

Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council
Quarterly Meeting
Wednesday, 1/18/23, 2 pm

Link: <https://fox.zoom.us/j/93444589027?pwd=SjRDQVVLNVdZK21NZ1IKbTRtVGYvQT09>
Meeting ID: 934 4458 9027
Passcode: 773179

1. Call to order and introductions
 2. Approval of minutes from 10/20/22 meeting
 3. Treasurer's report – Drechsel
 4. President's report
 - a) Council alum and former Wis. Newspaper Ass. executive director Peter Fox inducted into the WNA Hall of Fame on Nov. 10. WNA also unveils the Sunshine in Government award and names Oneida County Sheriff Grady Hartman as its first recipient.
 - b) Legal defense fund pays out \$247.45 for police records case in Holman.
 - b) [Sunshine Week](#) is March 12-18. Opees will be announced the week before; Watchdog Award dinner date TBA, likely in April.
 - c) Council elections to be held in April - need volunteer to round up nominations to present
 - d) Bill gone March 7 to March 16
 5. Council membership. Tom Bier has retired. Several people will be inducted as new members later in the meeting, hopefully including a representative from the Simpson Street Press.
 6. Legislative update: Rep. David Steffen and Evan Goyke [plan to reintroduce](#) legislation to dramatically expand the availability of expungement of records of criminal offenses.
 7. Legal update: Wisconsin Supreme Courts, after nearly six months, has yet to rule on WMC's motion for reconsideration regarding public health records. Court of Appeals ruling in [WSJ v. Blazel case](#) (filed by numerous media outlets & Jonathan Anderson seeking records of the legislative investigation into former Rep. Staush Gruszynski's sexual harassment of a staffer); remains pending. DNR board holdout Frederick Prehn resigns; oral arguments were heard Nov. 18 in Midwest Environmental Advocates' [open record lawsuit](#) against him; a decision is pending. Appeals court [rules against](#) Milwaukee cop who sought to block the department from releasing records regarding an investigation into a death at his home for which he was criminally charged.
- Westerberg report: American Oversight's cases are still in various stages of appeal or decision. One appeal (for contractors' records Vos controlled prior to the Office of Special Counsel being created) is fully briefed, and will decide various issues, including whether in-house counsel fees are recoverable. A second case is being briefed in the circuit court on attorneys' fees. And the third (the one handled by Judge Remington) is on appeal in every aspect—the merits of the open records case, attorneys' fees, the contempt against OSC, and the withdrawing of OSC's attorneys' pro hac vice admission. OSC attorney

Jim Bopp asked for and received permission from the court to file an oversized, 35,000-word brief (the normal is 11,000). This brief is due in a few weeks. Finally, the fourth case, regarding preservation of OSC records, is also pending in the circuit court.

Wis. Transparency Project/Tom Kamenick report: WTP [wins important case](#) at appellate court level regarding access to emails of parents in the Mequon-Thiensville school district, which plans to appeal. Appeal of [ruling](#) in Glendale case regarding access to liquor license applications has been briefed, awaits decision. In response to a filed lawsuit, La Crosse police are in the process of producing records regarding incident reports.

8. Issue for discussion: Opee Awards. Nominations sought in 2023 Opee Awards in six categories: Political Openness Award “Popee,” Media Open Award “Mopee,” Citizen Openness Award “Copee,” Open Records Scoop of the Year “Scooppee,” “Whistleblower of the Year (“Whoopee”). Also must appoint a selection committee.

9. Issue for discussion: Encryption. In much of the nation, police agencies are using encryption to block media and others from listening in to radio transmissions. But some police departments do allow access, and media in other states have tried to work out end-arounds. Is there any way to move the needle here?

10: Other issues: Wisconsin Right Now [raps](#) AG Kaul for longer response times to open records requests; Neenah Joint School District [rescinds](#) improperly noticed closed meeting; UW-Madison policy center [holds](#) closed-door meeting for school board members.

11. Web site – Foust/Anderson

12. Your Right to Know: Need columns for February, March and April. Maybe need better promotion?

13: Other business including electing new members and setting the next meeting date: Thursday April 13, 20, 27.

14. Adjourn.

