



North Port Board & Committee Handbook

A guide for Board & Committee members



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INTRODUCTION

The City Commission appoints members of the community to boards and committees (Boards) to act as advisors to the City Commission on a wide variety of topics and projects. The tasks of a board will vary depending on its purpose, but generally includes reviewing, recommending, and suggesting revisions to policy and long-range plans. Most of these bodies do not set policy, but rather act as a collective citizen sounding board in the policy creation process. Boards are not responsible for day-to-day operations of departments, operating procedures of departments, or the business decisions of the city.

All City of North Port boards were created for a specific reason, with its scope of authority established in the Code of the City of North Port, Florida; City of North Port Unified Land Development Code; and/or the Florida Statutes. Boards are an integral part of citizen participation in city government, and an important asset to our city to ensure the proper growth, development, and long-term stability of North Port.

QUASI-JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS

What does “*quasi-judicial*” mean?

Matters that are quasi-judicial in nature involve the actions of public officials who are required to investigate facts, or ascertain the existence of facts, hold hearings, weigh evidence, and draw conclusions from such facts, as a basis for their official action, and to exercise discretion of a judicial nature and any other decision involving the implementation, rather than formation, of city policy. When a board applies a law to a particular set of facts or circumstances in order to reach a decision that may impact a person or their property, the process must follow the city’s quasi-judicial procedure to ensure the parties to the action receive their due process.

Why do the Planning and Zoning Advisory Board and Zoning Board of Appeals conduct “quasi-judicial” proceedings?

Among other things, the Planning and Zoning Advisory Board serves as the Local Planning Agency and is responsible for making recommendations to the City Commission on the approval or denial of certain types of site plans, amendments to the city’s Comprehensive Plan, and other actions that affect development in the city. The Zoning Board of Appeals hears administrative appeals of and considers variances to the city’s zoning regulations. These actions involve applying the law to a certain set of facts or circumstances.

The Florida Supreme Court recognized that decisions of local governments that apply the law to specific circumstances such as zoning changes are quasi-judicial in nature. The Supreme Court decided these quasi-judicial decisions should be made in proceedings conducted with most of the same protections available to those persons who are presenting a case in court. These protections include the right to have a witness testify under oath, the right of opposing sides to ask questions of each other’s witnesses, and the right of each side to hear everything said to the decision maker.

[Section 2-82](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida identifies examples of matters that are quasi-judicial in nature. [Section 2-83](#) sets forth the procedures for quasi-judicial proceedings.

TYPES OF BOARDS

Advisory Boards

Some boards act in an advisory and/or investigatory capacity to the City Commission. A board is established in the Code of the City of North Port, Florida or the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code and is involved in ongoing or regularly occurring subject areas.

Other boards have direct responsibilities. For example, the Zoning Board of Appeals has final decision-making authority that is appealable directly to a court; the Board of Trustees for the Police and Firefighter Pensions are entrusted with administering the pensions; and the Citizen Tax Oversight Committee provides oversight for certain city expenditures.

Committees

A committee is a body, established by the City Commission to act in an advisory and/or investigatory capacity, and to accomplish a specific goal. Committees codified in the Code of the City of North Port, Florida are standing committees. The City Commission may also create temporary committees.

Task Forces

A task force is a body established to aid in accomplishing a specific goal, policy, or project. A task force can be temporary or long-term depending on the nature of its assignment.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE LISTINGS

Art Advisory Board

Established in [Chapter 4, Article III](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board serves as an information resource and to advise the City Commission on acquisitions, commissions, installation, placement, maintenance, preservation protection, decommissions, removal, and replacement of art in public places in the city and to review public art to be placed on private property in activity centers when the public art does not comply with the general requirements in Chapter 59 of the Unified Land Development Code. This board is responsible for advising the City Commission on:

- A. Installation and rotation of art exhibits city-owned facilities; the art advisory board will also install and rotate the exhibits;
- B. Acquisition, donation, selection, installation, and placement of public art in public places;
- C. Public art fund expenditures per Chapter 59 of the Unified Land Development Code;
- D. Recommended local artists to create artwork for public places;
- E. The maintenance, preservation, and protection of existing artwork in public places;
- F. Removal or replacement of artwork in public places;
- G. Efforts to increase public awareness and support of art in public places; and
- H. Public art applications where public art departs from the general requirements in Chapter 59 of the Unified Land Development Code.

The Art Advisory Board shall perform other duties as directed by the City Commission related to acquiring, commissioning, installing, placing, maintaining, preserving, protecting, decommissioning, removing, and replacing public art in public places and raising public awareness of art.

Auditor Selection Committee

Established in [Chapter 4, Article IV](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, and as required by Florida Statutes [Section 218.391](#), this committee provides for auditor selection functions consistent with Florida law, which include:

- A. Establish factors to use for the evaluation of audit services to be provided by a certified public accounting firm duly licensed under Florida Statutes Chapter 473 and qualified to conduct audits in accordance with government auditing standards as adopted by the Florida Board of Accountancy;
- B. Publicly announce requests for proposals;
- C. Provide interested firms with a request for proposal;
- D. Evaluate proposals provided by qualified firms; and
- E. Rank and recommend in order of preference no fewer than three firms deemed to be the most highly qualified to perform the required services after considering the established factors.

Charter Review Advisory Board

Established by [Ordinance No. 2014-08](#), adopted by the North Port City Commission on 02-10-2014. Also governed by Advisory Board general legislation in [Ordinance No. 2014-07](#) adopted on 02-10-2014 and [Ordinance No. 2017-30](#) adopted 01-09-2018.

This board reviews the City Charter annually and makes recommendations to the City Commission of proposed amendments which would be subject to referendum.

Citizens Tax Oversight Committee

Established by [Resolution No. 97-R-14](#) and authorized pursuant to Sarasota County Ordinance 2022-001 and [Ordinance No. 2023-11](#) to continue operating through December 31, 2024, this committee must meet at least once a year. This committee provides oversight of the city's use of proceeds from the Local Government Infrastructure Sales Tax, and is responsible for:

- A. Conduct an annual review of expenditures made by the City Commission from the sales tax proceeds to ensure that expenditures have been made in accordance with the city's infrastructure project list and any changes thereto;
- B. Review any changes made by the City Commission to the infrastructure projects or to the allocation of sales tax proceeds, for the sole purpose of ensuring that all procedural requirements have been followed; and
- C. Provide a written report to the city commission annually, including the committee's findings as to subsections (A) and (B) above.

Community Economic Development Advisory Board

Established in [Chapter 4, Article VI](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board advises the City Commission on business and economic development and issues of importance to the North Port business community and citizens, and is responsible for:

- A. Working with the City Manager and staff as appointed by the City Manager in researching, developing and recommending business and economic development policies necessary to direct the orderly economic growth of the city;
- B. Working with the City Manager and staff as appointed by the City Manager to support the city's business and economic development activities as follows:
 - (1) Make recommendations on any updates to the city's business and economic development strategic plan with long-term goals and objectives;
 - (2) Provide recommendations on any City Commission short-term action plans and measurements;
 - (3) Make recommendations on resources allocated for economic development activity of the city; and
 - (4) Provide recommendations on policies and ordinances affecting economic development.

Environmental Advisory Board

Established in [Chapter 4, Article IX](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board serves as an information resource to advise the City Commission on ways to protect, conserve, enhance, and raise public awareness of the city's natural and environmental resources, its wildlife habitat, its flora and fauna, and on safeguarding environmental quality for the future. This board is responsible for advising the City Commission on:

- A. Preserving and promoting clean air and water quality;
- B. Preserving and promoting wildlife and habitat protection;
- C. State and federal environmental regulations that may impact the city;
- D. Environmental concerns raised by citizens;
- E. Educational and outreach community opportunities related to preserving and protecting the environment and wildlife habitat;
- F. Grants and incentives related to preserving and protecting the environment and wildlife habitat.
- G. Matters pertaining to tree planting and care, landscaping, beautification of public road rights-of-way and public places within the city, grant opportunities, and the availability of special programs to assist the public; and
- H. Preserving and protecting the environment, wildlife habitat, trees, landscaping, and beautification of public places as the City Commission may from time-to-time direct.

The Environmental Advisory Board shall perform other duties as directed by City Commission relating to preserving and protecting the environment, wildlife habitat, trees, landscaping, and beautification of public places.

Historic and Cultural Advisory Board (SUSPENDED)

Established by [Chapter 4, Article X](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board serves as an information resource to advise the City Commission on ways to protect, conserve, preserve, enhance, and raise public awareness of the city's historic and cultural resources. This board is responsible for advising the City Commission on:

- A. Designation and regulation of historic and cultural sites, structures, and landmarks within the city;
- B. Properties and landmarks potentially eligible for listing on the local and National Register of Historic Places;
- D. The city's inventory of historic and cultural sites and landmarks;
- E. The city's Comprehensive Plan, codes, policies, and projects that influence historic and cultural resources;
- F. Legislation pertaining to historic and cultural resources; and
- G. Increasing public awareness of the city's history, culture, and historic and cultural sites and resources.

Joint Management Advisory Board

Established through an Interlocal Agreement with the School Board of Sarasota County, this board serves to foster cooperation between the City of North Port and the School Board of Sarasota County for the cooperative management of the North Port Performing Arts Center located at the North Port High School.

This board must meet at least once a year.

Firefighters' Pension Local Option Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Established in [Section 2-307](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board must meet at least quarterly and is responsible for the proper operation and management of the City of North Port Firefighters' Pension - Local Option Trust Fund, as follows:

- A. Construing the provisions of the system and determining all questions arising thereunder;
- B. Determining all questions relating to eligibility and membership;
- C. Determining and certifying the amount of all retirement allowances or other benefits;
- D. Establishing uniform rules and procedures for administrative purposes, benefit applications, and all matters required to administer the system;
- E. Distribution of information concerning the system to its members;
- F. Receive and process all applications for benefits;
- G. Authorize all payments whatsoever from the fund and to notify the disbursing agent of approved benefit payments and other expenditures arising through operation of the system and fund;
- H. Perform actuarial studies and valuations, at least as often as required by law, and make recommendations regarding any and all changes in the provisions of the system; and
- I. Perform such other duties as are required to prudently administer the system.

The board must elect a Chairman and a Secretary. The Secretary must keep a complete minute book of the actions, proceedings, or hearings of the board. Although the trustees do not receive any compensation, they may receive expenses and per diem as provided by law.

Police Officers' Pension Local Option Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Established in [Section 2-257](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board must meet at least quarterly and is responsible for the proper operation and management of the City of North Port Police Officers' Pension - Local Option Trust Fund, as follows:

- A. Construing the provisions of the system and determining all questions arising thereunder;
- B. Determining all questions relating to eligibility and membership;
- C. Determining and certifying the amount of all retirement allowances or other benefits;
- D. Establishing uniform rules and procedures for administrative purposes, benefit applications, and all matters required to administer the system;
- E. Distributing information concerning the system to its members;
- F. Receiving and processing all applications for benefits;
- G. Authorizing all payments whatsoever from the fund and to notify the disbursing agent of approved benefit payments and other expenditures arising through operation of the system and fund;
- H. Perform actuarial studies and valuations, at least as often as required by law, and make recommendations regarding any and all changes in the provisions of the system; and
- I. Perform such other duties as are required to prudently administer the system.

North Port Parks and Recreational Advisory Board

Established in [Chapter 4, Article VII](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, this board advises the City Commission on parks and recreation matters including:

- A. Use and condition of all public recreation facilities and recommending changes;
- B. Recreational programs to ensure that all public recreational facilities are properly and efficiently operated, and each facility is utilized to its optimum to the benefit of all citizens;
- C. Sources of grant funds that may be available for recreational programs and/or facilities and assist in development of an application for such funds; and
- D. Recommend a representative from this board to serve on the Sarasota County Parks Advisory and Recreation Council.

Planning and Zoning Advisory Board

Established in [Section 1-29](#) of the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code, this board serves as the Local Planning Agency pursuant to Florida Statutes Chapter 163, with the function, power, and duty to:

- A. Acquire and maintain such information and materials as are necessary to an understanding of past development trends, present development conditions and forces at work to cause changes in these conditions;
- B. Prepare and recommend to the City Commission for adoption and from time to time recommend amendments and revisions to the city's Comprehensive Plan for meeting present requirements and such future requirements as may be foreseen;
- C. Recommend principles and policies for guiding action affecting development in the city;.
- D. Prepare and recommend to the City Commission ordinances, regulations, and other proposals promoting orderly development along the lines indicated as desirable by the Comprehensive Plan;
- E. Determine whether specific proposed developments conform to the principles and requirements of the Comprehensive Plan;
- F. Conduct such public hearings as may be required to gather information necessary for the drafting, establishment, and maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan and ordinances, codes, and regulations related to it, and to establish public committees when deemed necessary for the purpose of collecting and compiling information necessary for the plan or for the purpose of promoting the accomplishment of the plan in whole or in part;
- G. Make or cause to be made any necessary special studies of the location, adequacy, and condition of specific facilities in the city;
- H. Keep the City Commission and the public informed and advised on these matters; and
- I. Perform such other duties as may be lawfully assigned to it or which may have bearing on the preparation or implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Established in [Section 1-28](#) of the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code, this board has the power and duty to:

- A. Provide administrative review to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is error in any order, decision or determination of the Director responsible for land development services in the enforcement of zoning regulations; and
- B. Consider and grant upon appeal variance from specific terms of zoning regulations

A quorum for this board to conduct business requires four members to be present.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities listed below are general guidelines. It is important that dialogue take place in a public meeting among members, Chairpersons, and Staff Liaisons on how a specific board can function at its optimum. Board members are volunteers and Staff Liaisons are city employees with other job responsibilities.

Board and Committee Members

Members are an important part of the City of North Port government process. They are volunteers and are selected to be part of the government and participate in pertinent issues, policymaking, project development, and implementation. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

- A. Being aware of the time, energy, and commitment that is involved in being part of a board or committee;
- B. Attending regular meetings and contributing to the problem-solving process by working in the spirit of compromise and negotiation in order to reach consensus whenever possible;
- C. Preparing materials that are substantive and meeting required deadlines;
- D. Completing specific tasks which may include serving on subcommittees;
- E. Notifying the City Clerk's office when they cannot attend a meeting;
- F. Keeping up to date on information relating to board interest areas; and
- G. Not representing their individual views as being representative of the full board unless an official position has been taken on the matter through a vote.

Board and Committee Chair/Vice Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected for a one-year term from the members of their respective board, at the first meeting of each calendar year. The Vice Chair will perform the Chair's duties in their absence.

It is the duty and responsibility of the Chair to ensure that meetings operate efficiently and for maintaining unity of the board. Responsibilities of the Chair include:

- A. Conducting the meeting firmly and courteously while preserving order and decorum;
- B. Ensuring the public is given a reasonable opportunity to be heard;
- C. Determining all points of order, subject to the right of any Board member to appeal to the Board
- D. Ensuring that a Board member or other speaker is recognized before speaking and permit only one person to speak at a time;
- E. Ruling out of order any remarks inconsistent with the Rules of Decorum;
- F. Asking for a motion or calling the question when it appears that Board members have concluded debate or when the debate has become repetitive and nonproductive for the required policy decision; and
- G. Announce the arrival of all members who arrive late.

Staff Liaisons

Staff Liaisons provide important resources to board members by:

- A. Attending board meetings in a non-voting capacity;
- B. Preparing agenda items and backup material;
- C. Scheduling all meetings and scheduling a special meeting only after determining a quorum is available;
- D. Serving as a communication link between the board, through the City Manager, to the City Commission;
- E. Presenting recommendations to the City Commission, if requested to do so by either the board, with the approval of the City Manager, or by the City Commission;
- F. Informing board members of City Commission action on routine recommendations and items pertinent to their board;
- G. Implementing the directions of the City Manager related to requests or needs of their assigned board;
- H. Helping to clarify the role, power, and duties of the board, and assisting with the advisory board; in staying on track and focused;
- I. Providing professional guidance, issue analysis and recommendations;
- J. Assisting with research, preparation of draft reports, and correspondence as directed by the City Manager and ensuring that presentations to the City Commission are prepared in the appropriate format; and
- K. Keeping their supervisor and department director informed about the work of their assigned board or committee.

Recording Secretary

Recording secretaries provide important resources to board members by:

- A. Managing and tracking of board memberships and vacancies;
- B. Ensuring new members are oriented to the board;
- C. Drafting annual calendars of regular meeting dates to be approved by the board;
- D. Handling logistics of meeting scheduling;
- E. Ensuring the election of officer is held at the first meeting of each year;
- F. Tracking and coordinating board member training;
- G. Tracking board member attendance;
- H. Preparing, posting, and distributing meeting agendas and supporting documentation;
- I. Communicating with board members to determine if a quorum will be present;
- J. Attending all meetings to record the meeting proceedings, prepare minutes, and record attendance of all members;
- K. Assisting in the swearing in of all parties for quasi-judicial agenda items; and
- L. Acting as a Parliamentarian for all boards.

GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

Representation of a Board or Committee

As an individual member of a board, it is important that you do not represent your own views or recommendations as those of the board. Board members making recommendations or expressing views which have not been approved by the majority of the board by an official vote should indicate that they are expressing individual opinions and are not speaking on behalf of the board or the city.

Relationship with Other Members

The success or failure of the efforts of a board weigh heavily on the degree of cooperation among the individual members of the body. Therefore, it is important to keep the following in mind:

- A. Show respect for individual points of view.
- B. Allow others to present their views fully before making comments.
- C. Strive to minimize political action among members.

Public Input and Participation

All board meetings must be noticed and open to the public, and public comments must be accepted at the beginning and the end of the meeting, and on any specific item.

Attendance

To be effective, all boards must have regular attendance. The City Clerk's office tracks vacancies due to resignation, multiple absences, and other reasons. Pursuant to [Section 4-4](#) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, a member, with the exception of Planning and Zoning Advisory Board members, is deemed to have resigned their seat if they have three absences from regular meetings within a 12-month period. Planning and Zoning Advisory Board members are deemed to have resigned their seat if they have six absences from regular meetings within a 12-month period. Upon resignation, the City Clerk notifies the remaining board or committee members that the member has resigned.

If a board member is unable to attend a meeting, they should notify the City Clerk's office.

Removal

Board members serve at the pleasure of the City Commission and may be removed or replaced by a majority vote of the City Commission. By majority vote, a board may recommend to the City Commission the removal of a member who fails to comply with any City Commission policies for order and decorum. By memorandum through the applicable Charter Officer, a board's staff liaison, may recommend to the City Commission the removal of a member who fails to comply with any City Commission policies for order and decorum.

Quorum

A majority of the appointed members of a board constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a quorum must be present in order for a meeting to take place. If no quorum is present at the scheduled starting time of the meeting, the Chair should call the meeting to order, announce the absence of a quorum for the record, and adjourn the meeting.

A quorum for the Zoning Board of Appeals consists of four members. If there are not enough appointed members of the Zoning Board of Appeals to constitute a quorum, the city's Zoning Hearing Officer has the same jurisdiction and authority as the board and may exercise all powers of the board pursuant to [Section 1-30](#) of the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code.

Establishing Rules

Each board is obligated to follow the rules of order and decorum established in [City Commission Policy 2021-03](#), Rules of Order and Rules of Decorum. Additional rules can be established by vote of the members. Members are expected to respect these rules, which are intended to prevent misunderstandings and disagreements and to keep order.

Orientation and Training

City staff provide yearly training with regards to Sunshine Law, Public Records, and Quasi-Judicial procedures. All members of city boards are required to attend the training.

Record of compliance with this requirement will be maintained in the City Clerk's office.

Additionally, the City Clerk's office will provide new board members with pertinent material which will assist in becoming fully functioning members of the board and annual Chair/Vice Chair training.

Annual Report

Each board and committee shall provide a verbal or written report to the City Commission in the first quarter of each year. The report should include:

- A. Previous fiscal year activities;
- B. Following fiscal year goals; and
- C. Board member attendance record.

GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE

Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law provides a right of access to governmental proceedings at both the state and local levels. The law is equally applicable to elected and appointed boards, committees, and their members, and has been applied to any discussion between two or more members of the same board or committee where they communicate about some matter which could foreseeably come before their board or committee. [Chapter 286 of the Florida Statutes](#) provides three basic requirements for public meetings:

- A. Meetings must be open to the public;
- B. Reasonable notice of such meetings must be given; and
- C. Minutes of the meeting must be taken.

The law on public meetings extends to telephone conversations, e-mail communication, text or instant messaging conversations, and even social media, whether on personal or public devices. This can even extend to a casual lunch between two members of a board or committee if they discuss some issue that may come before their board or committee. Such a communication, or even the lunch, becomes a public meeting subject to all the provisions of Florida's Sunshine Law.

Appointed members must remain aware of with whom they are communicating and what is being discussed. The safest course of action is to avoid discussion about matters that may come before the advisory body with other members of the advisory body, except during a publicly noticed meeting of that body. Questions about this law should be directed to the advisory body's Staff Liaison.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

[Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes](#), prohibits members from voting on any item for which they may have a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists where the vote of a board or committee member will or may result in a personal benefit to the member, usually resulting in some financial benefit to themselves, their family member, or business associate. Questions involving conflicts of interest are unique and fact specific for each individual and situation. Each potential conflict must be considered individually for proper legal guidance to be given. Any board or committee member having a question concerning a possible conflict of interest should contact their Staff Liaison, the City Clerk, the Florida Commission on Ethics at (850) 488-7864, or a private attorney immediately.

Abstaining Due to a Conflict of Interest

[Florida law](#) requires that all board and committee members disclose any financial interest they have in an item before them, file disclosure forms, and abstain from participating on the item. In effect, if a board or committee member does business with a person or business coming before the board or committee, it is essential that the members not participate in the proceedings, or the individual will be in violation of the law. Additionally, members of boards and committees are required to abstain from voting when a conflict of interest is present. This means that they may not vote on any matter which may have an impact on themselves, a family member, or someone who retains their services.

Although you must abstain from voting where a conflict of interest exists, you otherwise may participate in the discussion. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

STEPS TO RESOLVE A CONFLICT OF INTEREST

When a person abstains from voting due to a conflict of interest, the individual must complete Form 8B and submit it to the City Clerk's Office within 15 days of the vote taking place. The form will become a part of the official minutes of the meeting.

Who Must File a Form 8B?

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government of an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies equally to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Florida Statutes [Section 112.3143](#).

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

- A. You must complete and file Form 8B (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes.
- B. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members.

- C. The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- A. You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- B. You must complete Form 8B and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after for form is filed.

A copy of the official form is attached to the end of this handbook. You should consult the City Clerk for the most recent edition of the form. The Florida Commission on Ethics may change the format and/or content without notice. All Commission of Ethics forms are available on its [website](#).

OTHER MEETING GUIDELINES WHEN DISCUSSING ISSUES

Meeting Procedure

It is important that all organizations have underlying organizational structure and procedures. The following provides guidance for members and the general public. This list has been created to provide a framework for board procedures. Additional Rules of Procedure can be found in [City Commission Policy 2021-03](#).

The following three points are always in order:

- A. Point of Order: a question about process, or objection and suggestion of alternative process. May include a request for the facilitator to rule on process.
- B. Point of Information: a request for information on a specific question, either about process or about the content of a motion. This is not a way to get the floor to say something you think people should know.
- C. Point of Personal Privilege: a comment addressing a personal need – a direct response to a comment defaming one's character, a plea to open the windows, etc.

Motions

All motions must be seconded and are adopted by a majority vote unless otherwise noted. All motions may be debated unless otherwise noted. Motions are in order of precedence and may be made only if no motion of equal or higher precedence is before the body (i.e., don't do a number 4 (move to end debate) when the body is discussing a number 3 (move to suspend rules).

- A. Motion to Recess: not debatable. May be for a specific time.
- B. Motion to Appeal the Facilitator's Decision: Not debatable; goes to immediate vote and allows the body to overrule a decision made by the Chair.
- C. Motion to End Debate and Vote or Call the Question: applies only to the motion on the floor. Not debatable; requires simple majority vote.
- D. Motion to Extend Debate: can be general, or for a specific time or number of speakers. Not debatable.
- E. Motion to Amend: must be voted for by a majority to be considered and by a simple majority to be passed. If amendment is accepted as "friendly" by the proposer of the amendment, then many bodies will allow it to be accepted without a formal vote; this is a way of including a consensus-building process into procedure without endless debate over amendments to amendments. Strictly speaking, however, once the main motion is made it is property of the body to amend.
- F. Main Motion: formal proposal by any board member to take certain action on a topic of debate.
- G. Voice Vote: The form of voting on a motion by which the Chair asks those in favor to respond to the motion in question by saying "aye" and then asks those opposed to the motion to say "no". If the "ayes" have the majority the Chair will state that the motion has passed. If the prevailing side is negative, the Chair will state that the motion is lost.
Roll Call Vote: The form of voting on a motion by which the Chair calls the roll. Each member answers as their name is called and the clerk records their vote. Upon completion

of the roll, the Chair announces the results of the vote and states the name of those who dissented.

Basic Script for Chair's Agenda

Basic Script for Chair's Agenda

(This is a general format and order of business.
Any items not applicable should simply be deleted.)

Call to Order - Chair calls the meeting to order and states the time.

Roll Call – Chair calls on the Recording Secretary to conduct roll call.

Pledge of Allegiance –Chair requests everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment – Chair calls on those who filled out a public comment card to speak. (Public comment is three minutes per speaker.)

Approval of Minutes - minutes are a summary of what was said at the meeting, not what was intended to be said.

1. Chair announces the item.
2. Chair asks if there are any corrections to the minutes.
 - A. If there are any corrections, have each member clearly state their corrections for the record.
 - B. A member can clarify what was meant but cannot change what was said. A clarification would be in the minutes of the meeting that the minutes were clarified - the original minutes would remain unchanged.
 - C. Minutes can be tabled to allow the recording secretary the opportunity to re-listen to the recording.
3. Chair requests a motion to approve the minutes.
 - A. If the minutes were amended, the motion would be "I motion to approve the minutes with the following changes (have the motion maker repeat the changes that were made).
 - B. A member cannot abstain from voting merely because they did not attend the meeting. A member who did not attend the meeting has several options:
 - 1) Ask for a tabling to allow the member to listen to the recording
 - 2) Vote to approve
 - 3) Vote to deny
4. Chair calls for a voice vote.

Unfinished Business – Items carried over from a previous agenda/**New Business**

1. Chair announces the item.
2. Board discussion
3. Public comment

4. If action needs to be taken, Chair asks for a motion and a second.
 - A. Motions begin:
 1. I motion to approve.
 2. I motion to approve subject to (do not accept motions “subject to what was previously discussed.” Have the motion maker be explicit in the motion - this provides staff with the exact direction the board wishes to take).
 3. I motion to continue this item to _____ (a meeting date should be provided).
5. Chair calls for a voice vote. In most instances, a voice vote is acceptable.
 - A. Should the item be a controversial item, it is best to ask for a roll call vote.

Updates – Updates provided by Staff Liaisons

Future Agenda Items - Chair asks for items for the next meeting (this allows the Board Secretary to create the agenda for the next meeting).

Public Comment – Chair calls on those who filled out a public comment card to speak. (Public comment is three minutes per speaker.)

Adjournment – Chair states “*If there is no further business, this meeting is adjourned.*” (No motion is required.)

Recommendations to City Commission

All recommendations to the City Commission must be approved by majority vote of board members present.

All recommendations approved by the board will be handled in the following order:

- A. Staff Liaison will draft a memorandum annotating the board meeting date, pertinent discussion, and motion language.
- B. The memorandum will be thru the City Manager, or the City Clerk if applicable, to the City Commission.
- C. The City Manager/City Clerk will send the memorandum to Commission via email.
- D. Any Commissioner may request the item be placed on an upcoming agenda for discussion.
- E. For recommendations provided in response to a Commission directive, the City Manager/City Clerk will place the item on an upcoming agenda to provide a report and further discussion.
- F. If an item is placed on an upcoming agenda, the Staff Liaison will notify board members of the Commission meeting date where the item will be discussed.