings (open sessions) to support minute-taking and ensure accuracy.
- B. Any recording shall begin at the call to order and end upon adjournment of the meeting.
- C. Recordings shall be handled in compliance with public-record laws. From the moment a recording is created, it constitutes a public record subject to inspection and copying under FOIA.

IV. Retention and Disposal of Recordings

- A. Pursuant to General Retention Schedule #24, recordings made for minute transcription (meeting notes and audio/video recordings) shall be retained only until the official minutes are approved. Once the minutes are approved, recordings may be destroyed. GS 24 classifies these recordings under item "Meeting Notes and Audio or Video Recordings (EVT)" with retention = "one day after the date that the meeting minutes are approved."
- B. Accordingly, unless a FOIA request for a particular recording is pending, or litigation or other legal action concerning the meeting is ongoing (or reasonably expected), the Township Clerk (or designee) is authorized to permanently and securely delete or destroy the recording no later than one day after the meeting minutes are approved.
- C. The approved written minutes (and any associated agenda packets, distributed materials, exhibits, or attachments) shall be retained permanently (or according to the retention regime for official meeting records)

as the official and permanent records of the Township. This is in alignment with the GS 24 schedule's "Meeting Records — Open Sessions" series, which lists minutes and agenda packets as permanent.

V. Public Right to Record Meetings

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act (MCL 15.263), members of the public attending any open Township meeting have the right to record (audio or video) the proceedings — by tape recorder, video camera, or other means — without prior approval by the public body. The Township may adopt reasonable, nondiscriminatory rules to regulate the placement and use of such equipment solely to prevent undue interference or disruption of the meeting process.

VI. Limitations and Scope

- This policy applies to all public meetings of the Township and any of its boards, committees, or commissions, including regular, special, or rescheduled meetings, insofar as they are governed by the Open Meetings Act and produce written minutes.
- Recordings created solely for minute preparation — and not otherwise designated for long-term retention — will be destroyed according to the schedule above.
- If the Township desires to retain recordings for a longer period (e.g., archival purposes, for public access, or for historical record), the Township must adopt an "agency-specific retention schedule" (in accordance with state requirements) covering those recordings. Under state law, destruction of public records without authorization by an approved schedule is prohibited.

1ST C. HENDRICK

2ND H. MELTON

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