

MCC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

approved 1/18/12
updated 2/1/14, 1/28/15, 1/28/17

Councilmember Roles and Responsibilities (beyond those established in Bylaws)

All Councilmembers:

- Come to meetings on time & prepared for informed discussion
- Listen attentively, speak respectfully, one person at a time, recognized by Chair.
- Participate in group discussion & decision making.
- Keep discussion to the issues, not personalities or other's motives.

Chair – special responsibilities

- Represents the group in the community, held to a high standard of decorum.
- Ensures that agendas are set.
- Coordinates activities of the council and its committees to avoid duplication of effort and to facilitate timely results.
- As meeting facilitator, focuses on process, and strives to be last to speak during discussion and debate.
- Provides a supportive environment for process, content and group members.

Meeting and Agenda-setting Procedures

- Promptness -- prompt meeting start time at 7:00pm if quorum has been established. Suggest members arrive 15 min before start time.
Regular meeting end-time goal: 9:30 PM.
- MCC special meetings: Minimize the need by efficient mail handling & information input/distribution; project tracking; advance agenda planning; maintain staff contacts for current project updates

Agenda-setting

- Prioritize and plan ahead to meet our long-term goals
- Agenda item sponsor should supply the following:
 - Title of Agenda Item – clear, concise description of item to be discussed
 - Project timeline or upcoming deadline
 - Desired Outcome
 - Name of person doing presentation (correct spelling/title)
 - Time allotted for this issue, including public comment
 - Names & contact info of other informed parties or individuals with opposing views, the Sponsor wants to invite
 - Supporting documents: for website (72 hrs in advance of meeting) & one print copy for public meeting binder
 - Will A/V equipment be required?

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Communications

- a. General tone** – Always respectful, emphasizing the positive where possible.
- b. Letter writing**
- Efficient process for Council letter writing:
 - Item sponsor submit draft letter in agenda packet. Recommend review by another councilmember prior to submittal, or
 - Vote on list of points and designate to individual or committee, followed by email preview opportunity to object before sending.
 - Preferred style for effectiveness: clear/concise, of length that will actually be read by busy people. To ensure clarity & accuracy in final copy, have second person proof read.
 - Sending approved letters via email: Limit email to short standard sentence such as: “Attached please find...”
 - Only council-approved letters when quorum is present shall be sent out on council letterhead.
- c. Reports to council by members and committees**
- Written vs. oral: Written reports provide opportunity to review before meeting, aid in understanding, and help secretary with minutes.
 - Desired style: clear, concise, objective
- d. Email**
- Avoid Brown Act violations (non-public or serial meetings via email)
 - Minimize number of group emails – think before you “reply-all”. Limit to agenda setting, one-way information without discussion.
- e. Individual councilmember communications on public matters**
- When speaking as an individual, on public matters, always preface remarks with standard disclaimer, such as: I am a member of the Midcoast Community Council, but I am speaking/writing now as an individual. This includes communication with the Supervisor and staff on matters involving the MCC when councilmembers are speaking their own interests or opinions.
 - Speaking as an individual, one is still seen as a councilmember. Protect the image of the council.
 - Dissenting opinions: Councilmember voicing dissenting opinion should make standard disclaimer that he/she is not speaking for the council.
 - At MCC meetings during Public Comment for items not on the agenda, councilmembers may make announcements of upcoming meetings or events but should strive to stick to the facts and avoid editorializing.
- f. Media contacts**
- Carefully distinguish between Council-approved positions, and individual opinions.
- g. Attendance at other meetings affecting the Midcoast**
- Role of councilmembers appointed as MCC representatives on government agency boards/committees: Report back to council on proceedings/decisions at meetings attended. Strive to represent the majority opinion of the council according to positions taken to date.

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Committee Creation Policies

- All committees must be formally approved and recognized by the MCC.
- A request to form a committee needs to be placed on the agenda.
- The purpose of the group is to be clearly defined indicating specifically what the committee will accomplish.
- Desired outcome will be described as well as the estimated length of time anticipated for the group to accomplish its purpose.
- Committees will be required to create a simple agenda noting items for discussion with desired outcomes and time frames.
- Actions the group wants to take, i.e. Contact County staff for “x”, send a letter, set up meetings, etc. would require full Council approval.
- Committee reports/minutes are required for all meetings and are to be posted to the MCC website as well as reported at MCC meetings.
- Chairs of committees shall be councilmembers.
- Assigning tasks is an alternative to creating a committee; do not use a committee if one person or two people can accomplish the task.