

## CITY COUNCIL OPERATING GUIDELINES

These guidelines serve as operating policies of the Council/City Manager/professional staff.

**1. Mayor's Role.**

- The Mayor serves as the ceremonial head of the Council at the pleasure of the Council and an equal among Councilmembers.
- The Mayor is responsible for managing a smooth Council meeting that stays focused on the agenda items according to procedural guidelines as agreed-upon by the Council.
- The Mayor, as available, is the designated person to represent the Council on general matters of the City.

**2. Agenda Process.** The City Manager prepares Council meeting agendas in consultation with Mayor and as possible, with the Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem advise on the scheduling of items on agendas for the purpose of managing the meetings and the Council's affairs. The Mayor and individual Councilmembers may request that an item of concern be scheduled for a future agenda at a City Council meeting; the Councilmember may make the request under City Council reports. If a majority of the Council agrees, then the item will be placed on a future agenda. Additionally, the City Council shall develop an annual work plan to organize Council policy initiatives and topics that will be on future Council agendas.

**3. Mayor/Councilmembers' Role in Press Relationships.** The Mayor serves as the City spokesperson for Council-related issues. Council members agree not submit letters-to-the-editor wherein they identify themselves as Council members on issues that related to City business, litigation and practices. The City Manager's role is to prepare press releases and public information. He/she may serve as the City spokesperson to convey Council policy and matters related to City management.

**4. Council Liaisons.** Council liaisons serve as an Ad Hoc Committee in an advisory role for the purpose of representing the Council's goals and objectives. Liaisons are responsible for updating the full Council on committee progress at the next Council meeting at the appropriate point on the agenda (under "City Councilmembers' Reports").

**5. City Council/City Manager Interrelationships.** The City Manager serves as the administrative head of City Government. In performing his/her role, s/he must discuss matters with staff, reconcile differences, prepare recommendations, and delineate options for Council policy determination. If the City Manager differs with staff on a matter within their expertise (engineering, legal matters, public safety, risk management) that is significant or consequential, the City Manager shall apprise the Council of this difference. The City Manager shall develop a "list of Upcoming Agenda Items" that will be periodically updated and distributed to the Council.

**6. City Council/Staff Interrelationships.** Councilmembers should feel free to contact department heads with constituent concerns that fall within the purview of the particular department, to

make inquiries, or to receive information. An individual Councilmember cannot direct staff on how to proceed.

- Council should refrain from embarrassing the staff in a public setting. If an individual Councilmember has concerns about a particular Agenda item, he / she may ask questions of staff prior to the meeting to avoid surprises and provide staff with an opportunity to research the issue(s).
  - While it is perfectly appropriate for a Councilmember to convey resident concerns to the staff, it is not appropriate for a Councilmember to individually negotiate with a contractor or vendor with respect to any matter pertaining to the City, unless authorized by the Council to do so.
  - No individual Councilmember, nor City Committee or Commission, has the authority to commit City funds to any project. Recommendations for the expenditure of City funds must be submitted to the full Council. The final decision is the Council's.
7. **City Council/Commission and Committee Interrelationships.** Councilmembers value the work and contributions of Planning Commission and Committee Members who serve as a conduit for citizen input. Commission and Committee members provide skills, interest, and experience to guide policy development. Members are expected to attend all meetings, actively participate and deliberate, and vote on any matters that are requested for recommendation to the City Council. Their work in analyzing, analyzing, and recommending options to the City Council is invaluable and optimizes effective community planning and organization. The Planning Commission has quasi-judicial powers and can make decisions for the City. All such decisions are subject to appeal to the City Council.
8. **Council Dissent.** It is entirely appropriate for an individual Councilmember to argue his / her point of view with the Council before a vote is taken on the issue. However, once the Council has made its determination on how to proceed, Councilmembers will endeavor to be respectful of the decision. Mutual respect is an indispensable ingredient for the Council to function effectively as a group.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING GUIDELINES**

**1. AUTHORITY**

As provided by Government Code Section 36813, the City Council hereby establishes these procedural and operational guidelines for City Council meetings.

**2. GENERAL**

2.1 Quorum

Three members of the Council shall constitute a quorum necessary to transact business. In the event a quorum is not in attendance, the City Clerk, recording secretary or other authorized person may adjourn the meeting to a later set time.

2.2 Public Record of Meetings

Action Minutes of all public proceedings of the City Council shall be recorded by the City Clerk or his/her designee and entered into the official minute books of the Council. The Action Minutes will be prepared as reasonably possible and should be presented within 60 days of the meeting. The audio and / or visual recording of the meeting will be retained according to the City's record retention policy.

2.3 Right of Floor

Any Councilmember desiring to speak should first request recognition by the Mayor.

2.4 Rules of Order

The City Council will be generally guided by "Rosenberg's Rules of Order" if necessary. No ordinance, resolution, proceedings or other action of the City Council will be invalid, or the legality thereof affected, by the failure or omission to observe or follow these Rules. In the event of a conflict between the City's Municipal Code or these Guidelines, the provisions of the City's Municipal Code shall govern.

2.5 City Manager

The City Manager may make recommendations, and as permitted by the City Council, take part in all discussions of the Council, but shall have no vote.

2.6 City Attorney

The City Attorney shall give opinions, either written or oral, on questions of law and shall act as the Council's parliamentarian.

2.7 City Clerk

The City Clerk or designee shall publicly notice the meeting and hearings, as necessary, and record, prepare and maintain the official record of the City Council in accordance with applicable law.

### **3. TYPES OF MEETINGS**

#### **3.1 Public Meetings**

All meetings (except closed sessions as provided by State law) of the Council shall be open to the public.

#### **3.2 Regular and Adjourned Meetings**

Regular and Adjourned meetings are the business meeting of the Council where actions are taken. The Mayor, or the Mayor Pro Tem in the Mayor's absence, presides over the meeting. The City Council will endeavor to conduct its Regular business meetings within 3.5 hours and adjourn by 10:00 p.m. The scheduling of items on the agenda for each meeting, established in consultation between the Mayor and City Manager, will strive to meet this guideline. Items on the Consent portion of each agenda are deemed to be routine or non-controversial matters. As such, all matters on the Consent portion of the agenda shall be acted on with one motion unless a member of the City Council removes an individual item for separate discussion and consideration. Members of the public may comment on Consent items before action is taken. It is the discretion of the Mayor, mindful of encouraging public input, to establish the time allocated for public comment for items on or not on the agenda. Generally, three (3) minutes will be the time period provided for each speaker although the allocation of time may be reduced. If the meeting ends before all of the items listed on the agenda are completed, any unfinished business may be continued to a future Council meeting.

#### **3.3 Special Meetings**

Special Meetings may be called by the Mayor or by a majority of the Council members. The notice for a Special Meeting will specify the subject(s) to be considered and posted as required by the Brown Act. Only the matters specified in the notice may be discussed at Special Meetings. Special Meetings may be held to conduct a "workshop" or "study session" or for a joint meeting of the Council with its Commission or Committees and organizations such as the Palos Verdes Homes Association or staff for discussion and providing direction on matters of policy and budget.

#### **3.4 Workshops / Study Sessions**

The primary purpose of a workshop and study session is to provide an opportunity for the Council members to engage in discussion on matters without taking action. For each workshop and study session, the City Council has the discretion to structure the meeting in a manner that best serves the goal and intent of the meeting, facilitates interactive discussion, engages the public, and receives public input. Action Minutes shall be prepared. The meetings are not recorded. Workshops and study sessions are generally scheduled on the fourth (4th) Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. All Workshops are open to the public.