
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES CHAIR & VICE CHAIR TRAINING

MAY 2022



Agenda

-
- Election of Officers/Terms
 - Role of the Chair/Vice-Chair
 - Meeting Decorum
 - Meeting Management
 - Characteristics of an Effective Chair
 - Rights of the Public
 - Public Comments
 - What if....
 - Parliamentary Procedure
 - Quorum
 - Motions
 - Votes
 - Resources

- Annual Election (April or when vacant)
 - Chair
 - Vice-Chair
- No member shall serve more than two consecutive years
- Fixed Term (April – April)

Election and Terms of Office

- Set the Agenda
 - Chair/Liaison meet several days before publication
 - Items based on last meeting, staff or member requests
 - Determine order and estimated time needed
- Presides over meetings
 - Ensure business is accomplished
 - Eliminate irrelevant or unproductive discussion
 - Ensure all views are heard/considered
 - Ensure public's right to participate

Role of the Chair

(or Vice-Chair in the
absence of the Chair)

- Appoints members to temporary subcommittees
 - Confirmed by the Body
- Represents the body before Council
 - Annual Workplan/Accomplishments Presentation
- Signs correspondence and meeting documents on behalf of the body
 - Recommendations from the Body
 - Communications Regarding Sponsored events/programs
 - Meeting Minutes

Role of the Chair

(or Vice-Chair in the
absence of the Chair)

Meeting Decorum

Meeting Management

Typical meeting process:

- Call meeting to order (announce time)
- Roll Call
- Facilitate items
 - Manage step by step for presentation of information, questions/discussion/deliberation, public comment, and action/vote
 - Order is flexible so long as public comment is taken prior to action being taken
- Adjourn

Meeting Decorum

Meeting Management (Facilitating Items)

5.

(AGENDA TITLE)

(Description of action(s) being requested)

CHAIR: 1) Announce Item 2) Request presentation of item 3) Member questions/comments

4) Public Comment **“At this time members of the public who wish to provide public comments on this item should use the “Raise Hand” feature to request to speak.”** STAFF: Checks for raised hands among meeting attendees and announces speakers (if applicable).

5) IF ACTION NEEDED Ask for a motion to approve /Roll Call Vote **“Do I have a motion for consideration?” “Do I have a second?” “I have a motion from Member _____ and a second from Member _____. Can we please have a roll call vote?”**

STAFF: Calls each member’s name, announce if the motion passes/fails.

Acceptable alternative process:

CHAIR: 1) Announce Item 2) Request presentation of item 3) Member questions/comments 4) IF ACTION NEEDED Ask for a motion **“Do I have a motion for consideration?” “Do I have a second”**

4) Public Comment “At this time members of the public who wish to provide public comments on this item should use the “Raise Hand” feature to request to speak.” STAFF: Checks for raised hands among meeting attendees and announces speakers (if applicable).

5) Member questions/comments/discussion on motion

6) Roll Call Vote **“I have a motion from Member _____ and a second from Member _____. Can we please have a roll call vote?”**

STAFF: Calls each member’s name, announce if the motion passes/fails.

Meeting Decorum

Characteristics of an Effective Chair

- Come prepared and understand procedures
- Be a leader – strong voice and body language are important to show authority
- Encourage members to participate
- Keep conversation on topic
- Stay neutral – don't lead the conversation
- Ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak
- Manage conflict in a productive manner
- Respect time allocations and limits
- Protect public participation

Meeting Decorum

Rights of the Public

- Right to Speak guaranteed by:
 - 1st Amendment
 - California Constitution
 - The Brown Act
 - Comment on anything within subject-matter jurisdiction (regular) and agenda items (special and regular)
 - Comment BEFORE action taken
- Right to Speak Anonymously
- Right to Photograph or Record
- Reasonable Accommodations
 - Assisted listening devices, wheelchair access etc.

Meeting Decorum

Public Comment

- Reasonable time limit per speaker (3 min.)
 - Twice the limit provided w/interpreter
- Chair may limit time:
 - Limit per speaker if a high volume of speakers
 - Limit total time for public comments
- Cannot prohibit criticism of agency/body
- Are NOT a Discussion w/ the Public
 - **IF** responding, should extremely brief

Meeting Decorum

What if...

1. The members discussion is moving beyond the role/workplan of the body?
2. The members discussion on an agenda item begins to go off-topic?
3. The members discuss a topic not listed on the agenda?
4. There is a challenging/disruptive member of the public?

Meeting Decorum

What if...

5. There is a challenging/disruptive member of the body?
6. The Chair feels strongly about an agenda item being considered. When should they express their perspective?
7. The body is “stuck” on deliberations?

- Minimum number of members who must be present to conduct a public meeting.
- No Quorum = No meeting
 - Wait 15-30 minutes after start time before determining no quorum and cancelling.

Currently Appointed	Quorum
15	8
14	8
13	7
12	7
11	6
10	6
9	5
8	5
7	4
6	4
5	3*
4	3*
3	2
2	2
1	1

** Arts & Culture Commission, Planning Commission & Design Review Board require at least 3 members to meet.*

Chart revised 5/16/2022

Parliamentary Procedure

Quorum

No more than three motions shall be on the floor at any given time. When there are two or three motions to consider at the same time, the vote shall first be on the most recent motion made.

Motion To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn" <i>(Only needed if all items of business have not concluded)</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Hold/postpone item	"I move that we table the item"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Limit debate	"I move the previous question" or "Call the question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Introduce (Basic Motion)	"I move that..." or "I move to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend	"I move that this motion be amended by..." <i>(can also ask for a friendly amendment, which is less formal; if mover and second concur, no vote needed to amend)</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Substitute Motion	"I move a substitute motion to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Object to procedure or inappropriate conduct	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Object to consideration of question	"I object to consideration of this question" <i>(When not wanting to even consider an item on the agenda)</i>	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Suspend the Rules	"I move to suspend the rules in order to..." <i>(To allow suspension of a rule for a particular purpose)</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

- A majority of yes votes are required to pass a motion
 - Planning requires 3 yes votes to pass
 - Committee require simple majority of not less that 3 members
- Tie Votes Fail
- “Present and Voting” Rule
 - Abstain = NO

Members Present	Majority	2/3	4/5
15	8	10	12
14	8	9	11
13	7	9	10
12	7	8	10
11	6	7	9
10	6	7	8
9	5	6	7
8	5	5	6
7	4	5	6
6	4	4	5
5	3	3	4
4	3	3	3
3	2	2	2

Chart revised 5/16/2022

Parliamentary Procedure

Votes



Member Handbook



www.el-cerrito.org/110/membership-tools



Staff Liaison



City Clerk 510-215-4305
cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

RESOURCES
