

Boards and Commissions Training for County Departments

April 16, 2010

Boards and Commissions Handbook

Role of the Commissions:

- Commissions serve a vital role in County government by gathering and analyzing public input and recommending options to the Board of Supervisors. The guiding principle of any commission recommendation to the Board of Supervisors is that of addressing the overall public benefit.
- Some commissions are authorized by the Board of Supervisors to take independent action (i.e. Planning Commission, Personnel Board, Assessment Appeals Board, etc.).

Boards and Commissions Handbook

- Commissions do not make policy decisions, manage or direct programs, commit County resources, or take an official position that has not been approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Boards and Commissions Handbook

Qualifications to Serve on a Commission:

The Board of Supervisors looks for:

- committed, honest County residents free from motives of personal gain, willing to serve in the interest of the public, with high moral and ethical character.
- Members must have a genuine interest in the work of the commission.
- A fair and open mind is important to objectively analyze issues and make meaningful recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Boards and Commissions Handbook

Role and Responsibility of a Commissioner:

- Reviewing meeting materials in advance, attending meetings on time.
- Notifying the support staff and their Chairperson if they cannot attend a meeting, and volunteering for sub-committees.

Boards and Commissions Handbook

Commissioner Attendance Requirements:

- Most commissions by ordinance require that a vacancy shall be declared by the Board if a member misses three consecutive meetings or workshops.
- It is required that the commissioner call the clerk and the commission Chairperson if he/she cannot attend.

County Charter County Charter Section 506.

- Members shall be residents of the county. If any member ceases to be a resident of the county, or fails to maintain qualifications for the office, the office shall become vacant and the Board of Supervisors shall so declare.
- Members of boards and commissions appointed by the Board of Supervisors shall be subject to removal by the Board for willful or corrupt misconduct in office.

County Charter County Charter Section 506.

- As soon as practicable, following the first day of July of every year, each board and commission shall organize by electing a chairperson and vice-chairperson to serve at the pleasure of such board or commission.

County Charter County Charter Section 506.

- Each board or commission shall hold regular meetings as are required by ordinance and such special meetings as it may require.
- Each board and commission shall adopt rules of procedure subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors.

County Charter County Charter Section 506.

- A majority of the members of a board or commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business
- No act of a board or commission shall be valid unless at least a majority of the entire membership concurs therein.
- All meetings shall be open to the public.

Rules of the Board of Supervisors

CHAPTER VII Committees – Sec. 33

Board Policy Committee Structure.
There are five major policy committees of the Board of Supervisors.

- (a) Health and Hospital
- (b) Children, Seniors and Families
- (c) Housing, Land Use, Environment and Transportation
- (d) Public Safety and Justice
- (e) Finance and Government Operations

In addition, the Legislative Committee of the Board, as described in Section 35 of the rules, reviews legislation.

Commission reporting structure to Board of Supervisors' Committees

Children, Seniors and Families Committee

Commission on the Status of Women
Human Relations Commission
Senior Care Commission
Social Services Advisory Commission

Finance and Government Operations Committee

National Guard and Veterans' Affairs
Commission

Health and Hospital Committee Health Advisory Commission

Commission reporting structure to Board of Supervisors' Committees

Housing, Land Use, and Environment Committee

Airport Land Use Commission

Animal Advisory Commission

Historical Heritage Commission

Public Safety and Justice Committee

Domestic Violence Council

Rules of the Board of Supervisors

CHAPTER VII Committees – Sec. 33

- Committee purpose: to evaluate and make recommendations to the full Board on all items of significant importance, both fiscal and policy.
- Consistent with this mandate, referrals shall be made directly to the committees by the County Executive, County Boards and Commissions or individual Board members on the following matters:
 - a) Issues which would implicate new or changed policy for the Board.

Rules of the Board of Supervisors

CHAPTER VII Committees – Sec. 33

- (b) Issues which would have an impact of \$100,000 or more on the budget of the County.
- (c) Issues which, in the opinion of the County Executive or a member of the Board, may be of a controversial nature and/or would benefit from a preliminary review by committee.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Commissions or Advisory Boards to the Board of Supervisors are authorized to recommend positions on public policy or legislative issues to the Board of Supervisors
- Can advocate or take a position on local, state, national, or international public policy or legislative issues, if the Board of Supervisors has authorized them to do so.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- When any Commission or Advisory Board to the Board of Supervisors recommends positions on local, state, national, or international public policy or legislative issues, the Legislative Committee of the Board of Supervisors, will review the Commission or Advisory Board's proposed position and determine the appropriateness of the position.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

All items for the Legislative Committee should be directed to the attention of the Deputy County Executive for Intergovernmental Relations, copies to:

- Members of the Legislative Comm.
- Board of Supervisors
- Legislative Director.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- When the Legislative Committee considers a request or recommendation proposed by a Commission or Advisory Board for a position on local, state, national, or international public policy or legislative issues, the consideration and any recommendation is reported to the Board of Supervisors along with the regular Legislative Committee Report.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Commissions or Advisory Boards to the Board of Supervisors should incorporate their legislative issues into the County's Legislative Policies and Priorities document to facilitate coordination with the legislative cycle.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.1 POLICIES GOVERNING ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Commissions and Advisory Boards should advise the members of the Legislative Committee and the Deputy County Executive for intergovernmental Relations of local, state, national, or international public policy or legislative issues that are under study, particularly, if they are to be scheduled for referral to the Legislative Committee.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.2 OFF-SITE MEETINGS OF ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54961:

A legislative body may not conduct any meeting or function in any facility where racial or other discrimination is practiced, or which is inaccessible to disabled persons, or where members of the public must pay to attend the meeting.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.3 BUDGETS FOR COMMISSION BUSINESS

- Miscellaneous Commission expenses for mileage, child care, and meals shall be reimbursed...
- Approval to expend additional funds for travel, fixed assets, and other necessary Commission business shall be approved in advance by the Board of Supervisors.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.27 POLICY REGARDING COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS AND TRANSACTIONS

- All legal documents (such as ordinances, and resolutions) being presented to the Board for approval must be first reviewed by the Office of the County Counsel.
- Before placement on the BOS agenda County Counsel must be provided with all relevant material sufficiently in advance of the Board meeting to allow thorough legal review and modifications or clarification where required.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.27 POLICY REGARDING COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS AND TRANSACTIONS

- All "relevant material" includes the legal document, all exhibits and/or attachments, a copy of the draft transmittal, and information regarding the target date for Board consideration.
- All transmittals to the Board which raise potential legal issues should first be reviewed by the Office of the County Counsel.

Board of Supervisors Policy Manual

CHAPTER VIII - 3.27.2 POLICY REGARDING COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS AND TRANSACTIONS - Timing of Review

- Materials should be provided to County Counsel no later than 3 weeks prior to the desired Board meeting which is approximately one week prior to the date items for that meeting must be submitted to the County Executive's Agenda Review Committee.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Agenda Preparation:

- Agenda - prepare with Chairperson, finalize, and distribute.
- Prepare and distribute agendas at least 7 days prior to the scheduled meeting date, this gives the Commissioners ample time for review.
- Items may come from the commissioners, public, prior meetings and County Departments.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Email commissioners and public regarding agendas on the web.
- Notification sent via email to commissioners and members of the public regarding publishing the agenda on the web.
- Hard copies are provided to commissioners without web access and/or upon special request. (Department staff may need to provide sight-impaired commissioners with large font format copies of agenda packet).

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Controversial items should be discussed with County Counsel (i.e. if the public could perceive the commission is speaking on behalf of the County or if an item could expose the County to any legal issues, etc.).
- Publish agendas with supporting documents to web to provide the public with access to the agenda.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Post agenda in a publicly accessible area.
 - Regular meeting agendas must be posted no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting.
 - Special meeting agenda must be posted no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- Polling for a quorum.
- Attend meetings and prepare minutes for regular business meetings.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Minutes Writing:

- Minutes are prepared for business meetings only and are included on the next agenda for approval. COB does not distribute the minutes to the public prior to the agenda distribution.
- In Keyboard the agenda language is automatically captured in the minutes document.
- The COB staff does not write verbatim or extensive discussion.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Minutes only reflect actions taken by the Commissions.
- Minutes are written in past tense.
- The name of the Commissioners in attendance are captured under the roll call heading. Late arrivals are also noted in the minutes.
- Public speakers and affiliation are identified.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Always reflect the name of the Commissioner who made the motion and who seconded.
- A motion that is not seconded cannot be voted on – indicated in the minutes that “the motion failed for lack of a second.”
- Document is written in summary action format.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- The COB reflects the name of the Commissioner who voted “no” and who abstained, but does not list who voted yes.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Transmittals:

- Include the name of the commission in the Recommended Action language.
- Placement on BOS agendas should be under the Boards and Commissions header (not regular department heading).
- Effective January 2010 Resolutions for adoption are placed on the consent Calendar.
- If a Resolution is to be adopted and presented the Department must obtain authorization from the Board President for placement on the agenda as a 1:30 time certain item.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Clerking the Meetings:

- Note the start time and end time of meeting; if they take a recess, note that time also).
- Note who's present, who's absent, and if others arrive late note the time.
- Meeting cannot start until a quorum is present (quorum is one half of number of positions plus one, so any absences and abstentions from voting do not help achieve a quorum or a passing vote on an item.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- In order to reconsider a vote, a member who voted on the prevailing side has to make a motion to reconsider, and there must be a second, and then must be voted on and passed. Then a separate vote is made on the matter itself.
- Need to verify that members have oaths of office on file before they are allowed to vote including reappointed members.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Meeting Preparation:

Assistive Listening Device

Attendance Sheet

Business Card Request forms

Calendar (Commission, BOS, and Committees)

Correspondence

County Charter

Gavel

Guest Sign-In form

Handbook

Night meeting schedule for MAC Room

Nameplates

Note Pad

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Oaths

Pens

Polling form

Recording device (digital and/or CD)

Records Request forms

Request for Business Card forms

Request for Parking Permit forms

Request-to-Speak forms

Robert's Rule of Order

Room set-up needed?

Roster of Members

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

Other Clerical Responsibilities:

- Departments may make travel arrangements for commissioner as needed.
- Must maintain audio files.
- Maintain commission websites.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Annual Work Plan:
 - Agendize for Commission Approval by January
 - Chair can establish an Ad Hoc committee to develop the Plan.
 - Administrative staff may prepare a draft Plan for the commission.
 - Submit to the Clerk of the Board by April 1.
 - The Clerk of the Board Submits to the BOS Committees in May.
 - Chair or Commissions representative should attend the Committee and Board meeting to address any issues.

Clerical Support for Boards and Commissions

- Current Commissioner Roster Information
 - Contact information is not for public distribution.
 - Current commissioners information and Agenda Distribution list will be provided to Affected Departments electronically.

Processes Remaining with The Clerk of the Board

- Receive, distribute appointment applications to BOS and file.
- Provide commissioner appointment data and contact information to departments.

Processes Remaining with The Clerk of the Board

Oath of Office:

- Departmental Commission clerks will be deputized to administer oath of Office.
- Provide “appointment packets” to appointees (including Brown Act and Statement of Economic Interest etc.)
- Administer A-Permit parking process.

Processes Remaining with The Clerk of the Board

- Continue to staff Support the remaining 27 Commissions.
- Coordinate with County Counsel to provide trainings on Ethics, Brown Act, and Statement of Economic Interest .
- Maintain COB commissioner database. (Departments must have their own contacts information.)
- Provide letters to commissioners upon expiration of terms.
- Process resignations/vacation of positions.

Processes Remaining with The Clerk of the Board

Please continue to coordinate with the Clerk of the Board's Office regarding:

- Changes in membership
 - Vacancies
 - Expirations
 - Resignations
- Contact information changes (address, phone, email, etc.)
- Departmental Staff Changes