



STATE OF INDIANA

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October 19, 2026

Re: Complaint 26-FC-201
Christina Hammermeister (Complainant) v.
Whiting Public Library (Respondent)

This advisory opinion is issued in response to the above-referenced complaint filed on April 15, 2026.

A Notice of Complaint, along with a copy of the complaint, was sent to the Respondent on April 21, 2026, requesting a formal response by May 20, 2026. A formal response, submitted by Montserrat Inglada, Director, on behalf of Respondent, was received in this office on April 24, 2026.

The complaint alleges that Respondent violated the Open Door Law (ODL) when it prohibited Complainant from recording a meeting of the Library Board of Trustees.

ANALYSIS

ODL requires public agencies to conduct and take official actions openly, unless otherwise expressly provided by statute, in order that the people may be fully informed. As a result, ODL requires all meetings of the governing bodies of public agencies to be open at all times to allow members of the public to observe and record the proceedings. IC 5-14-1.5-3(a). Respondent is a public agency for purposes of ODL, and therefore, subject to the requirements. IC 5-14-1.5-2(a)(1).

Indiana Code 5-14-1.5-6.1 provides an exception to ODL when an executive session is being held. When an executive session is being held pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1, the public is excluded.

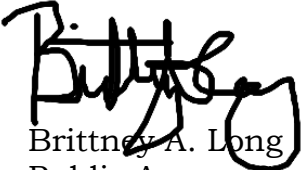
Respondent conducted a scheduled, public meeting of the Library Board of Trustees on April 14, 2026. At that meeting, Complainant indicated she would

be recording the meeting. Respondent's director informed Complainant that, due to library policy, she was not allowed to record the meeting.

As noted above, IC 5-14-1.5-3(a) specifically protects the public's right to record meetings conducted by a public agency. Respondent has not asserted any exception under IC 5-14-1.5-6.1. Accordingly, by prohibiting Complainant from recording the meeting, Respondent directly violated the ODL.

Conclusion

This office opines that Respondent violated ODL by prohibiting Complainant from recording the April 14, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting. This office notes the Respondent indicated the library is reviewing its policies and practices regarding recording in order to ensure full compliance with ODL moving forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittney A. Long". The signature is stylized with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Brittney A. Long
Public Access Counselor