

Information for Members of the Planning Commission, Parklands Committee and Traffic Safety Committee

Requirements of the position:

1. A Member must be a registered voter and resident of Palos Verdes Estates. City employees and relatives of City employees or elected officials will not be considered for appointment.
2. With the exception of the ability to read architectural and site plans and other documents and reference materials as appropriate for the particular Commission or Committee, no special skills, education or occupational experience is required.
3. A Member does not have an employment relationship with the City, and volunteers his or her services without compensation.
4. A Member serves at the pleasure of the City Council.
5. The identity of Members is public information and Members' names will be posted on the City's website.

Term of appointment:

6. The term of a Member is two years. A Member can reapply for consideration by the Council for successive terms.

Time Commitment:

7. Regular Commission/Committee meetings are held each month. In the event of a heavy agenda certain agenda items may be deferred to another meeting.
8. The meeting length is dependent on the number of applications being reviewed but typically is 2-4 hours.
9. Information related to the applications being reviewed at the meetings will be provided to each Member no later than the Friday evening before the meeting. After a review of the materials, a visit to the site of the application is recommended to fully understand the application. Preparation time varies among individuals but generally entails the equivalent of a full day to read and analyze the written materials and to visit the subject properties or street locales. Since the written materials are usually provided only a few days before the meeting, preparation is intensive.
10. The Member shall participate in any joint meeting with the City Council as requested.

Roles and Responsibilities:

11. The Member shall attend each meeting unless excused, and shall participate in discussions related to the applications under review unless precluded from participation by a legal conflict.
12. The Member shall review thoroughly the materials provided by the City to become familiar and knowledgeable with each application. Questions on the materials may be discussed with City staff prior to the meeting.

13. Based on personal review of the materials provided, observations of the site of the project/request and the discussions during the Commission/Committee meeting, the Member will participate in the Commission/Committee deliberations as to the acceptability or denial of the application/request.

Organization:

14. The Commission/Committee is composed of five members of whom one member is the Chair, and one member, the Vice-Chair, as appointed by the Mayor with the concurrence of the Council. The Chair is responsible for facilitating the meeting. The Vice-Chair serves as Chair in the Chair's absence. All five members' votes are equally weighted.
15. Commission and Committee members receive no compensation or benefits for serving in the appointed position.
16. Individuals appointed to a Commission or Committee will only serve on one board at a time.
17. Elected officials (City Council members and Treasurer) do not serve on a Commission or Committee.

Public Meetings and the Ralph M. Brown Act:

18. State Law requires that all meetings of a City shall be open and public. All business of the Commission/Committee are to be held at an open and public meeting where proper notice is given to the public including an agenda that identifies the items to be discussed.
19. The City Attorney will provide Members with the requirements of the Brown Act and is a resource available to answer any questions regarding compliance. The City Attorney is available by cell phone and email over weekends, and the contact information will be provided.

Ethics and Conflict of Interest Considerations:

20. The City Attorney will provide information and guidelines for ethics laws and good practice for transparency and fairness in decision making. In the event a Member has any question regarding his or her ability to participate in a discussion or vote, the Member should consult with the City Attorney prior to that time.
21. Planning Commissioners are required to submit FPPC Statement of Economic Interests Form 700 disclosing financial interests.
22. Members shall recuse themselves from participation in any matter within 500 feet of their residence or property or if he/she has a material financial interest in the matter.
23. Should a Member determine that a legal conflict-of-interest or "perceived" conflict exists, with respect to the particular project/request under consideration, the Member shall publicly state the nature of the conflict and recuse himself or herself before any discussion ensues. Absent a legal disqualification (conflict of interest), it is expected that each Member will participate in making a decision on matters properly before the body.
24. Each Member shall participate in biannual ethics (AB 1234) training.
25. Members must comply with the City's "No Gift Policy" as updated by the City Council on February 10, 2015 as attached. (pg. 4)

Best Practices:

26. In evaluating an application/request, the Member will participate in the deliberations including an evaluation of an application/request to determine if it meets the provisions of the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinances, the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance, Tree Management Policy, Parklands Policy and other City requirements as appropriate to the Commission/Committee specific area of responsibility and as needed. City staff may present a technical analysis including a recommendation for approval or denial. Decisions will be made on the information presented as well as testimony by the applicant and other interested parties, and the Member's review of the materials and site visit.
27. A Member shall be familiar with the laws, policies, and guidelines relevant to the business of the Commission/Committee. City staff and City Attorney are a resource in this regard and may be consulted to answer any questions before the meeting.
28. A Member shall think independently, yet recognize the value of resolving differences with other Members to send well-reasoned and clear recommendations to the City Council.
29. When Members have differing opinions as to an application/request, the Members should explain and justify their respective positions. Members should strive for mutually agreeable compromise or consensus on applications/requests.
30. A vote, when called for, will be made on each and every matter before the Commission/Committee. A majority vote of the quorum will determine whether the application/request is accepted or denied.
31. A Member shall act in the spirit of the law where judgment and discretion are called for.
32. A Member shall treat the public with courtesy and respect, and listen to testimony and the information presented and the concerns expressed by each individual.
33. A Member shall act without personal motivation, bias or self-interest.
34. Recommendations for change or improvements in current policies and practices should be brought to the attention of the City staff person assigned to support the Commission/Committee, City Manager, or Mayor.

Received and reviewed:

Name

Date

Policy for Gifts to City Employees and Officials

Gifts to individual employees and officials: Compensation for employees performing their public duty is limited to salaries, fringe benefits and any personal satisfaction that employees may derive from doing a good job. Officials include City volunteers who are appointed to serve on Committees, Boards and Commissions and are not compensated for their community service. Therefore, individual employees and officials shall not accept any personal gifts or tips from anyone other than the City for the performance of acts within the regular course of duties. Gifts include meals.

Gifts for the benefit of City employees: Edible gifts (e.g., gift baskets) are allowed but shall be made available to all employees. Alcohol is not allowed.

Received and Reviewed: _____