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FROM: Elizabeth M. Kameen  
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SUBJECT: Open Meeting Law Governs Conduct of Meetings

***Substantive Requirements***

- (1) A public body must meet in public open session. There are limited exceptions under which a meeting may be held in closed session, e.g. to receive legal advice; discuss procurements or personnel issues, etc.
- (2) A meeting occurs whenever a quorum of the Task Force convenes to consider or transact "public business."
  - Formal meeting;
  - Work sessions or pre-meetings;
  - Telephone conference call;
  - Lunch, if the discussion is about the public business;
  - Informal gathering; if the discussion is about the public business; and
  - E-mails back and forth among all members; if the discussion is about the public business.
- (3) "Public business" occurs when the Task Force acts in an advisory function, or quasi-legislative function.
  - Advisory function - - discussion of matters that encompasses the delegated responsibilities of the Task Force; and
  - Quasi-legislative function - - adopting regulations, approving contracts, budgets, etc.

***Procedural Requirements***

- (1) The Task Force must provide notice to the public of the meeting date, time, and place.
  - Maryland Register;
  - Websites;
  - Newspapers; or
  - Any other reasonable method.
- (2) The Act requires the Task Force to keep written minutes of open and closed sessions and sets the requirements for the content of the minutes.

***How To Close An Open Meeting***

- (1) The presiding officer presents a motion to close the meeting and describes the legal basis for doing so.
- (2) A majority vote must support the motion.
- (3) The presiding officer must prepare a written statement setting out the reasons for closing the meeting. (Form attached).

I hope this brief outline is helpful. I will be happy to answer your questions at any time.

**ADVICE OF COUNSEL NOT AN OFFICIAL OPINION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**