

On Wed, Nov 8, 2023 at 11:16 AM Ben Cullop <[ben.cullop@gmail.com](mailto:ben.cullop@gmail.com)> wrote:

Good morning,

By way of introduction, my name is Ben Cullop; I live in Charlottesville and serve on the Charlottesville Retirement Commission. This body manages the various pension and retirement funds for Charlottesville public service retirees. These meetings have been held virtually for the past several years; I've been on the Commission when the meetings were held in-person and virtually.

These meetings are excellent in virtual format - you can scroll through lengthy investment reports and returns without printing them; we can also invite people to our meetings that have expertise in the fields we are analyzing without asking them to come to Charlottesville. This has allowed us to better serve our retirees by using experts that we would not otherwise have had access to regularly.

In addition, every word on the meetings were recorded on Zoom. This is in contrast to simple summary notes that are taken during an in-person meeting. The FOIA implications seem much more transparent in the virtual, recorded format.

Lastly, the meetings are much more accessible for all members of our community virtually versus in person. This is important not only for making us more efficient, it also allows a wider array of people to participate in the process - not just the people who can get to an in person meeting on a Wednesday morning. Virtual meetings are certainly more accessible and equitable than in person meetings.

All told, virtual format is a phenomenal thing for this commission and phenomenal for FOIA purposes. I encourage you to continue to work to make virtual meeting formats available for all levels of government.

Regards,  
Ben Cullop