



"Where Community Counts."

To: House Judiciary Committee
From: Richard LaMunyon, City Administrator, City of Maize
Date: February 15, 2019
Subject: House Bill No. 2219, Open Meetings Act Amendment OPPOSITION

The House of Representatives sent HB 2219 to Committee last week. This bill adds section (g) requiring audio or video recordings with public accessibility within 24 hours after the meeting. In the opinion of the City of Maize Council and staff, this is unreasonable, unnecessary and would be extremely challenging for a city without a technology department, the required in-house expertise nor available staff.

The City of Maize is very supportive of the open-meeting requirements and always strives diligently comply. As a city of the third class, all meeting agendas and approved minutes are published. The Council, Park and Tree Board, Planning Commission and Public Building Commission agendas are on-line in advance of the meeting. The news media is also notified and provided copies of the agenda and supporting documents. Approved agendas are posted on the city website the same week. Citizen inquiries/requests for information is provided promptly and pleasantly.

Our concerns with HB 2219 are the following:

- The State of Kansas appears to assume that all governments entities have the ability to:
 - purchase video and/or audio equipment to record all city council and board meetings that meet at different locations and at different times. *(That is unreasonable)*
 - pay for technology staff to set up and run the equipment and then post it on a website for easy availability. *(these "extra" people do not exist specifically in a city of the 3rd class)*
 - dedicate staff to keep track of all the meetings recordings *(this would become the responsibility of existing staff that are currently working at full capacity)*
 - have servers big enough to store the information (and for how long?) **(technology is expensive, ever changing and requires constant oversight and this bill simply expands the burden financially and staff wise)**
- The requirements are vague. The who/what/when/how/how-long of the video/audio requirements need to be spelled out. *(if a bill of this type is to be followed correctly it should have clear guidelines or "all" to understand- that is not the case here)*
- The State of Kansas again must assume we, as a city, do not have our information accessible to the public. *(that is not the case we are open and available to our citizens)*
- The effective date is in summer of 2019. However, the State of Kansas is not funding the equipment for small towns with set budgets that did not predict this expense in the 2019 budget. *(Again, here another case where the State decides something is required, without any justification, then places the burden on the City and says fund it. If this bill is mandated we require state funding for equipment and personnel to accomplish it.)*

The City of Maize is opposed to HB 2219 for the above stated reasons. We find the suggested bill to be unnecessary, burdensome and unreasonable. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns during the hearing process.