

CITY OF COSTA MESA



COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/BOARDS

HANDBOOK

MARCH 2003

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE/BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK
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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been designed to assist members of all commissions, committees and boards in understanding their general responsibilities. These bodies are essential to the City Council in developing policies and services which address the needs and reflect the values of Costa Mesa. Commissions, committees and boards are advisory in nature. Their input, usually in the form of recommendations to the City Council and staff, is considered in evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and policies as well as formulating new programs and policies. Council Policy 000-2 on committees and boards establishes a streamlined mechanism to facilitate formation, membership, interaction, work programs, and evaluations of these bodies. Council Policy 000-2.5 identifies the procedures and practices for both the Planning and Parks & Recreation Commissions. This handbook provides general information about the City of Costa Mesa, as well as an outline of policies, practices, and procedures, as set forth in both Council Policies. All commissions, committees and boards are guided by the policies set forth in this handbook.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

In order to understand and successfully fulfill the responsibilities of a commission, committee, and board member, it is necessary to have an understanding of the nature and structure of the City's operations.

General Law City

California law recognizes two types of cities: general law cities and charter cities. The City of Costa Mesa, incorporated in 1953, is a general law city. Like 80 percent of California cities, Costa Mesa's Council structure, planning procedures, and many other aspects of local government are established by state law. The City's Municipal Code sets forth local laws and refines state law. Charter cities are governed by the provisions of their own adopted charters, particularly on matters not addressed by the laws of the State of California. Charter cities tend to have more local authority than general law cities, and may exercise powers not specifically prohibited by state law.

Council/Manager Form of Government

The City of Costa Mesa operates under a council/manager form of government. The City Council (5 members) is elected at large, and hires a city manager to manage the administrative functions of government and be responsible for effective and efficient municipal operations. Council Members serve four-year terms with not more than two such terms. The Mayor is selected by the Council from among the council members, and holds the position of Mayor for two years. As a member of the City Council, the Mayor retains the right to vote, make and second motions, and participate in debates. The Mayor has the additional responsibility of maintaining order during council meetings and providing general leadership. The Mayor does not have veto powers.

Input to City Council

The City Council receives input from many sources; each source contributing to the policy-making process. Commissions, committees, and boards are key in this process, providing citizens and staff the opportunity to work together on a variety of policy-relevant issues.

Levels of City Government

It is important for commission, committee, and board members to understand the functions and responsibilities of the different levels of city government and the functions of each city department. The following city organization chart (Exhibit “A”) and summary of roles and responsibilities illustrate the relationships among city departments and the City Council:

City Council

The City Council is the governing body of the City, elected directly by the citizens, and vested with all the regulatory power of the City. As elected representatives, council members provide a direct link with the citizens, and ensure the responsiveness of local government. All employees, officers, boards, commissions, and committees of the City are directly or indirectly accountable to the City Council.

Redevelopment Agency

The Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency is a public corporation, separate from the incorporated City of Costa Mesa, established for the purpose of transacting business to revitalize the physical and economic condition of an adopted project area. The City Council members serve as the five member agency. The Chair is selected from among the members and serves in this position for two years. The Agency determines redevelopment areas and coordinates, plans and undertakes redevelopment activities and projects within the City. In addition, the Agency utilizes not less than twenty percent (20%) of all taxes allocated to the Agency from the State Redevelopment Housing Set-aside fund for the purpose of increasing, improving and preserving the City’s supply of low and moderate income housing available at an affordable housing cost.

City Manager

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council as the City’s chief administrative officer. The City Manager implements policy and coordinates day-to-day operations. The City Manager is responsible to the Council for coordination of all City departments, ensuring their efficient and effective performance.

Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Boards, commissions, and committees act in an advisory capacity to the City Council. These bodies may assist the City Manager or one or more department heads with a specific task. Boards, commissions and committees make recommendations to aid the Council in making sound decisions concerning resource allocation and policy formulation. The benefits of the work done by these groups include:

- Identifying and focusing attention on specific problems of a policy nature;
- Weighing specific community values;
- Reviewing and selecting alternatives for policy discussion;
- Functioning as a sounding board in bringing community attitudes and needs into focus. Boards, commissions and committees identify and study specific problems or policy matters, and may provide in-depth study of specific areas for which intense study would not otherwise be possible. In addition, board, commission and committee members may provide professional expertise in given fields.

Department Heads

City department heads work with and under the direction of the City Manager in carrying out the policies of the City Council. Department Heads may be assigned to work with commissions and committees in an advisory and staff support capacity.

CITY DEPARTMENTS

Administrative Services

The Administrative Services Department consists of five divisions: Personnel, Risk Management, Management Information Services (MIS), Recreation, and Telecommunications.

Personnel

Personnel is responsible for the recruitment, testing, and selection of over 570 full-time employees, and overall administration and coordination of the City's personnel program. The latter includes administering the City-wide classification and compensation plan; coordinating employee training and recognition programs; conducting wage, salary, and benefits surveys; coordinating employee labor relations activities as dictated by law; and administering written employment policies.

Risk Management

Risk Management is responsible for the worker's compensation and safety programs; the City's property protection program; administering the employee insurance and retirement programs; the City's liability program, including claims administration; loss funding and loss control; and related insurance procurement.

MIS Division

The MIS Division develops, implements, and maintains automated business accounting systems for all City departments, while managing the continuing changes in information technology. This Division is functionally organized into sections that maintain specific data processing disciplines necessary to support the City's information processing needs. The Central Services Section is comprised of the mailroom, which provides centralized photocopying, mail and messenger services; as well as word processing, which provides centralized typing. Graphics/Printing provides typesetting, paste-up, design, and printing services.

Recreation Division

The Recreation Division is responsible for the development, supervision, and coordination of extensive recreation and social programs. These programs are designed to provide meaningful avenues of self expression, as well as providing cultural, social, and physical development opportunities for city residents. This Division is also responsible for overseeing the Costa Mesa Golf and Country Club contract and associated capital improvement projects. The Recreation Division consists of three sections: Administration, Athletics and Fitness, and Youth and Community Services.

Telecommunications Division

The Telecommunications Division is responsible for the operation of the Public Safety Dispatch Center. This Center provides dispatching service to police, fire, and paramedic units deployed throughout the City. The Center is fully staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to its public safety radio networks, the Center is the Public Safety Answering Point, or PSAP, terminating Costa Mesa 9-1-1 and other emergency telephone calls from the community. The Telecommunications Division also works with the Police and Fire Departments on Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Procedures. Additionally, this Division provides video production support services to various City departments for the City's municipal access channels.

City Attorney

This Department provides legal services to the City Council, the Planning and Parks Commissions, the Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency, and City departments. It provides legal counsel and advice during all official meetings and study sessions; assists in the preparation of ordinances and resolutions, and prepares contracts and lease agreements. The City Attorney's Office interprets and applies local, state, and federal laws, and conducts litigation in all state federal courts.

City Manager

The City Manager's Office consists of an Administration Division, Housing and Community Development Division, and City Clerk's Office.

The Administrative Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for the coordination and implementation of all functions of the City within the framework of policy established by City Council. This Division also supervises all City departments and other agencies providing service to the City on a contractual basis; formulates recommendations and reports to the City Council concerning city issues and operations; informs City Council on financial conditions and future needs of the City; prepares and submits the annual budget to the City Council; and keeps the public apprised of the operations of the City government.

Housing and Community Development Division

The Housing and Community Development Division is responsible for providing technical and financial assistance to all eligible homeowners in the community through interest loans or direct grants, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, and HOME Program. The Division also implements special housing programs as directed by the City Council.

City Clerk's Office

The City Clerk's Office maintains the City's legal records and information regarding City operations. Responsibilities of this office include: supervising all municipal and special elections; preparing the agenda and minutes of all regular and special City Council meetings; maintaining and certifying records of all ordinances, resolutions, written contracts and final tract maps; publishing the City's legal notices; and administering oaths of office.

Development Services Department

This Department provides a combined service to the community in the areas of land use planning, redevelopment, municipal code enforcement, building construction plan check, and building inspection. The Department is divided into three divisions: Administration, Planning, and Building/Safety.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division provides Department direction and clerical support. The Division is responsible for follow-through and completion of Planning Commission and Redevelopment Agency agendas and reports, as well as applicable City Council reports.

Planning Division

The Planning Division, consisting of three sections, Advanced Planning, Current Planning, and Redevelopment, guides development in the City. The Division assists in the formulation of long term goals and objectives established by City Council; prepares special land use related reports primarily for the Planning Commission; analyzes the environmental impacts resulting from proposed projects; prepares the Specific Plan; and prepares and revises the City's General Plan. This Division is also responsible for the dissemination of zoning information to the public and the processing of development requests. Redevelopment issues and projects are also addressed through this Division. Planning is responsible for providing assistance to the Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency, as needed.

Building/Safety Division

The Building/Safety Division has three sections: Plan Check, Building Inspection, and Code Enforcement. The Plan Check section provides structural plan check services to determine compliance with uniform building codes at the public counter, on the telephone and through development plan submittals. This section also issues building permits as required by code. The Plan Check section updates and maintains building records, and disseminates information pertaining to the City's building permit process.

The Building Inspection Section performs structural inspections to determine compliance with approved building plans. This Section includes structural, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing inspectors and building clerical support staff who work with property owners and businesses to ensure developments are in compliance with uniform building codes, and that the proper permits are obtained. Certificates of occupancy are issued (commercial and industrial buildings), and release of

utilities (residential/commercial/industrial buildings) are granted by this section, once all requirements are met, and related fees are paid.

The Code Enforcement section is responsible for the enforcement of municipal code provisions which are not enforced by the Police Department. Examples of municipal code sections governed by Code Enforcement include trash and debris, illegal signs, inoperable vehicles, substandard housing, illegally-converted garages, and many other zoning violations. This section is also responsible for public entertainment and special event permits.

Finance Department

The Finance Department is responsible for: preparing and administering the City's annual budget; maintaining a general accounting system; collecting all taxes and revenues of the City; investing cash reserves; preparing financial reports; administering the payroll; procuring equipment and supplies; and control inventories of the City. The Finance Department is comprised of four divisions: Administration, Accounting, Purchasing, and Treasury Management.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for preparing and administering the City's Annual Budget; providing financial advice to the City Manager and the City Council.

Accounting Division

The Accounting Division maintains the general accounting system, the payroll system, and the fixed assets system; reconciles bank accounts; and prepares various financial reports.

Purchasing Division

The Purchasing Division provides centralized procurement of all services, supplies, and equipment for all departments of the City. It also maintains the City's central warehouse.

Treasury Management Division

The Treasury Management Division provides centralized cashing, collection, and accounting for improvement district bonds; maintains fund ledgers; prepares fund reports; reconciles bank accounts; collects for all business and dog licenses; and collects all accounts receivable.

Fire Department

The functions of the Fire Department include: enforcement of laws relating to fire prevention; extinguishment of structural, brush, and any other types of fires; abatement of any hazard or nuisance caused by any substance that presents a threat to the public due to toxicity, radioactivity or flammability, provision of rescue and/or medical care to any person in distress; and performance of other functions as may be delegated by the City Manager or the City Council.

The Costa Mesa Fire Department accomplishes these functions through its three divisions: Administration, Suppression/MIC (Mobile Intensive Care), and Prevention.

Administration

This Division provides the direction for planning programs, establishing policy and coordinating the functions of all other departmental divisions.

Suppression/MIC Division

The Suppression/MIC Division is responsible for the direction of eight (8) fire companies staffed on a 24 hour basis by three shifts of firefighting personnel. Mobile Intensive Care is responsible for the delivery of advanced life support emergency medical care at the scene of an emergency incident.

Prevention Division

This Division is responsible for the development of life safety standards and the enforcement of the fire codes. This Division is further responsible for the delivery of public education to the community and administration of the Weed Abatement Program.

The Weed Abatement Program eliminates potential fire hazards by clearing vacant land parcels of weeds, brush, and debris. Fire involving weeds, debris, and brush may spread to valuable property. This would require a commitment of Fire Department Suppression/MIC resources that should otherwise be available for more life-threatening emergencies.

Police Department

The function of the Police Department is to maintain social order within prescribed ethical and constitutional restrictions. This involves: prevention of crime; repression of crime; apprehension of offenders; recovery of property; and regulation of noncriminal conduct. These objectives are accomplished through the enforcement of local, state, and federal laws. The Police Department is composed of four divisions:

Administration, Administrative Services, Patrol Services, and Operations Services.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for direction and planning based upon interaction and feedback from all divisions. This Division includes the internal affairs and legal advisor functions.

Administrative Services Division

The Administrative Services Division is responsible for the support functions in the department, including, but not limited to: records and information systems; crime scene investigation; photographic services; training; planning and research; property and evidence; custody and court liaison services; building and equipment maintenance; and animal control. Animal control is responsible for the regulation, control, and prevention of rabies in the wild and domesticated animal population of the City. This section is further responsible for the impoundment of animals found at large or unlicensed, and the enforcement of those laws and ordinances applying to animals within the City.

Patrol Services Division

The Patrol Services Division is responsible for: field area policing (patrol); helicopter patrol; gang and special enforcement detail; crowd control unit; the special weapons and tactics squad; crime prevention/community relations, and the D.A.R.E. program.

Operations Services Division

The Operations Services Division is responsible for traffic enforcement and control; contract policing and special event policing; and the Detective Bureau, which conducts follow-up investigations, prepares criminal matters for prosecution, and processes juvenile offenders.

Public Services Department

The Public Services Department is responsible for providing a variety of services in the City commonly known as “Publics Works.” Public Works traditionally includes streets, highways, public buildings, equipment maintenance, water supply, storm water control, street lights, transportation and traffic control, and liquid and solid waste management. The City of Costa Mesa provides all of these services with the exception of water supply, which is managed by the Mesa Consolidated Water District. The Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD), an independent and separate agency, has primary authority over liquid and solid waste management. The City, by contract with the CMSD, provides the

manpower and equipment to administer and manage the District's day-to-day operation.

The Public Services Department consists of six divisions: Administration; Engineering Services; Facilities and Equipment; Parks and Parkways; Project Administration; and Transportation Services.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for direction and planning in the Department, based upon interaction and feedback from the remaining divisions. This Division advises the City Manager on public works projects, oversees reports to the City Council, as well as the Parks, Recreation Facilities and Parkways Commission, and ensures that City Council Community Objectives for the Department are implemented.

Engineering Services Division

The Engineering Services Division is responsible for the design and coordination of capital improvement projects located within the public right-of-way, as well as the maintenance of streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm drains, and sewers. The Division also reviews conditions and inspects development-related projects. The Sanitation section of this Division provides contract waste management, maintenance and operation of sewers, and the administration of contracts for collection, proper disposal, and recycling of solid waste.

Maintenance Services Division

The Maintenance Services Division is responsible for the care, maintenance, repair and alteration of the City's municipal facilities, equipment, utilities, parks, parkways and roadways. The Administration section plans, organizes and directs all functions of the division. All capital improvement projects and all major construction involving City municipal facilities is coordinated by this Division including construction efforts to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act and Title #24 for City facilities. The Division consists of five (5) sections:

- Streets Maintenance
- Traffic Operations
- Facilities and Fleet Maintenance
- Parks and Parkways Maintenance
- Sanitation

Project Administration Division

The Project Administration Division is responsible for the contract administration and construction management of all capital improvement projects developed by the Public Services Department. Contract administration includes: project advertising and award; change order processing; compliance with construction contract requirements (legal and financial); and the processing of all payments to contractors. Construction management includes supervision and inspection of construction in the public rights-of-way; compliance with project plans and specifications; calculations of quantities for payments to contractors; and maintenance of good public relations with businesses and residents in project areas.

Transportation Services Division

The Transportation Services Division is responsible for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services throughout the community. Although traffic on city streets is of primary concern, this Division is also responsible for the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, and oversees pedestrian linkages, as well as local and regional bicycle routes. The Transportation Services Division provides expertise to the Planning Division pertaining to traffic impacts, on-site circulation and parking for development projects. The Division also provides city-wide monitoring to identify, manage, and eliminate potentially hazardous traffic conditions. The application of “scientifically accepted” principles in traffic engineering and transportation planning are utilized to improve and maintain the transportation system network to meet current and future needs of the City.

III. POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES

A. Commissions, Committee and Board Authorization and Formation

The City Council appoints commissions, committees and boards based upon the need for citizen input on matters of importance to the community. Citizen commissions, committees and boards are created at the request of individual council members, local organizations, or citizens. “Committee Formation Application Forms” and “Committee Interest Forms” forms are available for all parties interested in petitioning the City Council for the creation of such a body.

Upon review of the Committee Formation Application, the City Council may constitute a new commission, committee or board by formal action. A formation statement is formulated for each commission, committee or board establishing it as a part of the political process. While the Planning Commission is established by state law, other commissions, committees and boards are established by one of the following: (a) municipal code, (b) ordinance, (c) resolution, (d) minute order, or (e) informal direction. In addition to establishing the commission,

committee or board, the source document also includes guidelines on purpose and authority of the commission, committee, or board; number of members; and other items of clarification.

Ad Hoc and Standing Committees and Boards

A committee or board may be established as ad hoc or standing. Ad hoc committees and boards are called to serve a limited and specific purpose, and are dissolved when the committee or board has served its stated purpose. Standing committees, on the other hand, deal with more perennial issues, and fulfill their purpose on a continuing basis. When creating an ad hoc committee, the City Council will designate a deadline for completion of the committee's work. The Council has the authority to extend or shorten the committee deadline. Once the final deadline has been reached, the committee will automatically cease to exist. Standing committees may also be terminated if the City Council so decides.

B. Membership Application and Procedures

The City Council appoints members to various commissions, committees, and boards.

For the practices and procedures governing the recruitment and appointment process for both the Planning and Parks & Recreation Commissions, please refer to Council Policy 000-2.5. This Policy also identifies other information specific to both Commissions.

Committees and boards serve staggered terms. The Mayor may appoint a chairperson pro tem of a committee to assist in organizing, after which time the committee may annually elect a chairperson from among themselves. The chairperson is the presiding officer for the committee or board. The position is rotated on an annual basis to other members. The Mayor designates at least one member of the City Council to serve as a non-voting liaison to each committee.

All commission, committee, and board members serve at the pleasure of the City Council for designated terms: Committee and board members are typically appointed for two years, unless otherwise specified by the City Council.

If a member wishes to be reappointed, a letter or "Committee Interest Form" requesting reappointment must be submitted to the Mayor prior to the term expiration date. Unless reappointment is desired, and such application is received, committee and board members are required to step down after their terms have been completed. Committee and board members may step down or resign by submitting a letter to the Mayor. In addition, the City Council may request resignations or terminate membership at any time for any committee or board member.

Notification Process

The staff liaison notifies all applicants of their appointments or reappointments and the term expiration date in writing. All applicants not appointed or reappointed are notified in writing by each staff liaison, and are informed that their application will be kept on file for consideration at the next recruitment. Staff liaisons are required to contact non-appointed candidates prior to the next recruitment to determine whether they are still interested in serving.

Prior to taking office, all commissioners must complete an Oath of Allegiance, required by Article XX, Section 3, of the Constitution of the State of California. All oaths are administered by the City Clerk. Newly-appointed commissioners should make arrangements to take the Oath immediately after appointment. Upon taking office, new members are given a copy of the handbook as well as Council Policy 000-2 on commissions, committees and boards. According to the California Attorney General, advisory committee and board members are not required to take the constitutional oath; however, staff liaisons shall provide each new committee/board member with a handbook and Council Policy 000-2.

Membership Terms

Upon the formation of a new committee, or board, staggered membership terms are established by the City Council. The expiration of these terms are tied to one of two time periods:

- April
- October

In February of 2003, City Council redefined the terms of Planning Commissioners and Parks and Recreation Commissioners to coincide with the concurrent term of the respective appointing Council Member (see Council Policy 000-2.5 for details).

The Recruitment Schedule

In conformance with California Government Code Sections 54970 through 54976, the City Clerk annually publishes an appointment list of all regular and ongoing commissions, committee, and boards for which the City Council has appointive power. The list is available to the general public. The City of Costa Mesa issues press releases announcing vacancies and application deadlines, and encouraging Costa Mesa residents to submit interest applications for consideration at the time of commission/committee/board vacancies. Vacancies may be filled immediately or held open until a regular appointment time period occurs. The Mayor and each member of the City Council review the submitted interest applications when considering appointments.

April Committee/Board Recruitment – Approximate Deadlines

1. JANUARY – Staff liaisons shall notify those existing members whose terms are expiring, that they must provide a letter of interest to the City Council if they wish to continue to serve. Letters of interest shall be mailed/sent to the staff liaison for compilation, and must be received by the first Monday in January. Staff liaisons are then to provide the City Manager’s office with number of vacancies on committee or board.
2. FEBRUARY – City Manager’s office to send out press release on committee and/or board vacancies. Staff liaisons compile information on interested applicants.
3. MARCH 1ST – Staff liaisons submit information on prospective candidates for appointment/reappointment to the City Manager’s office for inclusion in the City Council staff report.
4. APRIL – City Council appoints/reappoints members.
5. APRIL/MAY – Staff liaisons forward updated rosters (members names, addresses, phone numbers, and term expirations [month/year]), and work program to the City Manager’s Office for compilation into the master roster. The City Manager’s Office distributes updated rosters to all staff liaisons.
6. Staff liaisons will write appropriate letters to appointed committee members and forward to the City Manager’s Office for signature by the Mayor.

UOctober Committee/Board Recruitment – Approximate Deadlines

1. JULY – Staff liaisons notify those existing members whose terms are expiring, that they must provide a letter of interest to the City Council if they wish to continue to serve. Letters of interest shall be mailed/sent to the staff liaison for compilation, and must be received by the first Monday in July. Staff liaisons are then to provide the City Manager’s office with number of vacancies on committee or board.
2. AUGUST – City Manager’s office sends out a press release on committee and/or board vacancies. Staff liaisons compile information on interested applicants.
3. SEPTEMBER 1ST – Staff liaisons submit information on prospective candidates for appointment/reappointment to the City Manager’s office for inclusion in the City Council staff report.
4. OCTOBER – City Council appoints/reappoints members.

5. OCTOBER/NOVEMBER – Staff liaisons forward updated rosters (members names, addresses, phone numbers, and term expirations [month/year]), and work program to the City Manager’s Office for compilation into the master roster. The City Manager’s Office distributes updated rosters to all staff liaisons.
6. Staff liaisons will write appropriate letters to appointed committee members and forward to the City Manager’s Office for signature by the Mayor.

Planning/Parks & Recreation Commissions - Recruitment/Appointment Process

1. Please refer to Council Policy 000-2.5 (see Practices and Procedures section, 1. Appointments)
2. Staff liaisons forward updated rosters (members names, addresses, phone numbers, and term expirations [month/year]), and work program to the City Manager’s Office for compilation into the master roster. The City Manager’s Office distributes rosters to all staff liaisons.
3. Staff liaisons will write appropriate letters to appointed commissioners and forward to the City Manager’s Office for signature by the Mayor.

Alternate Committee Members

Alternate committee and board members may be appointed by the City Council. While precluded from voting, alternate members are encouraged to participate fully in committee/board activities. However, an alternate may vote if a regular member is absent at the time of the meeting. Should a vacancy occur on a committee/board, an alternate shall automatically fill the vacancy left by the departure of a full member, based on the following priority criteria:

1. The first priority for appointment shall be made on the basis of the alternate with the most seniority.
2. The second priority for appointment shall be made on the basis of the alternate with the best attendance record.
3. The third priority for appointment shall be made at the discretion of the Council Liaison.

Staff liaison shall advise the City Manager’s Office of automatic move-ups of alternates to full member.

C. Work Program

Each commission, committee and board is expected to fulfill its stated purpose. The establishment of a work plan allows the City Council to evaluate the work of the commission, committee, or board. **Staff liaisons shall prepare a status report on the work plan by the end of March of each year. This report will be included with the April appointment requests for review by City Council.** This status report includes:

1. Evaluation of the previous year's progress.
2. Delineation of the upcoming year's program goals and objectives.
3. Proposed budget requests.

The City Council shall conduct a Committee Review Process once a year in April to review the role and progress of commissions, committees and boards to determine their effectiveness. In doing so, the City Council reserves the right to revise the status of any commission, committee or board based upon their need and benefit to the community.

D. Compensation

Except for the Planning and Parks Commissioners, no member of any committee, commission and board receives compensation. Commissioners, committee members and board members may be reimbursed for necessary expenses related to the performance of their duties, if approved in advance, and in writing, by the City Manager. No commissioner or committee member should incur expenses without following the approved City procedure.

E. Scope of Authority

One of the most important aspects of understanding the role of a commission, committee or board member is understanding the decision-making boundaries of such bodies. The following section outlines commission, committee and board members' scope of authority with respect to the City Council, City departments and employees, the public, and outside agencies. All commissions, committees and boards act in an advisory capacity to the City Council. As an advisory body, commissions, committees, and boards do not receive, disburse, or in any way possess money or any other valuable commodity, nor enter into any contract as an agent of the City without prior authorization of the City Council. In addition, commissions, committees, and boards are not involved in the hiring, promotion, dismissal, or suspension of City employees. All action and business of commissions, committees, and boards is to be conducted by the group as a whole. No member is to transact business on an individual basis unless duly authorized by a majority of the quorum. Should a split opinion exist on commission action, the majority report that is sent to the Council as the recommendation should include an attached explanation outlining reasons for dissent.

Relations with the City Council

Commission, committee and board members should always be open in communicating with the City Council. Contact should never be used to circumvent fellow commission, committee or board members, or the staff. All formal communication to the City Council should be in writing, with written reports and minutes distributed to the Council after each committee, commission or board meeting.

A commission, committee or board recommendation may be included in a staff report presented to the City Council by the City Manager. If a commission, committee or board desires to suggest major changes or additions to city policies, the commission, committee or board must first review the issue with its assigned staff liaison.

Relations with City Staff

The relationship between the staff liaison and advisory body is pivotal. One or more staff liaisons are assigned to each committee, commission and board to: attend meetings; speak to procedural and policy issues; coordinate the distribution of agendas and minutes; and provide support by preparing reports and assisting in special projects. Council approval shall be required for any Committee or Board assignment which requires more than four (4) hours of staff time. Staff liaisons are appointed by the City Manager or his designee. Staff liaisons are not considered members of the commission, committee or board and have no power to vote on commission, committee or board matters. Because of their support position, staff members should not respond to questions from the public at commission, committee or board meetings, unless requested to do so by the Chair. The staff liaison will assist in identifying issues, which may need the commission, committee, or boards attention, and will assist in suggesting alternatives the commission, committee or board may consider. Staff's recommendations are purely advisory. The following are important guidelines to follow in maintaining effective working relationships:

1. Contacts should only be made with the staff member assigned to the commission, committee or board. At such time as a commissioner, committee or board member wants to make contact with a higher level supervisor, the member should notify the assigned staff person of this contact.
2. Contacts with staff members should be clearly within the framework of the commission, committee or board assignments.
3. Commissioners, committee and board members should not ask for individual reports, favors, or special consideration. Any

assignment requiring more than (4) hours of staff time requires prior City Council approval.

4. Citizen complaints heard by commissioners or committee and board members should be referred directly to the staff liaison assigned to the commission, committee or board.
5. The assigned staff liaison reports directly to a supervisor and may not be able to carry out every recommendation that a commission, committee, or board may have without obtaining his or her supervisor's approval.

Relations with the Public and Outside Agencies

It is important to recognize that a commission, committee, or board member's actions and comments can be interpreted as that of the entire advisory body, city council, or city as a whole. For this reason, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. There should be no promises made to the public that are binding on the commission, committee, board, City Council, or City staff.
2. Comments to the public and to the press should be factual.
3. Technical questions which cannot be answered by commissions, committees or board members should be referred to the staff liaison for a response.
4. Commission, committee and board members have an obligation to listen to input from the public in a courteous and appropriate manner.
5. Individual comments of commission, committee and board members should always be distinguished from full commission, committee or board positions. Special care should be taken when talking to the press or City Council to distinguish individual viewpoints from official commission, committee or board positions.
6. Commission, committee and board members are free to engage in political campaigns or partisan activity while serving on a commission, committee or board. However, ethics and common sense should be applied. Commission, committee or board members who work on a political campaign may not do so in the name of the commission. City government is nonpartisan. Therefore commissions, committees and boards are nonpartisan, and cannot take action to sponsor political candidates.

F. Conflict of Interest

Commission, committee or board members are subject to conflict of interest provisions. These provisions, outlined in various sources, are designed to protect the public from biased decisions based on financial interests. There are a number of sources of conflict of interest laws, including the Political Reform Act of 1974, (Government Code 8100Q), Chapter X of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, and other sections of the Government Code. Each of these sources is consistent in holding commission and committee members responsible to disclose their financial interests, and to abstain from participating in any matter before the member's commission or committee which may have a material effect on the individual member's financial interest.

Commission, committee and board members are required to file annual statements of economic interest which disclose the member's interest in investments, real property, and income designated as reportable. Disclosure forms and instructions are available through the City Clerk's Office.

Any member of a local agency who knowingly fails to disclose such interest will be guilty of misconduct in office. The penalties for violating conflict of interest laws are serious, and may include fines and a prohibition against future service in public office. If a commission, committee or board member is uncertain as to a possible conflict of interest, it is generally best to refrain from participating and voting on the matter at hand. A safe way to deal with a possible conflict is for the member to state the basis for his/her conflict of interest immediately after the chairperson announces the item for consideration. Clarification as to what specifically constitutes a conflict of interest may be obtained from the City Attorney's Office through the staff liaison.

IV. MEETINGS

The commission, committee or board meeting is the time and place for decisions and actions. The following outlines policies, procedures, and guidelines for running effective meetings:

A. Brown Act

The City of Costa Mesa's commissions, committees and boards must conduct business based upon provisions of the Brown Act, which deals with the conduct of public meetings. The Act requires that meetings of all boards, committees, and commissions be open to the public. To abide by this provision, an agenda must be posted in a location freely accessible to the public at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting. Each agenda must contain sufficient information to briefly describe each item to be transacted or discussed at the meeting. A commission, committee or board is prohibited from taking action on any item not on the posted agenda. All documents presented to a commission, committee or board are considered public record unless otherwise determined by the City Attorney.

B. Public Meetings

Every resident of or property owner in the City of Costa Mesa has the right to address a commission, committee or board regarding any item on the agenda. They may do so by requesting permission for the floor from the chairperson. When possible, oral and written requests should be made prior to the motion on the subject. When granting permission to speak, the chairperson should request that the speaker state his/her name and address for the record. The chairperson may limit the time for public comment, and request that speakers avoid reiterating positions previously presented.

C. Meeting Times, Quorums, and Attendance

Commissions, committees and boards establish their own regular time and place of meetings. The time and place for regularly scheduled meetings are set either by ordinance, commission, committee or board bylaws, or whatever rules that have been adopted by the commission, committee or board. If the regular meeting date falls on a holiday, the commission, committee or board should establish another date for the meeting. If no such arrangement is made, the meeting will automatically be held on the next regular business day. A special meeting may be called by either the Chair or majority vote of the membership when an issue is urgent and action is required before a regular meeting takes place, or when an in-depth discussion of an issue is needed. Written notice to the commission, committee or board members and the press is required 24 hours before the time of the meeting. The notice should specify time, place, and business to be transacted.

When addressing Citywide or area wide issues, Commissions, Committees and Boards may find it beneficial to schedule a Study Session. Such meetings are allowed for under the law in order to provide input to City staff on broad policy matters such as the formulation of ordinances, resolutions or policies. No action may be taken at any scheduled Study Session and meetings must follow the same procedures as regularly scheduled meetings including but not limited to provisions for posting of agendas and public comments. While Study Sessions can be a very effective tool for communicating ideas and requests for information to City staff, care should be taken to restrict deliberations to broad policy matters as noted in the preceding.

In order for a commission, committee or board to conduct business, a quorum must be present. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum. Subcommittees established by the commission, committee or board do not require a quorum of the full membership to conduct business.

In cases in which the membership of a commission, committee or board is reduced to less than a majority of the members due to vacancies, the quorum shall be a majority of the remaining members of such body until the vacancies are filled by City Council. However, under no circumstances shall the quorum be lowered

to less than three (3) commission, committee or board members. (For example, a committee formed by City Council which has seven members would need four members to be present for the committee to take formal action on a matter on the agenda for the meeting. If vacancies occur due to resignations of the members, the quorum is adjusted to require a minimum of three members. Once the vacancies are filled, the quorum returns to four members).

To ensure effective meetings and decisions, commission, committee and board members are expected to attend all meetings and should make every effort to do so. Unless for an excused absence (vacation, illness, etc.), absence from three consecutive meetings or more than four unexcused absences out of twelve meetings a year, may constitute a basis for dismissal by the City Council. For those committees or boards meeting less than twelve times a year, unexcused absences that exceed 33 1/3% of the total number of meetings a year would also establish a basis for dismissal by City Council. In the event of an excused absence, a member should notify the Chair in advance of the meeting.

D. Minutes

Minutes are required for every standing commission, committee and board regular or special meeting. Minutes constitute the official record of the proceedings. The minutes are a record of resolutions, transactions, findings, and other determinations. Commission, committee and board meetings may be taped to facilitate the preparation of the minutes. The minutes must contain the following: the members of the commission, committee or board and staff who are present; the time the meeting convenes and adjourns; a description of the items discussed; the names and addresses of people who have spoken at the meeting (and their opinions about decisions or issues, if requested); all motions made and the votes taken; and any stated reason for abstentions and “no” votes. Only action minutes, rather than verbatim minutes, will be taken, due to the cost involved in minute preparation. Each Committee is responsible for providing a Secretary from their members to prepare the action minutes. This may be in the form of an elected Secretary or a position to be rotated to a new member each meeting. The minutes of all meetings must be reviewed and approved by the commission, committee or board. After the meeting, the minutes will be distributed to the City Council, City Manager, and other interested parties.

E. Parliamentary Procedure and Effective Meetings

Each commission, committee and board should follow Parliamentary Procedures during meetings. Parliamentary Procedures are accepted methods for conducting meetings, and are outlined in Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, which commissioners and committee members should review. The following is a guide for running effective meetings, based on principles of Parliamentary Procedure:

1. General Principles of Parliamentary Procedure
 - a. Practice justice and courtesy for all.

- b. Do only one thing at a time: one subject at a time; one speaker at a time.
 - c. Business must be conducted.
 - d. Facilitate action, not obstruct it.
 - e. All members are equal.
 - f. The majority decides.
 - g. The rights of a minority must be protected.
 - h. Silence gives consent.
 - i. A question once settled may not be reintroduced.
 - j. Human feelings must be respected.
2. Goals of Meetings
- a. Ensure that majority rule prevails.
 - b. Assure that the dignity of all members is respected.
 - c. Provide for a logical order of business.
3. Types of Meetings
- a. Regular - These meetings are held at specified times and deal with general business of the commission, committee and board.
 - b. Special - These meetings are convened to treat a specific item. No other business can be discussed at a special meeting.
 - c. Study Session – These meetings are convened to provide input or pose questions to City staff on issues of Citywide or area-wide significance.
4. Types of Procedures
- a. Formal - This procedure does not permit discussion of a subject until it is offered as a motion, then seconded and restated by the Chair.
 - b. Informal - The members are permitted to discuss the subject prior to the presentation of motions. The informal procedure may form better motions by permitting the group to arrive at a general opinion before the making of a motion.
5. Conduct of Meeting
- a. Addressing the Chair - Whether formal or informal procedure is used, all discussion is controlled by the Chair. Members address the Chair as Mr. or Madam Chair.
 - b. Recognizing Members - The Chair must recognize members in the order in which they raise their hand.
6. Agenda/Order of Business
- a. The agenda shall contain a brief general description of each item to be considered. Except as otherwise provided by law, no action

shall be taken or discussed on any item not appearing on the agenda.

- b. The order of business provides a logical sequence for group considerations as well as the procedures by which the Chair advances from one matter to another. It reviews actions taken at the last meeting. The order of business also reports actions of elected officials, communicates knowledge gained by special committees, is a reminder of actions still pending, and furnishes knowledge and facts recently attained. The sequence of items on an agenda is as follows:

1. Call to order

- a. The Chair presides at the meetings. In the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair presides.
- b. Quorum - Simple majority of the commission/committee/board.
- c. Open the meeting - To open the meeting, a roll call is taken. If a quorum is present, the Chair will call the meeting to order by announcing, "The meeting of the _____ commission/committee/board will come to order." If a quorum is not present, the Chair announces, "As there is no quorum, a motion to adjourn is in order." The motion is made by a member, seconded, and the meeting is adjourned by the Chair.
- d. The secretary is responsible for posting a notice at the entrance door when no quorum exists.

2. Minutes of previous meeting - Minutes are the official record of the actions of the commission/committee/board. They are approved at the beginning of each meeting to establish continuity of action.

3. Reports of members and standing subcommittees - These reports deal with accounts of what the various members have accomplished. The reports offer a chance for the entire commission/committee/board to be informed of the involvements of the members and the various subcommittees.

4. Reports of special committees - Special committees study a proposal suggested by the commission/committee/board, resident or another body, and submit their findings at a commission/committee/board meeting. These committees are appointed by the Chair. Committee reports should include: (a) A statement of the issue (b) The approach used in seeking a solution

(c) information gathered, and (d) recommendations. All special committees should keep the Chair informed of their progress and report at the meeting that coincides with completion of their work. Members should be advised prior to the end of a meeting that specific reports will be presented at the next meeting. The item should then be agendaized. A copy of every report should be filed with the staff liaison prior to preparation of the agenda. These reports are advisory in nature. Commission/committee/board approval is required if any of the recommendations are to be utilized.

5. Announcements - The Chair mentions items of interest and events. All effective announcements contain five elements: who, what, why, where, and when.
6. Unfinished Business - This item concerns matters still under study or discussion, as well as matters postponed from a previous meeting.
7. New Business - Any proposal or issues not previously considered by the group are dealt with during New Business. Items are introduced in the form of a motion. In addition to the individual members, the Chair is privileged to hold informal discussions on a topic before a formal motion is made. The Chair states, "A motion is now in order, what is your pleasure?"
8. Public Comment – The Brown Act requires that a time period be set aside during the meeting for public comment. Each commission, committee, and board shall determine where the public comment period shall be on the agenda. It is suggested that the public comment statement from the city council agenda be used for speaker time allotment, total time allotted for public comment, and exceptions thereto.
9. Adjournment - A motion to adjourn has highest precedence. It is in order at any time but may not interrupt a speaker or voting. There are two types of adjournment motions: To adjourn until the next regular meeting or to adjourn to a specific time and place. The second motion has priority over the first and is amendable concerning time and place (but not the issue of adjournment). The first is not debatable and hence not amendable.

7. Reminders for the Presiding Officer

- a. Correct procedure should always be your goal.
- b. Always state the exact wording when dealing with motions or amendments. Ask to have an item repeated if you are unsure of the correct wording.

- c. Discussion is not in order until the motion has been stated by the Chair.
- d. The Chair should not voice a strong opinion at the beginning of a discussion.
- e. The Chair should always indicate clearly how a vote is to be taken; rather than calling for “the usual sign.”
- f. The Chair should always call for the negative vote, saying, “Those opposed, say ‘no’.”
- g. The adoption of an amendment does not mean adoption of the main motion. The Chair should remember to state the main motion as amended.
- h. It is better to say: “The motion is out of order” than to indicate an individual is out of order.

The information and direction contained in this handbook will better assist all commission, committee, and board members in understanding the City, their role, and responsibilities. Additionally, use of the handbook as a tool by those involved – staff liaison, commission, committee, board members, or city council – will ensure consistency in procedures and practices involving all such advisory groups.

