



**Pioneer
Library
System**

2557 State Route 21
Canandaigua, NY 14424

(585) 394-8260
Fax: (585) 394-1935

www.pls-net.org
online catalog at www.owwl.org

leading libraries forward

August 17, 2021

Senator Pam Helming
425 Exchange Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Dear Senator Helming,

In early 2020, Executive Orders included language authorizing virtual meetings and the suspension of the in-person requirement outlined in Public Officers Law, Article 7, Open Meetings Law. This provision offered elected library trustees the flexibility needed to continue conducting open and transparent governance at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. On behalf of the libraries in your region, I am writing in support of a permeant change to this law by allowing the use of hybrid meetings for public officers.

While the current law specifies that “videoconferencing” may take place, this becomes limiting when “A public body that uses videoconferencing to conduct its meetings shall provide an opportunity for the public to attend, listen and observe at any site at which a member participates.” A more substantial clause for hybrid/virtual meetings is necessary in today’s environment.

Libraries are more than capable of complying with recording and transcription requirements outlined in early Executive Orders. We are also able to accommodate in-person as well as virtual attendance by the public.

This change would go a long way in supporting your local institutions and increasing the transparency of government. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronald Kirsop
Executive Director
Pioneer Library System