

# Iowa Public Information Board Budget

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FEBRUARY 5, 2026



# IPIB: Our Role

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The IPIB is designed to be ***an official, efficient and free legal resource for citizens and government officials.***

The Iowa Public Information Board was created by the passage of Iowa Code Chapter 23.

- Guidance for government bodies and elected officials on how to ensure compliance with open records and meetings laws
- Review and resolution of complaints related to failure to comply with open records or meetings laws
- Working with citizens and government bodies to resolve issues and concerns
- Educating the public and government bodies on the requirements of laws and best practices to meet those requirements

*“One of the big problems today is, you have to go hire a lawyer, spend a bunch of time where it ends up being litigated.”*

Governor Terry Branstad, on the lack of a system to address transparency upon signing Iowa Public Information Board legislation into law in 2013.

# IPIB – Board Members

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**Governed by a nine-member board comprised of media, government, and public representatives. These members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate:**

**Joan Corbin** – President of the Pella Community School District Board and community volunteer

**E.J. Giovannetti, J.D.** – Attorney for Hopkins and Huebner, P.C. and former elected official

**Barry Lindahl, J.D.** – Senior Counsel for the Dubuque City Attorney’s Office

**Catherine Lucas, J.D.** – General Counsel for the Iowa Department of Public Safety

**Luke Martz** – Background in public affairs, grassroots advocacy, and campaigns

**Joel McCrea** – Former General Manager of WHO Radio in Des Moines

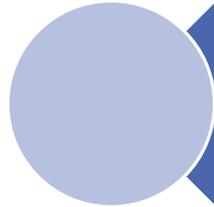
**Monica McHugh** – Shared Services Manager at A.Y. McDonald and owner of JM Farm Accounting

**Jackie Schmillen** – Director of Public Affairs at the Iowa National Guard

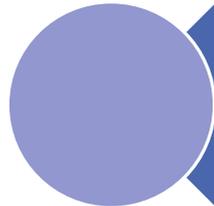
# IPIB Staff



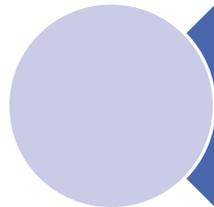
IPIB has three staff who report to the Board and carry out the functions of investigation, legal analysis, mediation, administration, technology, and communications.



Charlotte Miller, Executive Director  
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# IPIB Jurisdiction



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**IPIB has jurisdiction over Iowa Code Chapter 21 (Open Meetings laws) and Iowa Code Chapter 22 (Open Records laws)**

## **Most common Chapter 21 Complaints:**

- Notice,
- Closed sessions,
- Agendas

## **Most common Chapter 22 Complaints:**

- Confidential documents,
- Delays in providing documents
- Fees

# Complaint Examples

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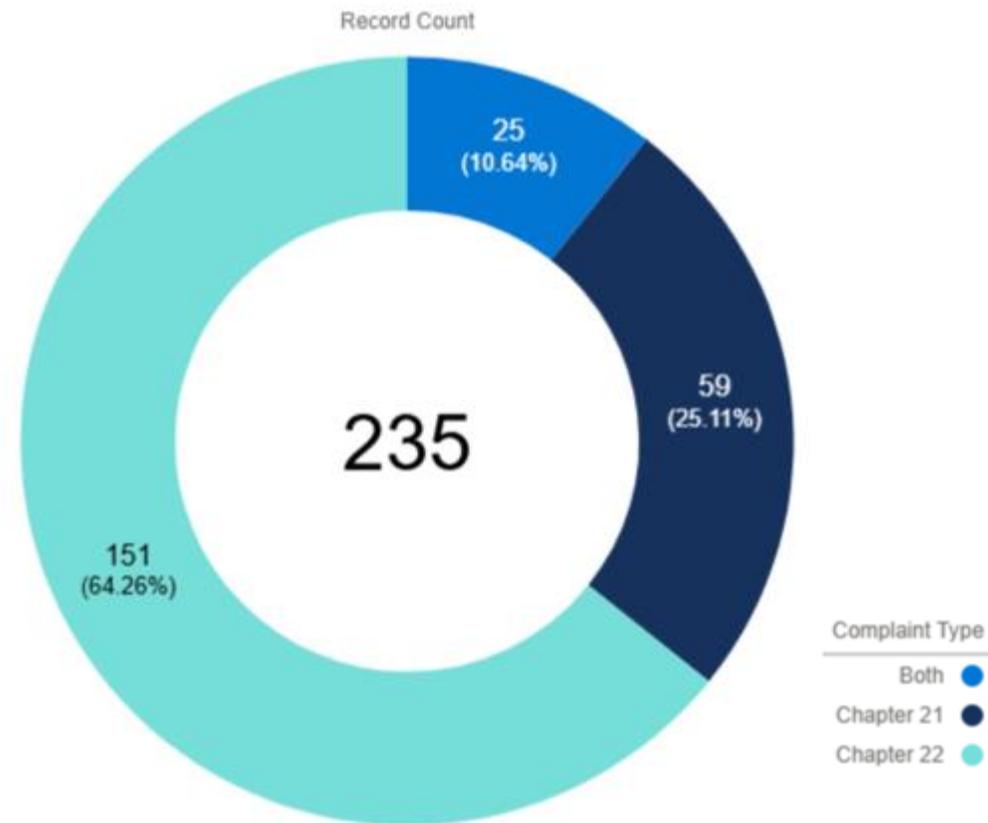
- **Chapter 21:** “My Board of Supervisors met last week. There was not an agenda posted and nobody in the community received notice that the meeting was occurring.”
  - IPIB would educate the government body regarding open meeting requirements and ensure policies and best practices are implemented to comply with the law.
- **Chapter 22:** “I requested public records from the City two months ago. I haven’t received a response to my request.”
  - IPIB would review the case to determine whether the City responded, if the records should be released, and if the records should be deemed confidential pursuant to the law.
  - IPIB would educate the citizen and government body regarding the requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 22.

# Types of Cases

64% were public records

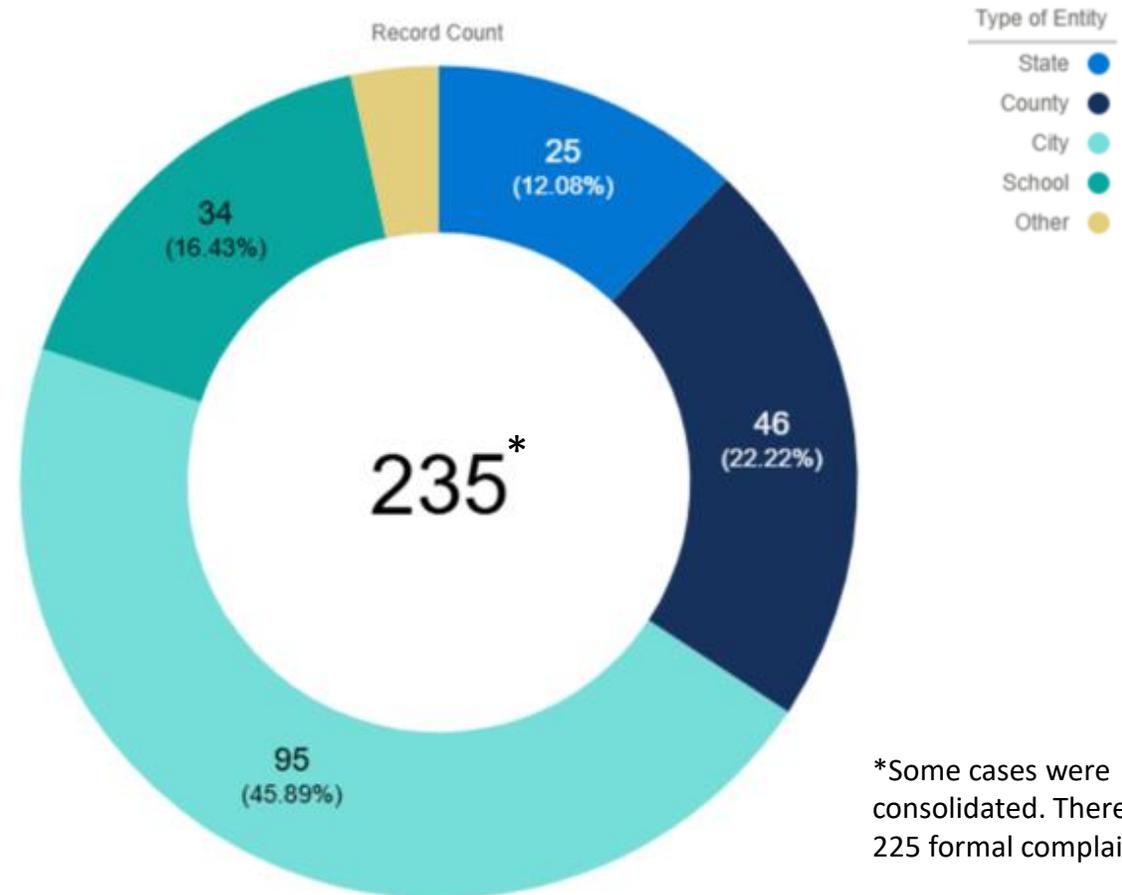
25% were open meetings

10% were both



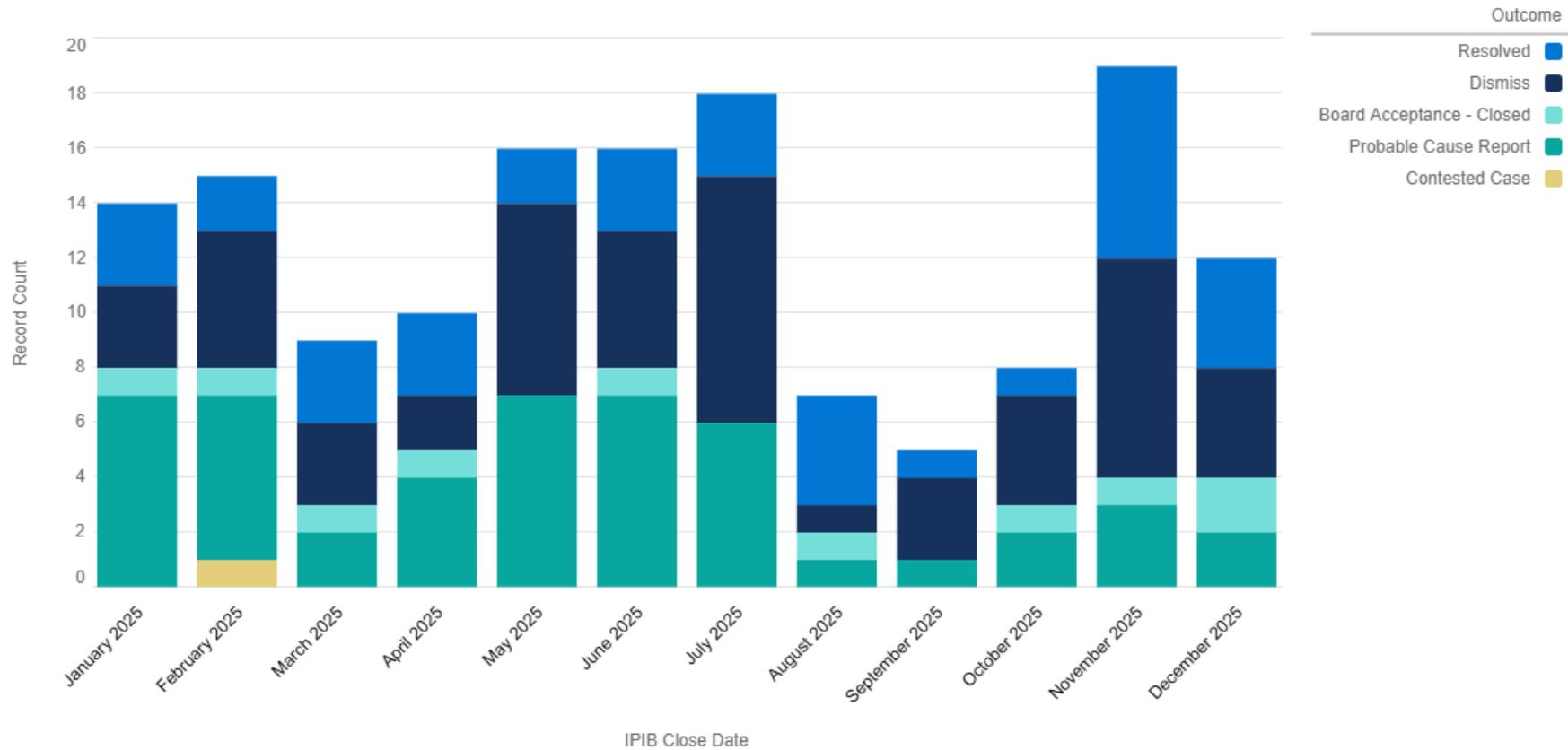
# Entities

- 25 against state entities
- 46 against counties
- 95 against cities
- 34 against schools
- 7 against others, such as libraries, conservation, etc.



\*Some cases were consolidated. There were 225 formal complaints.

# Outcome of Closed Cases



# Year Highlights

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- In August, began providing required Training for Newly Elected and Appointed Officials
- All meetings in 2025 live-streamed available on YouTube channel
- Continued focus on formal complaints
  - 235 complaints addressed in 2025
- Continued guidance to officials and citizens via official advisory opinions
- Continued outreach, education, and training
  - 29 formal trainings provided in 2025
    - 10 of which were Newly Elected and Appointed Official

# FY2027 Goals

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Tracking timeframes and goals for complaint review and responsiveness

Providing more training opportunities

- Short videos on common issues and advisory opinions
- Updating training materials and FAQs

Increase resources for the public regarding open meetings and public records

- Work on handbook

Continue to collaborate with groups with common interests in open meetings and public records

# Challenges

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Small staff, so wear multiple hats:

- investigation, legal analysis, mediation, administration, technology, communications

Training

- Need to assist in providing training and support: Chapters 21 and 22 are not easy
- Thousands of officials subject to the requirements

Have utilized as many efficiencies as possible

- Updated complaint process
- Electronic submissions
- Hiring of an administrative assistant

Turnover

- Only 1 out of 3 staff has tenure over 7 months

# FY2026 Budget

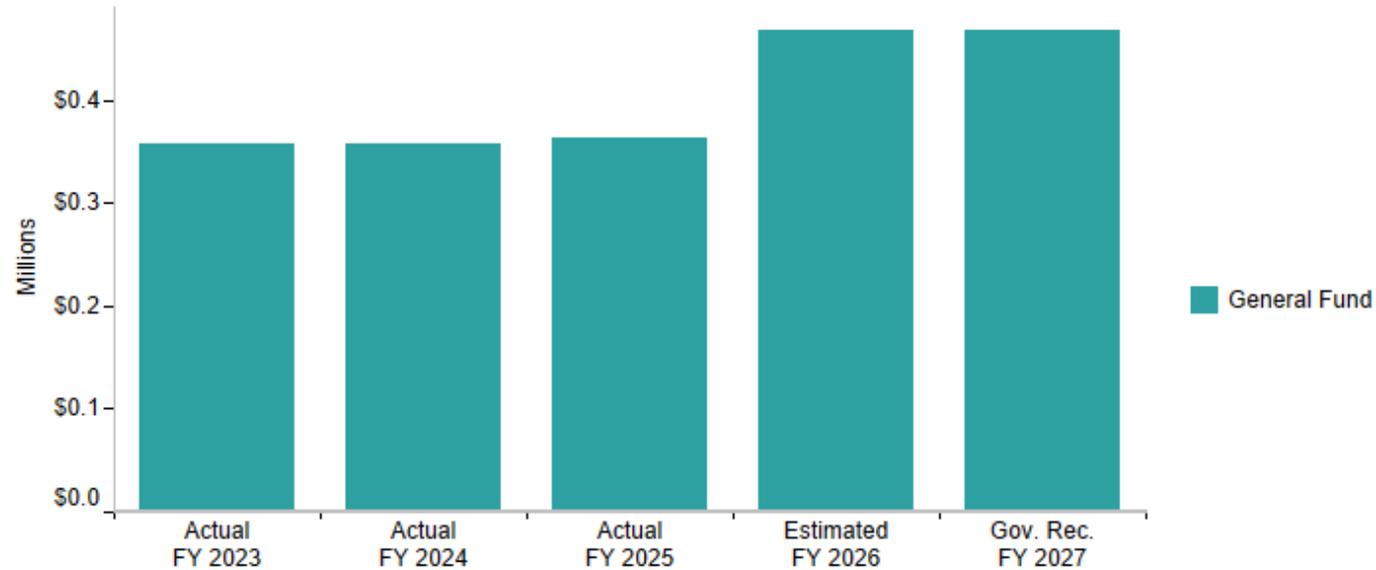
Status quo budget of \$467,227.

Increase of \$29,000

## General Fund Recommendations

	Actual FY 2025 <u>(1)</u>	Estimated FY 2026 <u>(2)</u>	Gov Rec FY 2027 <u>(3)</u>	Gov Rec FY 27 vs Est FY 2026 <u>(4)</u>
<b>Public Information Board</b>				
Public Information Board Iowa Public Information Board	\$ 363,227	\$ 467,227	\$ 467,227	\$ 0
<b>Total Public Information Board</b>	<b>\$ 363,227</b>	<b>\$ 467,227</b>	<b>\$ 467,227</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

## Funding History



# Proposed Policy

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HSB578 – An Act relating to the public notice requirements of a governmental building.

- Provides updated notice requirement and guidelines for a governmental body

HSB580 – An Act relating to the filing of complaints within the Iowa Public Information Board.

- Extends the filing deadline for a complainant to file with IPIB to 90 days.

HSB 582 – An Act relating to public records requests.

- Provides guidelines for a governmental body for acknowledging its receipt of a public record request