



TOWN OF
LOS GATOS
CALIFORNIA

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

Small Town Service

Community Stewardship

Future Focus

TITLE: Town Agenda Format and Rules

POLICY NUMBER: 2-01

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/15/1986

PAGES: 7

ENABLING ACTIONS: 1986-183; 1987-024; 1988-124; 1993-181; 1994-057; 1996-108; 2001-077; 2004-033; 2009-002; 2021-047

REVISED DATES: 12/15/1986; 3/2/1987; 6/6/1988; 6/15/1992; 12/6/1993; 4/4/1994; 8/5/1996; 7/2/2001; 4/5/2004; 1/20/2009; 3/16/2009; 12/6/2010; 8/5/2013; 3/3/2015; 9/20/2016; 6/20/2017; 8/1/2017; 12/4/18/; 8/20/19; 12/3/19; 6/1/2021; 11/2/2021; 9/20/22; 2/7/2023; 11/21/2023; 8/6/2024

APPROVED:

PURPOSE

To establish procedures which standardize Town agendas and ensure an orderly meeting. This Policy applies to Town Council and all Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees, and references to Mayor will apply to Boards, Commissions, and Committees Chairpersons as set forth in this Policy.

POLICY

The following policies have been established:

A. Order of the Agenda

Subject to the Mayor's discretion to change the order of consideration of any agenda item during any individual meeting:

- Call Meeting to Order
- Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Presentations
- Consent Calendar
- Verbal Communications
- Public Hearings
- Other Business
- Council Matters
- Manager Matters
- Attorney Matters and Closed Session Report
- Adjournment (No later than midnight without vote.)

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B. Closed Session Report

As required by the Brown Act, the Town Attorney will report on actions taken at the Closed Session, but without reporting any information which could damage the Town's position on a) potential or existing litigation, b) the acquisition or disposition of property, or c) any employee's privacy interests. In addition, the Closed Session agenda shall clearly identify the subject of each agenda item consistent with the requirements of the *Brown Act*.

C. Communications by Members of the Public

Speakers at public meetings will be asked to provide their full name and to state whether they are a resident of the Town of Los Gatos. This information is optional but not required.

1. *Verbal Communications.* Comments by members of the public during the initial Verbal Communications portion of the agenda on items not on the Council agenda shall be limited to 30 minutes and no more than three (3) minutes per speaker, or at the discretion of the Mayor. Town resources may not be used to facilitate audio or visual presentations. Individuals addressing the Town Council under Verbal Communications may submit written materials and must provide at least one (1) copy for inclusion in the administrative record. As an item not listed on the agenda, no response is required from Town staff or the Council and no action can be taken. However, the Council may instruct the Town Manager to place the item on a future agenda. At the conclusion of the first Verbal Communications, the agenda will proceed onto the Public Hearings and Other Business sections of the agenda. In the event additional speakers were not able to be heard during the initial Verbal Communications portion of the agenda, an additional Verbal Communications section can be opened prior to Adjournment.
2. *Public Hearings.* Presentations during the Public Hearings portion of the agenda by appellants and applicants, including any expert or consultant assisting with the presentation, shall be limited to a total of no more than five (5) minutes for all speakers. Appellants and applicants shall be provided no more than three (3) minutes to rebut at the end of the public hearing. Visual presentations that require the use of staff resources shall be limited to appellants and applicants. Other members of the public testifying at public hearings shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes and may submit written materials, provided that one (1) copy is submitted for inclusion in the administrative record.
3. *Submittal of written materials by Applicant and Appellant.* To allow Town Council, Boards, Commissions, Committees, Town Staff, and the public the opportunity to review material in advance of a hearing, all materials should be submitted by the Applicant or Appellant to the designated staff member prior to the publishing of the report for the scheduled public hearing. Documents and materials received from the Applicant or Appellant after the publishing of the report will be accepted; however, the Town Staff and the Town Council may not be able to analyze the late submissions based on the time provided by the submitter for such material to be reviewed.
3. *Other Agenda Items.* Comments by members of the public concerning any other item on an agenda shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes per item.

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4. *Mayor's Discretion.* All time limits noted above shall be subject to change at the Mayor's discretion.

D. Consent Calendar

Items on the Council agenda that are considered to be of a routine and non-controversial nature are placed on the Consent Calendar. Typical items include meeting minutes, final reading and adoption of ordinances, resolutions approving agreements, awards of contracts, status staff reports, etc.

Consent items shall be approved by a single Council motion unless a member of the Council requests that an item be removed for separate Council action. Members of the public may speak on an item on the Consent Calendar during the public comment portion before the Council votes on the Consent Calendar. Items removed from the Consent Calendar may be considered at that meeting at the Mayor's discretion.

E. Presentations

The Presentations portion of the agenda is intended to allow organized groups to make formal presentations to the Council and to recognize and honor deserving individuals and organizations. All matters included on the Presentations portion of the agenda require the prior approval of the Mayor and shall be limited to no more than ten (10) minutes, unless the Mayor grants additional time. Visual presentations must be submitted to the staff 24 hours in advance of the meeting unless otherwise authorized by the Mayor.

F. Council Matters

Members of Council may report on the activities of the committees to which they belong or the meetings they attend, question staff briefly on matters upon which the Council has taken action or given direction, make brief announcements related to activities that a Council Member performs on behalf of the Town or its residents, or discuss whether to place particular items on future agendas for action by the Council. Personal business and personal political campaign activities are not Council Matters. Council Members' reports are limited to three minutes each. Public comment on any Council Matter will be provided during Verbal Communications section of the agenda.

During the Council Matters portion of the meeting, any Council Member may request that an item be placed on a future agenda for Council discussion. If a second Councilmember supports the request or if such request is solely made by the Mayor, the item will be scheduled on the next agenda under Council Matters for discussion purposes only.

If the item requires significant staff effort as determined by the Town Manager, then three or more members of the Council must vote in favor of placing an item on a future agenda for action. If more information is needed, the Council can continue the item to allow staff to obtain the required information, with approval by a majority of the Council.

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Discussion items are intended solely for dialogue between Councilmembers and shall not require staff research, reports, or preparation beyond listing the item on the agenda. If, after such discussion, three or more Councilmembers support further consideration through a vote to agendaize, the item shall be placed on a future agenda for formal action. At that time, staff will prepare the necessary materials and reports consistent with standard agenda procedures.

Nothing shall limit three or more Council members from providing direction on requesting action at any time.

G. Adjournment

Council meetings will be adjourned at midnight unless a majority of the Council Members present vote to extend the adjournment time.

H. Americans with Disabilities Notice on Town Agendas

As part of the requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Town is required to provide notice of whom to contact in advance of a public meeting for assistance to disabled individuals who might wish to participate. The following notice shall be provided in at least one location on each Town agenda for Council, Boards, Commissions, or Committees.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Clerk's Office at (408) 354-6834. Please notify the Clerk's Office at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting so that reasonable arrangements can be made to ensure accessibility in compliance with 28 CFR §35.102-35.104 and related provisions.

I. Preparation of the Town Council Agenda

The agenda is prepared by staff in consultation with the Mayor for the Mayor's final approval. If there is a disagreement between The Mayor and staff, the Mayor makes the ultimate call on the Agenda and its items. In the case of any order change or scheduling agenda items, the Town Manager has the discretion to adjust the order and scheduling if such change is necessary to mitigate an operational, financial, or compliance related impact.

The Mayor in good faith will make every effort to place a Council requested item on the first available Council agenda in consultation with the Town Manager.

If the wish of the Council is to add an item on the agenda of the current meeting, then the *Brown Act* generally requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote or a unanimous vote of those present if less than five (5) Council Members are present, with a finding that there is a need to take immediate action and the need for action came to the attention of the Town after the agenda was posted.

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- i. Preparation of the Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees Agenda
For Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees, the staff liaison will consult and consider the Chairs's input on the items scheduled for future meetings.

J. Council Regular Meeting Agenda Schedule and Preparation

In general, questions or inquiries from Council Members to the Town Manager and/or Town Attorney regarding agenda items should be responded to within 24 hours, and then placed into Addenda and/or Desk Items, as appropriate.

The following timeline outlines the standard schedule for finalizing and distributing Town Council meeting materials. While this schedule will be followed under normal circumstances, adjustments may occur based on staff availability, meeting demands, or unforeseen circumstances.

Thursday, prior to the meeting	Written agenda is finalized and printed. Agenda packets distributed to Town Council Members.
Friday, prior to the meeting	Additional information from staff available after the Thursday distribution of the agenda packet, and public comments received prior 3:00 p.m. will be distributed to Town Council members as an Addendum to a staff report.
Monday, prior to the meeting	Additional information from staff available after the Friday Addendum and public comment received prior to 3:00 p.m. on Monday will be distributed to Town Council members as an Addendum to a staff report.
Day of Council Meeting	Public comments received by 11:00 a.m. on the morning of a Council meeting will be included in a Desk Item for distribution to Town Council members by 3:00 p.m. on the afternoon of a Council meeting. Public comment received after 11:00 a.m. will not be distributed to the Council in the Desk Item; however, public comment may be submitted by individuals during the Council meeting.

- i. Boards, Commissions, and Committee Schedule and Preparation.
The schedule for Boards, Commissions and Committee meetings will follow a corresponding schedule, depending on their meeting day.

K. Agenda Posting

Agendas shall be posted at least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting in compliance with the Brwon Act.

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L. Conduct of Town Council Meetings

The Council shall adopt:

1. Modified Rosenberg's Rules of Order (Exhibit A - changes are bolded and noted with asterisks) with a change to the "Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion" section to allow Council Members to ask questions after public comment; and a change to the reconsideration process to allow a reconsideration of a motion as outlined in this policy under Section O; or
2. Allow the Mayor to conduct the meeting as deemed appropriate so long as all members of the Council concur.

M. Attendance at Meetings

The Town Council and Commissioners are expected to attend all meetings as part of their commitment to their positions. Attendance requirements for Commissioners are set forth in Town Council Policy 2-11: Commission Appointments, Residency and Attendance Requirements, and Establishing a Quorum. Consistent with the Family Medical Leave Act and the California Family Rights Act, absences of up to 12 weeks due to the birth of a child constitute excused absences.

N. Remote Attendance

In addition to the requirements of the Brown Act, the following guidelines apply to Town meetings:

1. Town Council Meetings: Requests by Council Members to attend a regular Council meeting via remote appearance (either Zoom or telephone) are allowed on a limited basis and with no more than two regular meeting remote participations in a row. In addition, at least a quorum of the Council must participate from a location within the Town and comply with other requirements of the Brown Act. However, a Council Member may participate remotely under the 'Just Cause' provisions of Government Code Section 54953, with remote participation limited to five meetings per calendar year. When a Council Member is participating remotely, they shall have their camera on and be visible for the duration of the meeting.
2. Town Board, Committee, and Commission Meetings: Board, Committee, and Commission members may participate remotely by telephone only, with the exception of the Finance and Planning Commissioners who have the choice of either Zoom or telephone. Requests by Commissioners to attend a Commission meeting via remote appearance should be allowed on a limited basis, with no more than four remote participations annually, no more than two regular meeting remote participations in a row, and in compliance with the Brown Act.
3. Remote Participation by the Public: In conformance with Government Code Section 54953, the public may participate in Town Council meetings remotely. The public may also participate in Finance Commission and Planning Commission meetings remotely as technology allows. Individuals can join these meetings using the remote participation instructions provided on the agenda, based on the available technology and equipment.

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The remote participation instructions shall be provided on all Town Council, Finance Commission, and Planning Commission agendas with the exception of Town Council Closed Sessions. There is not a remote public participation option for other Town Boards, Committees, or Commissions.

O. Proposed Reconsideration of Prior Council Actions

Reconsideration of prior Council actions is discouraged and may only occur in special circumstances subject to the procedural restrictions outlined herein. Reconsideration does not include, and this Policy does not prohibit, the repeal of a resolution or ordinance in response to a lawsuit or a referendum challenging that adoption.

Step 1 – Motion to Place Reconsideration of a Prior Action on a Future Council Agenda

- a. The motion must be made by a Council Member who previously voted on the prevailing side of the prior action, while the second can be any Council Member ;
- b. The maker of the motion shall specifically articulate the new information, analysis and/or circumstances that warrant(s) reconsideration of the prior action;
- c. The motion must be adopted by a majority of the full Council; and
- d. The motion may be made and considered no later than the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Council after the item was originally acted upon.

Step 2 – Full Reconsideration of the Prior Action, if a motion as outlined in Step 1 is approved.

- a. The full reconsideration of the prior action will be placed on the next available Council agenda following the agenda-setting and required public notification process.
- b. The agenda, public notification and staff report for the full reconsideration of the prior action shall clearly state that the item has been previously acted upon by the Council and is being reconsidered by the Council.
- c. Action on the reconsideration of the prior action shall adhere to regular Council policies and practices as if the item was being heard for the first time.
- d. The full reconsideration of the prior action (whether sustained, reversed or otherwise modified) will be the final action on that item, and no further reconsiderations will be considered.

P. Motions by the Mayor

The Mayor may make or second motions. The Mayor may also restate, or ask that the maker restate, all motions immediately prior to any vote.

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Q. Behavior Expectations at Town Meetings

At each meeting, the Mayor should welcome the public to participate in the meetings, understanding that the purpose of the meeting is to conduct the important business of the Town in an efficient and effective manner. The Mayor may promote constructive communication by asking Council members, staff, and community members to embrace and adhere to the following values:

- Be respectful, welcoming, inclusive, compassionate, and kind to each other,
- Appreciate the diversity of perspectives and views in our community,
- Express your views and share your perspectives in helpful ways,
- Listen to understand and empathize with each other, and
- Collaborate and work together to do what is best for Los Gatos.

As needed, the Mayor may need to remind the public about the Town's civility rules listed below:

1. For the benefit of the entire community, the Town of Los Gatos asks that all speakers follow the Town's meeting guidelines by treating everyone with respect and dignity. This is done by following meeting guidelines set forth in State law, in the Town Code, and on the cover sheet of the Council agenda.
2. The Town embraces diversity and strongly condemns hate speech and offensive, hateful language or racial intolerance of any kind at Council meetings.
3. Town Council and staff are well aware of the public's right to disagree with their professional opinion on various Town issues. However, anti-social behavior, slander, hatred, and bigotry statements are completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any way, shape, or form at Town Council meetings.
4. All public comments at the Town Council meeting must pertain to items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Town and shall not contain slanderous statements, hatred, and bigotry against non-public officials.

R. Managing Disruptive Behavior During Meetings

The Town will go through the following steps in the event of a meeting disturbance:

1. If the individual is participating remotely, the Mayor, or their designee shall warn the individual that their behavior is disrupting the meeting and that their failure to cease their behavior may result in their removal. If they do not promptly cease their disruptive behavior after the warning their permission to speak will be removed.
2. If the individual participating in-person, the Mayor or their designee shall warn the individual that their behavior is disrupting the meeting and that their failure to cease their behavior may result in their removal. If the speaker does not promptly cease their disruptive behavior after the warning, they may be removed from the meeting.

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3. In accordance with Government Code Section 54957.9, in the event that any meeting is willfully interrupted by a group or groups of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of such meeting infeasible and order cannot be restored by the removal of individuals who are willfully interrupting the meeting, the members of the legislative body conducting the meeting may order the meeting room cleared and continue in session. Only matters appearing on the agenda may be considered in such a session. Representatives of the press or other news media, except those participating in the disturbance, shall be allowed to attend any session held pursuant to this section. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the legislative body from establishing a procedure for readmitting an individual or individuals not responsible for willfully disturbing the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Nothing in this policy limits other options to resolve disruptions, including but not limited to, taking a recess.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Gabrielle Whelan, Town Attorney