



City of Pacific Grove
BOARD and COMMISSION
Standard Protocols

Every City board and commission needs basic protocols by which it operates. The standard protocols presented here are to be observed by all Pacific Grove boards and commissions (hereinafter referred to as “boards”). An individual board may append to these protocols additional standards relating to its specific needs.

I. Term, Council Charges, and Annual Work Plan/Calendar

Purpose. Generally, the City’s 11 boards advise the Council on matters within their jurisdiction. The City Charter and the Council have also delegated some decision-making authority to some of the boards. The City can achieve its overall goals only if all 11 boards function effectively. The specific responsibilities of all 11 boards are provided in *Current Duties of City Boards, Commissions, Panels, and Committees*.

Term. The term of each board shall be February 1 through January 31 of the following year.

Calendar and Annual Work Plan. The generalized annual board calendar is as follows:

Date	Task
Feb 1	Start of new term
Feb	Orientation of new member(s)
1 st Mtg in Feb	Organizational meeting: review City Council approved charter; elect officers; approve operating rules and procedures
Mar	Adopt work plan; AB 1234 training to be completed (biennial requirement) by all members
Apr	Secretary turns certificates of completion into City Clerk
June	First of two meetings of City Council with all chairs
Nov 1	Last date for City Clerk to publish vacancies
Nov	Second of two meetings of City Council with all chairs
Nov 30	Annual report due to City Council
Early Dec	Applications for vacant seats due
Jan	Mayor fills vacancies, with approval of City Council

At its first meeting after the February 1 start of the new term, each board shall agendaize organizational actions and decisions. These actions include:

- ❖ Welcoming and installing new members.
- ❖ Electing officers.
- ❖ Starting the process of developing the effective relationships necessary for the members of the board or commission to work effectively together and with staff.

- ❖ Accepting or recommending updates to its duties, responsibilities, and authority.
- ❖ Reviewing and updating norms and standard procedures.
- ❖ Working with staff to continuing developing members' knowledge of the involved professional disciplines and current issues.

- ❖ Planning its year by developing its annual work program.

The annual work program is the commission's expressed joint effort for the year. It addresses the important problems, challenges, and opportunities that need to be addressed during the year. The work program should be developed within the framework of the City Council's adopted strategic plan (available on the City's website or from the Council liaison and lead staff) to ensure consistency.

In addition to each board's ongoing duties, it may from time to time, receive a specific request from the Council. Such requests will be in writing, specifying the exact request of the Council, and such details as the requested completion date.

II. Organization, Officers, and Responsibilities

Organization. The board shall consist of voting and, in some cases, non-voting members, appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council. Any member may be removed at the pleasure of the City Council. Terms are for two or four years and are generally staggered, to provide continuity. A board shall report to the Council the unexcused absence of any member from three or more consecutive meetings.

Officers. Following the installation of any new board members, a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary shall be elected annually from among the board's membership at the first meeting in February, to serve at the pleasure of the board. Each officer is elected to serve a one-year term, which starts on February 1 of each year and is renewable in subsequent years.

The Vice-Chair shall succeed the Chair if s/he vacates his or her office before the term is completed, and shall serve the unexpired term. A new Vice-Chair shall be elected at the next regular meeting.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, any other member shall call the board to order, whereupon a temporary Chair shall be selected from the members present, to preside over that meeting. In the event that an officer cannot serve due to resignation or other reasons, the committee shall select an interim officer to fill the position until the next organizational meeting.

The board Chair or, if there is no Chair, the person who called the meeting to order, will ask for nominations for the office of Chair. Any member of the board may nominate himself/herself or any other member of the board; no second is required. Once nominations are complete, the Chair will close nominations, announce the slate of nominees, and ask for a vote on the nominees in the order of nomination. Each voting member of the board shall have one vote. The nominee receiving votes from a majority of the members in attendance shall be declared the winner. If no member receives a majority, the process shall be repeated, except in the event of a tie between the top two vote-getters, in which case a run-off shall be held. The winner shall assume the office of Chair immediately. Using the same procedure, the new Chair shall secure the election of a Vice Chair and Secretary.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities and powers of board officers shall be as follows:

Chair

- In consultation with staff, determine the agenda.
- Call special meetings of the board.
- Preside at all meetings.
- Fully participate in the board's deliberations.
- See that all actions of the board are properly taken.
- Act as parliamentarian, applying and enforcing these protocols and parliamentary procedures.
- Sign all documents of the board.
- Report to the Council, at scheduled times and as needed, on matters of interest.

All process decisions by the Chair are final unless overruled by a majority of the board.

As a member of the body, the Chair has full rights to participate in dialogue and decision making, and to make and second motions. The Chair often strives to be the last to speak during any round, and generally does not make or second a motion unless he or she is convinced that no other member of the body will do so.

Vice Chair

During the absence, disability, or disqualification of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall exercise or perform all the duties and be subject to all responsibilities of the Chair.

Secretary

- Repeat motions prior to a vote, if requested by Chair.
- Prepare and attest to approved minutes.
- Forward meeting recordings to staff.
- Forward draft minutes to the members and the City Clerk as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Keep track of AB 1234 ethics training requirements and training sessions completed, for each member, and forward those to the City Clerk.

III. Committees

The board may appoint committees of less than a quorum of its members to address specific matters within its purview. In certain instances, a committee may be formed with members of two or more boards, to address issues crossing boundaries of normal responsibilities. Board committees have narrowly defined discretion and shall not stray from the board direction.

IV. Meeting Types

All board meetings shall be held in full compliance with all provisions of the Brown Act (California Government Code, Section 54954.2) the Municipal Code, and Council Policy. At a minimum, this shall include:

- Posting of the agenda a minimum of 72 hours prior to regularly scheduled meetings, with a listing of agenda items in terms adequate to advise the public of the business to be considered. (A catchall for "miscellaneous" or "new business" items is not permissible; new matters raised shall be placed on future agendas.) In the case of special meetings, notice and agenda posting shall occur a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- Agenda and packet materials shall be available prior to meetings at a location to be

designated by the board and indicated on the posted agenda. Materials presented at meetings shall also be available to the public in attendance.

- Provision for public comment shall be made at all meetings for items on the agenda as well as matters not on the agenda that are under the purview of the board.
- Open and public meetings shall be the rule; all business of the board is to be conducted at such meetings. Closed sessions may be held only under Brown Act restrictions and upon approval of the city attorney.

Regular Meetings. Regular meetings shall be held at a regular date and time, either once or twice a month. Regular meetings shall also be held at a regular place, generally in Council Chambers or the City Manager's Conference Room. Whenever a regular meeting falls on a public holiday, no regular meeting shall be held on that day. Such regular meeting may be rescheduled to another business day or canceled by motion adopted by the board.

In the event it is the wish of the board to adjourn its meeting to a certain hour on another day, a specific date, time and place shall be set by the board, as part of the motion to adjourn.

If unable to attend a meeting, members should announce their upcoming absence prior to the adjournment of the prior meeting. If they become aware of their inability to attend after that, they should notify the Secretary immediately.

Meetings may be cancelled by the chair due to a lack of business, or if the Chair determines a quorum will not be met. Such cancellations shall be posted.

Special Meetings. Special meetings for the purpose of conducting study sessions or workshops, or for other purposes, may be held at any time upon the call of the Chair, a majority of the voting members of the board, or the City Council, following notice as required by law. The time and place of the special meeting shall be determined by the convening authority.

Meetings of Individual Members with Applicants or the Public. Meetings and other communication between a board member and members of the public interested in the outcome of an agenda item can be a valuable method for the board member to determine what decision will be best for the community. The board member should share useful information with the full board in open session.

When the board is acting on a given item in a quasi-judicial capacity, the member shall report on any such *ex parte* communications at the beginning of the meeting at which the item is considered (see *Meeting Rules and Procedures*).

V. Process and Administrative Matters

Agendas and Posting. The agenda for each meeting of the board shall be prepared by the Secretary or staff, and approved by the Chair. The number of items to be considered on each agenda will be determined based on the nature and complexities of the items and what can reasonably be considered in the two or three hours set for the meeting.

The agendas for all regular and special meetings shall be posted at the Library, the outdoor display cabinet at the City Hall, and on the City's web site. In addition, if the meeting is held somewhere other than at City Hall, the agenda shall be posted at that facility, in a location that is accessible by the public for a full 72 hours prior to a regular meeting, or a full 24 hours prior to a special meeting.

Any item within the board's purview may be placed on a future agenda when requested by a board member through the Chair. (An exception to this rule is reconsideration of a decision; see *Meeting Rules and Procedures*.)

Conduct of Meetings. Board meetings shall follow the meeting rules and procedures approved by the Council and provided in *Meeting Guidelines and Procedures*.

Recordings. Meetings shall be recorded on an audio tape or digital audio recorder, and kept by the Secretary or designee. The recording is to be erased after one year or upon approval of the minutes, whichever comes second.

Minutes. Minutes shall be kept, are to be limited to a report of actions taken at the meeting (including findings or a reference to the findings for quasi-judicial actions, and any appropriate attachments, and shall note either unanimity or a record of the vote for all actions). The draft minutes of all meetings shall be forwarded to the members and the City Clerk, so they can be included in the packets of the next available City Council meeting. Approved minutes shall be signed by the Chair and filed with the City Clerk.

Matters Needing the Attention of Others. Each board shall ensure that the Council or staff is notified promptly of matters needing the attention of Council, staff, or another board. Such matters can be noted clearly in the minutes, carried forward by staff, forwarded to the City Manager by the Council liaison, or presented to the Council by a member of the board at the next available Council meeting. If the matter needs prompt Council action, then the Chair shall ensure that the City Clerk is notified as soon as possible, to ensure the matter is agendaized and any additional necessary analysis can be undertaken.

Ethics. Each member of a board is a representative of the City and the board on which he or she serves. Each member has a duty to represent the City to the best of his or her ability, and to take those actions that the member believes are for the benefit of the City as a whole.

Each member shall take the required AB 1234 ethics training at least biannually and notify the Secretary upon completion. Each member shall adhere to the standards of ethics established by the City Council and file with the City Clerk on a timely basis all appropriate FPPC reports.

Annual Report. Each board shall forward to the Council, prior to January 1 of each year, a report on matters of interest. Such reports are not to repeat what is contained in the meeting minutes, but address those matters and suggestions that are designed to assist the Council and to improve the effectiveness of the board or the system of advisory boards in future years.

Adoption and Amendment of Board-Specific Protocols. A board may adopt board-specific protocols consistent with these standards. They shall be adopted and amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting, shall be reviewed annually by the board, and may be suspended at any meeting of the board by a majority vote of the members present and voting.