

From Livestream to Public Record

The stream serves the people watching at that moment. The record serves everyone who comes afterwards.

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Virginia's Code deems audio and audiovisual records of open meetings public records. Section 2.2-3707 states that "minutes, including draft minutes, and all other records of open meetings, including audio or audio/visual records, shall be deemed public records." The language is not new. Whether and how it applies to a particular body, recording or request is a question for counsel and the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council.

Body / meeting: _____ Clerk: _____ Date: _____

THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE

- ☐ Recorder is running, writing to the expected destination
- ☐ Free storage exceeds expected length by a wide margin
- ☐ Every microphone position checked, lectern included
- ☐ Remote-participant path verified both ways
- ☐ Captioning active and reaching the stream
- ☐ Start time noted against the agenda
- ☐ Someone is watching the confidence monitor

AFTER THE MEETING

- ☐ File exists, opens, and runs to the true end
- ☐ Start and end complete rather than clipped
- ☐ Naming convention applied
- ☐ Published, then opened as a member of the public would
- ☐ Captions or transcript accompany the published file
- ☐ Any exception recorded, with an owner and a date
- ☐ Retention date logged

EVERY STAGE HAS AN OWNER — NAME THEM

STAGE	OWNER	HOW IT FAILS
Microphone and acoustics	_____	Off-axis speech, unintelligible public comment
Production mix	_____	Remote participants at the wrong level, or absent
Encoder	_____	Stream fine, archive missing or truncated
Recording	_____	Stops silently; nobody is watching
Naming and metadata	_____	File exists, cannot be found
Retention and retrieval	_____	Cannot be produced on a deadline
Published archive	_____	Posted without captions or transcript

THREE CITIZEN TASKS

- Find one thing.** Locate a specific vote from three months ago, starting from the public website and nothing else.
- Understand one thing.** Play a public comment on a phone, at normal volume, in a noisy room. Determine what was said and who said it.
- Prove one thing.** Produce the file, its date and its unedited state in a form that would satisfy someone who doubts it.

Tasks 1 and 3: if either takes longer than a few minutes, the finding is about naming, indexing and retrieval. Task 2: if it fails, the finding is about the capture chain and belongs to the AV system.

GOVERNANCE THE AV SYSTEM DOES NOT SUPPLY

- ☐ **Retention** — how long, under which schedule, applied by whom
- ☐ **Original vs derivative** — which object is the record
- ☐ **Naming** — body, date and type without opening the file
- ☐ **Integrity** — whether the file can be shown unmodified
- ☐ **Access** — who reaches the master capture, and is it logged
- ☐ **Request retrieval** — located and produced on a deadline
- ☐ **Redaction** — how a withheld version is produced
- ☐ **Ownership** — the named role holding each of the above

Retention schedules are set outside the AV system; the Library of Virginia's schedules are the starting point.

ARCHIVE PACKET — PRODUCE ONE WITH EVERY MEETING

Agenda identifier · Meeting title · Recording file name · Caption status · Posted by · Any known audio issue

That single artifact carries the routine facts about a meeting file without anyone reopening it.