

CITY BOARD/COMMISSION MEMBER GUIDE

Purpose. This document outlines shared expectations that help the board function respectfully, efficiently, and in the best interest of the community. These expectations are not legal requirements; they are norms the group voluntarily follows to support productive service.

1. Commitment to the Public

- Act in the best interest of the community and the board's mission.
- Come prepared, having reviewed materials in advance.
- Maintain an open mind and base decisions on facts, policy, and community benefit.

2. Respectful Conduct

- Treat fellow members, staff, and the public with courtesy.
- Focus on issues, not personalities.
- Allow others to speak without interruption.
- Disagree respectfully and avoid personal attacks.

3. Meeting Participation

- Attend meetings consistently and arrive on time.
- Participate actively but concisely.
- Follow the agenda and support the chair's efforts to keep the meeting on track.
- Bring up new ideas through appropriate agenda-setting channels.

4. Communication

- Ask clarifying questions early, ideally before meetings if possible.
- Communicate concerns directly and respectfully.
- Use email, phone, or staff communication appropriately and professionally.

5. Support for the Chair

- Allow the chair to facilitate discussion without challenging their authority.
- Follow established ground rules and meeting procedures.
- Help maintain an environment where everyone can contribute.

6. Constructive Problem-Solving

- Assume good intent from fellow members.
- Work toward consensus where possible.
- When conflict occurs, focus on solutions and shared goals.

7. Relationship With Staff

- Respect staff roles and workloads.
- Use staff as a resource—not as an advocate for an individual viewpoint.
- Direct requests for information through the appropriate staff contact.

8. Accountability

- Accept responsibility for one's actions and words.
- Be open to feedback from fellow members and staff.
- Uphold the board's mission and agreed-upon norms.

