



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

**Tuesday
March 14, 2023
5:00 p.m.**

In person at the Snohomish Carnegie, 105 Cedar Avenue
with remote access via Zoom:

ONLINE Zoom access: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89890062184>
or CALL in at (253) 215-8782 and use Meeting ID# 898 9006 2184

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Flag Salute
2. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS** on items not on the agenda
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
4. **APPROVAL** of the minutes of the February 14, 2023 special and regular meetings (P.3)
5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - a. Preparing for March 21, 2023 Council Meeting (P.7)
 - b. Collecting Safety Concerns from Citizens
 - c. Designating Time on Future Agendas for Guest Speakers
 - d. Firearm Safety (P.13)
 - e. Proposed Agenda Items for April 11, 2023 Commission Meeting
6. **COMMISSION MEMBER UPDATES**
7. **PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY UPDATES**
 - a. Snohomish PD
 - b. Fire District #4
 - c. Other
8. **STAFF MANAGER UPDATES:**
 - a. April Presentation on Coalition of Neighborhoods - Examples, Recommendations

- b. May Presentation from Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management (DEM)
- c. Review of Meeting Etiquette and Rules (*P.15*)

9. **ADJOURN**

NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at the Snohomish Carnegie, 105 Cedar Avenue, Snohomish, and online via Zoom.

Specialized accommodations will be provided with 5 days advanced notice. Contact the City Clerk's office at 360-568-3115. This organization is an Equal Opportunity Provider.



CITY OF SNOHOMISH

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Public Safety Commission Special Workshop Meeting Minutes February 14, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:11 p.m., held in person at the Snohomish Carnegie, with a remote attendance option available via Zoom.

Commission Members Present:

Brian Mills, Chair
Debby Lippincott
Stephanie Strom
Peter Messinger
Teri McDonell
Holly Urness

Staff:

Heather Thomas, City
Administrator
Shari Ireton, Community
Engagement & Strategic
Initiatives Director
Ann Ray, Community
Outreach Specialist

Other:

Councilmember Donna Ray
Chris Veentjer, Admin. Sgt.
Jason Hodkinson, Fire Dist. #4

Commission Members Absent:

Jill Clark Fulmer

2. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- a. 2022 Annual Report: Commissioners discussed items to include in the annual report. They added language on National Night Out, including a public contact identified for residents with questions about Neighborhood Watch (NW), the NW kick-off event, a quick launch kit, public education (a co-authored article by Commissioners Strom and Clark Fulmer in the *Snohomish Quarterly*), the November 2022 Town Hall and the creation of consistent NW signage.
- b. Work Plan for 2023: Commissioners discussed work they would like to accomplish in 2023. They agreed to continue NW efforts and community emergency preparedness. They also discussed determining the level of interest in an official neighborhood group (i.e. a collation of neighborhoods or a neighborhood council) as well as a Citizen Corps program.
- c. Council Goals and Action Items the Commission Will Contribute to in 2023: Commissioners identified a Council goal of developing "a plan for creating neighborhoods and/or districts as a tool to help organization efforts related to neighborhood watch, disaster preparedness, CERT teams and community outreach."

3. **ADJOURN:** The workshop adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Approved this 14th day of March, 2023.

Chair



CITY OF SNOHOMISH

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Public Safety Commission Regular Meeting Minutes February 14, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m., held in person at the Snohomish Carnegie, with a remote attendance option available via Zoom.

Commission Members Present:

Brian Mills, Chair
Debby Lippincott
Stephanie Strom
Peter Messinger
Teri McDonell
Holly Urness

Staff:

Heather Thomas, City
Administrator
Shari Ireton, Community
Engagement & Strategic
Initiatives Director
Ann Ray, Community
Outreach Specialist
Velvet Franz, Community
Navigator

Other:

Councilmember Donna Ray
Chris Veentjer, Admin. Sgt.
Jason Hodgkinson, Fire Dist. #4

Commission Members Absent:

Jill Clark Fulmer

2. **APPROVE AGENDA:** Chair Mills proposed an amendment of the agenda to move the introduction of Community Navigator Velvet Franz to discussion items. Motion passed, 6-0.
3. **APPROVAL** of the minutes of the November 17, 2022 special meeting and the January 10, 2023 regular meeting. In a correction to the January 10, 2023 minutes, it was pointed out that Messinger, not Mills, nominated Debby Lippincott to Vice Chair. With that change the minutes were approved as modified.
4. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS** on items not on the agenda: None
5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- a. Introduction of Community Navigator, Velvet Franz

The Commission learned that as Community Navigator, Velvet Franz connected people to existing services and was a resource for the Snohomish community. Each week Ms. Franz held office hours at the Snohomish Food Bank and the Senior Center. Sgt. Veentjer explained that Ms. Franz was also a resource for the Snohomish Police Department, providing them with a warm hand-off for residents contacted who needed services.

- b. Reappointment of Positions 3 and 4

Director Ireton said Mayor Redmon reappointed Commissioner Lippincott to Position 3 and Commissioner Clark Fulmer to Position 4 after they indicated they would like to continue serving.

- c. Review Public Safety Commission Notebook and Establish Timeline for Missing Items

- Current workplan
- Most recent report to Council

- Map of current neighborhoods

Director Ireton could not find the 2022 workplan or the most recent report to Council. Once the City hired a new GIS coordinator, a map of current and potential neighborhoods will become available.

d. Prepare for March 21, 2023 Council Meeting

Commissioners continued their discussion from the workshop. They asked for clarification as to when reports would be expected in the future. Administrator Thomas said it was a process tied to the budget, to help inform Council--roughly June 2023 to June 2024. She also mentioned surveys would be going out to current board and commission members to get their input on what was and was not working. It was confirmed that the Public Safety Commission would be presenting to Council on March 21. Administrator Thomas reminded Commissioners to be sure the Commission's workplan was tied to Council goals.

Commissioners discussed the recommendations put forward by Chair Mills, also in the workplan document. Concern was expressed over the phrasing of some of the items, particularly that the current work plan could come across as lobbying and some language could be interpreted as political. Commissioner Messinger stated that the Commission should be apolitical as it was charged with gathering and sharing public opinion and concerns with Council. Commissioner Urness agreed that the recommendations should be more affirming and in alignment with what the City was already doing.

Commissioners selected items to include in the workplan: CERT training, a coalition of neighborhoods, a briefing by the City and Snohomish County on the City's emergency plan, Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, calendar of activities, population islands, and tracking progress through data. Regarding the calendar of events, Director Ireton recommended the Commission focused on September as National Preparedness Month. Chair Mills pointed out that the calendar for the City did not currently show any safety-related events. Director Ireton responded that staff have a broad, inclusive list of calendar items, and that not all could focus on public safety. Administrator Thomas said she recommended staff focus on one or two items per year per board/commission due to workloads.

e. Continued Discussion on Workshop Items and Any Action Needed

f. Propose Agenda Items for March 14, 2023 Commission Meeting

- Discuss final presentation for Council
- Set objectives for Commission goals
- Review calendar of work items

Commissioner Messinger requested that the March 14 agenda include a presentation from Dylan O'Conner, Director of Government Affairs, Alliance for Gun Responsibility. The Commission asked if it would be possible to have that presentation at a later meeting. They requested City staff provide a presentation on different models of neighborhood coalitions and what that might look like for the City of Snohomish. Staff agreed to present this information at the April 11, 2023 meeting. They also asked that

staff reach out to the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) to make a presentation at the June 13, 2023 meeting.

Commissioner Urness suggested the Commission create a calendar for the year including topics they would like to discuss and work to be done. She volunteered to present this calendar at April's meeting. The Commission's March agenda would include the following:

- Discuss Final Presentation for Council
- 2022 Annual Report
- Recommendations to Council
- 2023 Work Plan
- Set Objectives for Commission Goals
- Review 2023 Work Plan Calendar

6. **PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY UPDATE:** None

7. **STAFF MANAGER UPDATE:**

Director Ireton reviewed the City Celebrations, Observances and Events Calendar that CESI staff put together. She mentioned that updates to the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) have not been reviewed by Council since 2015; however, since that time, the City entered into an interlocal agreement with DEM, meaning 99% of the emergency management plan will be driven by the County's plan. Director Ireton will meet with the County this spring to review.

Director Ireton also mentioned that the City will host a training of Public Information Officers from across the County to discuss population islands and the challenges of communication in the event of an emergency. The information gathered will be shared with the DEM. In addition, the CESI department was hosting a wellness activity in May for City employees focusing on personal preparedness.

8. **COMMISSION MEMBER UPDATE:** None

9. **ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Approved this 14th day of March, 2023.

Chair

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION 2023 WORK PLAN

SUMMARY: The Public Safety Commission presents its 2022 report, including an updated draft work plan while seeking input from Council on the direction of the Public Safety Commission for 2023. It should be noted that the membership of the Commission was in a state of flux for a good part of 2022, resulting in some meetings not having quorums, and creating challenges in getting work accomplished by the remaining members.

BACKGROUND: The commission spent the past year focusing on several topics of concern. From the 2022 work plan, our goals were to: 1. gauge the general level of public safety within the city; 2. promote the Neighborhood Watch program and associated components of that initiative; and 3. assess the status of and potentially address shortcomings with regard to Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response.

REPORT ON WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES: Gauging the general level of public safety within the city was, for all practical purposes, not accomplished. While to some on the commission this task seems to be a critical and logical first step in being able to fulfill our role as advisors to the Council on matters of public safety, its level of importance seemed to fall off in favor of trying to maintain commitments to other plan items. When time was devoted to look into this goal, we were unable to come up with a method to gather that type of information. We were advised by staff and our council liaison that a public open house to solicit input and ideas was a bad idea. Further, even though some base information related to crime is available on the city crime map, empirical data from the Police Department was not available to us. And although annual report information was available from Fire District 4, we were unable to unearth any trends or specific areas of concern, mostly because of our lack of members and lack of time to do so, but also because the data is not solely restricted to the City of Snohomish, it is for all of Fire District 4. However, through one on one conversations and other informal means, we were able to understand some of the common concerns being voiced by the citizens of Snohomish. Specific examples are included later in this report.

The following steps were taken in 2022 towards the Commission goal of increasing and coordinating Neighborhood Watches in Snohomish:

- 1. National Night Out:** Commission members hosted a booth at the annual National Night Out event, distributing emergency preparedness materials and inviting visitors to outline and define their neighborhoods on a laminated map. Citizens were encouraged to share safety and crime prevention concerns for their neighborhoods. Citizens were also given the opportunity to sign up for help establishing a neighborhood watch.
- 2. Public Contact Named:** Commissioner Peter Messinger accepted the role of the city's main contact for establishing Neighborhood Watches.
- 3. Pilot Group Launched:** Commissioners Messinger and Jill Clark-Fulmer launched a Neighborhood Watch kickoff event on Avenue I along with Sgt. Chris Veentjer of the Snohomish Police Department. They saw a 67% response rate, with newly formed members agreeing to meet quarterly to discuss topical safety concerns and get to know each other. This watch had a second successful gathering in December.
- 4. Scaling Plan Enacted:** Building on the success of this pilot event and bringing in previous advice of Council Member Donna Ray, Commissioner Clark-Fulmer built a quick-launch training kit to help launch

and scale new Watches, with the goal of eventually forming a strong Coalition of Neighborhood Watches across the community.

5. **Publicity and Public Education:** Commissioners Stephanie Strom and Clark-Fulmer co-authored an article in *Snohomish Quarterly* to inspire readers to realize the benefits of forming their own watches. The article also publicized the upcoming Town Hall event at the Carnegie.

6. **Public Town Hall:** Together with Council Member Ray, Director of Community Engagement & Strategic Initiatives Shari Ireton, and Community Service Program Specialist Ann Ray, the Commission planned and produced a November Town Hall at the Carnegie. Its goals were to

- 1) encourage establishment of Neighborhood Watch chapters in more neighborhoods,
- 2) share success stories from past examples
- 3) equip attendees with a take-home launch kit and
- 4) familiarize the public with our police liaisons.

Around 40 Snohomish citizens arrived to engage with presentations and Q&A from Commission Members Brian Mills, Messinger, and Clark-Fulmer, Council Member Ray, and Public Safety Commission Police Liaison Sgt. Veentjer. The event was also attended by Mayor Linda Redmon and covered by the Snohomish Tribune.

7. **Web Page & Assets:** The updated city of Snohomish Neighborhood Watch web page now hosts the same launch kits that feature materials and procedures for establishing and customizing a hyper-local Neighborhood Watch. These are sent out in response to every online inquiry, along with an offer for a Commission Member and Snohomish Police Department representative to attend any initial meeting.

8. **Steady Growth:** Since December, online inquiries from two more Snohomish neighborhoods have been received and addressed.

9. **Consistent, Recognizable Signage:** Ann Ray and Shari Ireton performed extensive research on pricing and options for standardized, citywide Neighborhood Watch signage. After a brief discussion, the Commission agreed with their recommendation to move forward with designs that demonstrate the positive working relationship between Snohomish PD and the citizens of Snohomish (rather than the typical “burglar” graphics typically seen on Neighborhood Watch signage).

10. **Data Tracking:** At the start of 2023, a new project was initiated to investigate overlaying City / County of Snohomish Crime Report data with defined Neighborhood Watches to determine block-by-block effectiveness. The project’s feasibility and next steps are currently being examined by Commission members and Snohomish Police Department.

Our goal to delve into the large arena of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response went largely unmet. The largest reason for this was time and resources. There simply were not enough people on the commission that had enough time to undertake this task.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The commission developed a set of guidelines (copy included) to help members navigate the processes of commission business, but to also be a tool for educating future members, hopefully avoiding the long learning curve experienced by the recently re-envisioned team. The document will be reviewed regularly in order to insure its relevance and applicability.

We were able to participate in the National Night Out event in August. It was a great opportunity to connect with citizens, city staff, and police and fire personnel. Commission members were able to have discussions with several folks about safety concerns in their neighborhoods, and to answer some questions from people who live just outside the city.

WORK PLAN FOR 2023

Rising from the meetings of the past several months is a draft work plan that the commission has developed to help guide our activities and energies for the coming year. It includes the following:

1. Continue our efforts to promote Neighborhood Watch. This would include creating a process to insure that interested parties are contacted, and that requests from neighborhoods for assistance and/or resources are directed to the appropriate place.
2. Devote time to understand the general level of emergency preparedness of our citizenry, and explore ways to provide methods of addressing any inadequacies and/or insufficiencies. Work to bolster those areas of preparedness that are currently amply addressed. Examine potential partnership opportunities with surrounding agencies and/or jurisdictions.
3. Determine the amount of interest at the citizen level in creating some "official" neighborhood groups (e.g. Neighborhood Councils), that would act as representatives and/or advisors to the City Council/and or Mayor. This type of group is a natural adjunct to Neighborhood Watch efforts, and would also strongly support the preservation of the small town look and feel for Snohomish. Spend time evaluating the resources that might be available to help launch and maintain this type of undertaking.
4. Finalize our evaluation of the Citizen Corps program to determine if Snohomish would be a good candidate for registration as a Citizen Corps City.

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS: Even though the commission has had limited opportunity to gather public opinion, there are some specific issues that we feel the council should investigate and/or address. These are in no particular order of importance.

1. *Speeding.* While perhaps not more important than any other safety concern, it is none the less the single most common complaint that we hear. We do not have compelling statistical data that would suggest that this concern is or is not valid, but the fact that so many people voice it, in itself, should be reason enough to address it. There was an initiative begun in 2021 to move towards lowering the speed limit on most city streets to 20 mph. That measure was supported by most if not all of the City Council, and overwhelmingly supported by citizens. The benefits of doing so are supported by

significant amounts of data.

RECOMMENDATION: Take measures to establish a 20 mph speed limit on streets in Snohomish, giving exception to certain specific arterials. In concert with such a change, it is important, even imperative, that enforcement of the new lower limit be a priority for our police department

2. *Street Lighting.* Numerous citizens have expressed concern over the low level, or complete lack of lighting at crosswalks at various locations in town. Commission member review of this item leads us to tend to agree with that concern. Specific areas are some intersections along Avenue D, places on First Street, and in lots of different non-core neighborhoods. Good lighting along streets and especially at intersections serves not only to provide for a safer walking environment, but it helps deter crime as well.

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of street lighting throughout the city, looking particularly at intersections and crosswalks.

3. *Traffic Flow.* Another “frequent flyer” comment that surfaces is “What are they doing about traffic?” This comes frequently on the heels on the announcement of a new or proposed development (e.g. Walsh Hills, Midtown, etc), but it also arises as a habitual problem that never seems to be addressed adequately. Citizens are genuinely worried about a number of issues in this regard, including pedestrian safety, road wear and tear, space for bicyclists, and general traffic volume. In addition, many expressed frustration about the apparent lack of any type of comprehensive planning document that would, at the very least, show that the City is looking into the future with regard to traffic. And finally, downtown parking. Well, it’s a problem that needs fixing.

RECOMMENDATION: Include traffic/parking as a standalone topic in the Comprehensive plan; undertake a thorough study of traffic in the city, looking particularly at existing roads that are far beyond their original design capacity; publish for public review and comment any and all existing traffic/road improvement plans.

4. *Crime.* Our city enjoys a lower than average crime rate. However, that does not eliminate the feeling of violation when it happens to you. Nor does it eliminate the concern that some of our citizens have expressed with regard to things such as theft, property damage, car prowls, drugs (use and sales and houses), auto theft, and illegal camping. The commission’s efforts to promote Neighborhood Watch programs is a start, but if the Council wants to preserve and/or improve the level of safety in our community, there needs to be a more visible and stronger effort on the part of the city to champion that effort so that the citizens see and understand the importance that the Council is placing on this topic.

RECOMMENDATION: 1. Enlist/assign/implore a person within City Government to be the Crime Czar, someone who is *passionate* about keeping Snohomish free from crime (as opposed to general public safety). **2.** Take a more affirmative and assertive position with regard to urging the state legislature to rework the laws so that our police officers are not prevented from doing their jobs, and in doing so being able to keep everyone safer.

5. *Community Involvement.* In our work to promote the Neighborhood Watch program, it has become evident that in some, if not many areas of town, there is a certain degree of apathy and sometimes

even opposition towards being “neighborly”. Some folks are too busy, some are too shy, some are too private, some are just very cautious. On the other hand, there are also many sections of the community where people want to really get to know those living near them, want to be involved in protecting and serving their area and their city, and want to foster the neighborhood feel that small towns are so well known for. Building strong neighborhoods is an endeavor that can do nothing but good for our city. Giving citizens and neighborhoods a strong and clear voice in the life of Snohomish is a very worthwhile and winning approach. Cities around Washington are having great success with this model, including Spokane, Tacoma, Kent and Everett.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop a plan, and champion its implementation, that would create an initiative within the city that focuses resources and energy on growing and nurturing neighborhoods, to include establishing neighborhood councils and creating a section of city government to promote those efforts. This initiative would need to include cooperative and collaborative efforts across numerous city departments, organizations, boards and commissions.

6. *Homelessness.* Notwithstanding those who are struggling to find housing that fits their budget, we are fortunate to have a relatively small population of true homeless (e.g. living on the street or in cars) in Snohomish. But for those of us who have occasional or even regular interaction with these individuals, such meetings are often uncomfortable at best and can be alarming. In addition to the possibility of confrontation, citizens also express concern about the health and safety of the homeless.

RECOMMENDATION: Expand and/or establish permanent long range funding and staffing support for developing and implementing the priorities presented by the Snohomish Health and Human Services advisory committee, specifically those focused on the homeless population.

CONCLUSION: The commission is committed to supporting the Council in reaching established goals and objectives, and at the same time is committed to presenting the council with carefully considered recommendations that, in our opinion, would improve the level of public safety in Snohomish.

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Firearm Safety Issue

The following invitation, including topics, was sent out and accepted by Ms. Kelly, who passed it on for handling of specific information to the Alliance for Gun Responsibility. Two representatives of that organization agreed to attend our March 14 meeting and have subsequently agreed to our postponement to the April 11 meeting. The presentation will be educational in nature and will not advocate any specific point of view. We have the ability to discuss the topics to be covered below and edit them for time as the Public Safety Commission sees fit as a body.

Dear Ms. Kelly:

I recently contacted you regarding your doing a presentation for the Public Safety Commission in the city of Snohomish. As a member of the Commission, I have put you on our meeting agenda for March 14, 2023, if you are available to attend at 5:00 PM at the Carnegie Building here in Snohomish. While I have also invited the members of the City Council, apparently there is a limitation that they cannot all attend another meeting if it is not their regularly scheduled meeting-- or they run into problems with a quorum and it classifying as an official City Council meeting. Since our Commission meetings are recorded, the City Council members would have the option of watching the presentation after the fact.

If you could present for 30 minutes and then field questions for 10 or 15 minutes, I think the impact would be maximal. The topics most important to our group are:

- 1. state guidelines for municipalities establishing no-firearms zones*
- 2. the ability of merchants to exclude firearms from their premises*
- 3. current data on the impact of firearm-involved violence in smaller communities*
- 4. current guidelines for firearm safety and enforcement of those regulations at the municipal level*
- 5. bills currently being addressed by the state legislature to prevent gun violence*
- 6. current data on gun violence resulting in the injury or death of law enforcement officers in Washington*
- 7. current data on firearm theft from private individuals or merchants*

Of course, this constitutes more than 30 minutes, so any selection of 3-4 issues from among the 7 would be left in your hands. Are there ongoing support programs for municipalities to educate their residents on gun violence prevention and support for local law enforcement? Is there a workshop format that better serves the needs of community government?

Thank you for considering my request and invitation to come to Snohomish. If it would help for us to plan this in person, I would be more than willing to drive to Olympia to meet with you.

Respectfully,

*Peter E. Messinger
Commission Member
Public Safety Commission
Snohomish, Washington*

During the preparatory stages of our annual report draft, I advocated inclusion of firearm safety and violence prevention as an objective that might be added to the six already proposed for 2023 in the drafts of that report. I urge that possibility be discussed by our Commission as we draft a final version on March 14 to be presented to the City Council in its next meeting.



Meeting etiquette & rules

Open Public Meeting Act

All City of Snohomish meetings must adhere to the Washington State Open Public Meeting Act. Rules and additional information can be found here:

<https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/legal/open-government/open-public-meetings-act>. The Washington Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), codified in [chapter 42.30 RCW](#), requires that all meetings of governing bodies of public agencies, including cities, counties, and special purpose districts, be open to the public.

Any action taken at a meeting held in violation of the OPMA is null and void. Any member of a governing body who attends a meeting knowing that it violates the OPMA is subject to a potential personal liability of \$500 for the first violation and \$1,000 for a subsequent one. Any person who prevails against an agency in any action in the courts for a violation of the OPMA will be awarded all costs, including attorney fees, incurred in connection with such legal action.

All Commissioners must complete OPMA training within 90 days of assuming duties. A refresher OPMA training is required every four years.

Open Public Meetings Act Basics: <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/legal/open-government/open-public-meetings-act/open-public-meetings-act-basics>

Public Records Act

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires that all public records maintained by state and local agencies be made available to all members of the public, with very narrow statutory exemptions.

A public record is defined in [RCW 42.56.010\(3\)](#) as any writing that is prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local government agency, and which contains information that relates to the conduct of government, or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function.

Public Records Act eLearning: a course designed for city and town councilmembers: <https://wacities.org/data-resources/public-records-act-elearning>

