

§7.2

39 CFR Ch. I (7-1-06 Edition)

§7.2 Open meetings.

(a) It is the policy of the United States, established in section 2 of the Government in the Sunshine Act, Public Law 94-409, 90 Stat. 1241, that the public is entitled to the fullest practicable information regarding the decisionmaking processes of the Federal Government. The Postal Service is charged to provide the public with this information while protecting the rights of individuals and the ability of the Government to carry out its responsibilities. Accordingly, except as specifically permitted by statute, every portion of every meeting of the Board of Governors is open to public observation.

(b) Except as provided in §7.3 of these bylaws, every portion of every meeting of the Board is open to public observation. Members of the Board may not jointly conduct or dispose of business of the Board without complying with §§7.2 through 7.8 of these bylaws. Members of the public may obtain access to documents considered at meetings to the extent provided in the regulations of the Postal Service concerning the release of information.

(c) Without the permission of a majority of the Board, no person may participate in, film, televise, or broadcast any portion of any meeting of the Board. Any person may electronically record or photograph a meeting, as long as that action does not tend to impede or disturb the members of the Board in the performance of their duties, or members of the public while attempting to attend or observe a meeting of the Board. The rules and penalties of 39 CFR 232.6, concerning conduct on postal property, apply with regard to meetings of the Board.

§7.3 Exceptions.

Section 7.2 of these bylaws does not apply to a portion of a meeting, and §§7.4 and 7.5 do not apply to information concerning the meeting which otherwise would be required to be disclosed to the public, if the Board properly determines that the public interest does not require otherwise, and that such portion of the meeting or the disclosure of such information is likely to:

(a) Disclose matters that are (1) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or foreign policy, and (2) in fact properly classified under that Executive order;

(b) Relate solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the Postal Service, including the Postal Service position in negotiations or consultations with employee organizations.

(c) Disclose matters specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552), provided that the statute (1) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or (2) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(d) Disclose trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential, such as market information pertinent to Postal Service borrowing or investments, technical or patent information related to postal mechanization, or commercial information related to purchases of real estate;

(e) Involve accusing any person of a crime, or formally censuring any person;

(f) Disclose information of a personal nature, such as personal or medical data regarding any individual if disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(g) Disclose investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, or information which if written would be contained in those records, but only to the extent that the production of those records or information would (1) interfere with enforcement proceedings, (2) deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (3) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (4) disclose the identity of a confidential source and, in the case of a record compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, confidential information

furnished only by the confidential source, (5) disclose investigative techniques and procedures, or (6) endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement personnel;

(h) Disclose information contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions;

(i) Disclose information the premature disclosure of which would be likely significantly to frustrate implementation of a proposed action of the Board, such as information relating to the negotiation of a labor contract or proposed Postal Service procurement activity, except that this provision does not apply in any instance where (1) the Postal Service has already disclosed to the public the content or nature of the proposed action, or (2) the Postal Service is required by law to make such disclosure on its own initiative before taking final action on the proposal; or

(j) Specifically concern the issuance of a subpoena by the Postal Service, or the participation of the Postal Service in a civil action or proceeding, such as a postal rate or classification proceeding, an action in a foreign court or international tribunal, or an arbitration, or the initiation, conduct, or disposition by the Postal Service of a particular case of formal adjudication under the procedures of 5 U.S.C. 554 or otherwise involving a determination on the record after opportunity for a hearing.

§ 7.4 Procedure for closing a meeting.

(a) A majority of the entire membership of the Board may vote to close a portion of a meeting or to withhold information concerning a meeting under the provisions of § 7.3 of these bylaws. The members shall take a separate vote with respect to each meeting a portion of which is proposed to be closed to the public, or with respect to any information which is proposed to be withheld, and shall make every reasonable effort to take any such vote at least 8 days before the date of the meeting involved. The members may take a single vote with respect to a series of meetings, portions of which are

proposed to be closed to the public, or with respect to information concerning the series, so long as each portion of a meeting in the series involves the same particular matters, and no portion of any meeting is scheduled to be held more than 30 days after the initial portion of the first meeting in the series.

(b) Whenever any person whose interest may be directly affected by a portion of a meeting requests that the Board close that portion to the public for any of the reasons referred to in § 7.3 (e), (f), or (g) of these bylaws, upon request of any one of its members the Board shall vote by recorded vote whether to close that portion of the meeting.

(c) The Secretary shall record the vote of each member participating in a vote under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section. Within 1 day of any vote under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the Secretary shall make publicly available a written copy of the vote showing the vote of each member on the question. If a portion of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Secretary shall, within 1 day of the vote, make publicly available a full written explanation of the action closing the portion, together with a list of all persons expected to attend the meeting and their affiliation.

[59 FR 18451, Apr. 18, 1994, as amended at 62 FR 4459, Jan. 30, 1997]

§ 7.5 Public notice of meetings, subsequent changes.

(a) At least one week before any meeting of the Board, the Secretary shall publicly announce the time, date, place, and subject matter of the meeting, whether it is to be open or closed to the public, and the name and phone number of the official designated by the Board to respond to requests for information about the meeting.

(b) By a recorded vote, a majority of the members of the Board may determine that the business of the Board requires a meeting to be called with less than a week's notice. At the earliest practicable time, the Secretary shall publicly announce the time, date, place, and subject matter of the meeting, and whether it is to be open or closed to the public.