

MCC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

approved 1/18/12
updated 2/1/14

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?
- Format for agenda items: add total time for item and “desired outcome”

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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.
- 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.