



POLICY

Compliance – Open Meetings & Freedom of Information Acts.

Background

The Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC) is a public body as defined under the Open Meetings and Freedom of Information acts of the State of Michigan. Under these statutes the ARC has certain obligations and responsibilities. The following policy outlines the means by which the ARC shall respond to those obligations to meet both the spirit and letter of these legal requirements. It is the intent of the ARC to provide full public disclosure of the operations of the ARC and to encourage public participation in the activities of the ARC.

Open Meetings Act

Meeting of the Full ARC

Consistent with the requirements of state law, the ARC shall post the date and time of regularly scheduled meetings of the ARC immediately following the first meeting of the ARC in each calendar year. To the extent possible the meeting locations for each regularly scheduled meetings shall also be posted at the same time, but in any event the place shall be posted at least 3 days in advance of each ARC meeting. The ARC shall also post the date, time and place at least 18 hours in advance of any special meeting of the full ARC.

The ARC shall use the website (www.allianceofrougecommunities.com) to post meeting notices and shall provide email notification to any member of the public who requests meeting notification. If any member of the public requests in writing, the ARC shall provide first class mail notices for an annual fee not to exceed the reasonably estimated cost of copying and mailing as required under the Open Meetings Act.

To the extent possible all meetings of the ARC shall be held in publicly owned facilities and the hosting public agency with assistance of the ARC staff, shall post a notice at the meeting site at least three days in advance of any regularly scheduled meeting or 18 hours

before any special meeting of the ARC. If an ARC meeting is scheduled for a non-public facility the ARC staff shall work with the facility to appropriately post notice of the meeting.

Meetings of ARC Standing or Special Committees

ARC Standing and Special Committees are advisory to full ARC and do not exercise independent decision-making authority as a public body covered under the Open Meetings Act. However, to the extent that public attendance can be accommodated by the size of the meeting facility, the public shall be allowed to be present as invited guests, or simply observers. Participation in such meetings by the public shall be at the discretion of chair or co-chair. If any member of the public requests to be in attendance at any ARC Standing or Special Committee, the chair or co-chair shall take all reasonable steps to accommodate the request.

Meetings of the ARC Executive Committee

The ARC Executive Committee makes recommendations to the full ARC, provides oversight of the policies, budget, and actions approved by the full ARC, and guides the activities of ARC staff. It is not empowered to exercise independent governmental or proprietary authority or perform a governmental or proprietary function not specifically authorized by the full ARC. None-the-less, notices of the regularly scheduled ARC Executive Committee shall be included in the posting immediately following the first full ARC meeting of the year. Upon request, any member of the public shall be provided email notices of all ARC Executive Committee meetings. Members of the public shall be allowed to attend and observe ARC Executive Committee meetings to the extent that the physical limits of the meeting facility allow. Public participation at an ARC Executive Committee shall be at the discretion of the committee chair.

Minutes of Full ARC Meetings

Minutes shall be compiled for all full ARC meetings that shall include time, date and place of the meeting, members present and absent, a record of any decisions made at the meeting, a record of any roll call votes and an explanation of the purpose if a closed session is conducted consistent with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act. Draft minutes of full ARC meetings shall be available on the ARC website within 8 business days of the meeting. Correction the minutes shall be made at the next full ARC meeting and posted, if changed, within 5 days following their final approval.

Minutes of any closed meeting conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act shall be prepared but not available for public inspection unless required by civil action. Such closed meeting minutes shall be retained for a minimum of one year after formally approved.

Public Participation at Full ARC Meetings

Any member of the public shall be given an opportunity at each full meeting of the ARC to present information to the ARC members. The public presentation shall be limited to no more that 5 minutes unless extended by the Chair of the ARC. Members of the public shall be provided the opportunity to distribute written materials to individual ARC

members during their presentation or to provide copies of documents for inclusion as part of the public meeting record of the ARC. Members of the public are encouraged to contact the Chair or ARC staff in advance of a meeting if they would like to extend their presentation beyond the 5 minutes allotted for each speaker.

Freedom of Information Act

Except as specifically provided under the provisions of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), all written documents, emails and other forms of recorded information generated by the ARC shall be considered public records subject to disclosure to any member of the public upon request.

Availability of ARC Public Records

Upon a written request of an ARC officer or of designated ARC staff in writing for Public Records of the ARC, the ARC shall provide within 5 business days the requested record. Under unusual circumstances the ARC may notify the requestor in writing and extend the time limit by ten days. However, it is the intent of the ARC to respond to email, written or verbal requests for specific documents as soon as practical. The ARC reserves the option of charging a fee for the actual cost of duplication, mailing and clerical labor costs when requests involve a large number of pages of public records consistent with the provisions of state law. Facilities shall be made available for the inspection of public records during normal business hours.

FOIA Coordinator

The ARC shall designate its FOIA coordinator annually who shall be responsible for accepting and processing requests for ARC's public records. The FOIA coordinator shall be James Ridgway or, in his absence his designated alternate, whose email address is jridgway@ectinc.com and whose mailing address is: _____

James Ridgway, ARC FOIA Coordinator

Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT)

719 Griswold, Suite 1040

Detroit, Michigan 48226

Changes in ARC Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts Policy

The ARC shall post its most current Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts Policy on its website. From time to time the ARC may modify this policy to better meet the requirements of state law, to further encourage public participation, to enhance public access to ARC public records, or to clarify matters related to the ARC's effort to conduct its business while meeting its obligations to provide full public disclosure and appropriate public input prior to final ARC actions.