

Parks, Recreation and Beautification Council Meetings

Meeting Schedule

Regular meetings are held in the Town Hall Conference Room 6570 E US 36. The PRBC establishes meeting times and dates annually. The public sessions of meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. No Council meeting will be held in the event that a regular meeting of the Council falls on a legal holiday. *Council members should inform the staff as soon as possible if they intend to be out of town on a set meeting date.*

Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Council President or by four members of the PRBC. Written notice must be given to the PRBC and to the media 48 hours prior to a special meeting). No business other than that announced may be discussed.

At all regular and special meetings, public comments must be permitted before or during consideration of any agenda item. Public comment is appropriate on any matter within the jurisdiction of the PRBC.

Notice requirements shall follow state statute; minutes of the meeting shall be taken by the PRBC Secretary or designee and shall be available for public inspection.

Placing Items on Agenda

PRBC: A Council member may request an item be considered on a future agenda and, upon consensus of a majority of Council, staff will prepare a staff report if formal Council action is required. Council members may make this request during the “Council Comment” portion of a meeting.

Members of the public: A member of the public may request an item be placed on a future agenda during public comment or through other

The Council President or 4 Council members may call a special meeting.

The “Council Comments” portion of the agenda presents an opportunity to gain support of the full Council to place an item on a future agenda.

A citizen must gain support of the

communication with Council members, and upon consensus of a majority of Council, a staff report will be prepared and approved by the Town Manager, or his/her designee.

Council to place an item on the agenda.

Other Business items: Non-agendized items may be added to an agenda under the Other Business portion of the Agenda. Non-agendized items may be added to the agenda only if the Council makes findings that (1) the need to consider the item arose after the posting of the agenda and; (2) there is a need to take immediate action at this meeting of the PRBC. These findings must be approved by a 5/7th vote; if less than five members of Council are present, the findings require a unanimous vote of those present.

Tips on the Dais

There are several issues related to the recording system which are important to keep in mind. Never say things near a microphone that you do not want recorded.

Have all speakers come forward to the podium. The recording device cannot hear people that speak from the audience.

Order of Business

This section summarizes each PRBC meeting component.

1. **Approval/Correction of Minutes:** Minutes shall be submitted to the Council for approval and/or correction in draft form at a subsequent regular meeting. It is the policy of the PRBC that only members of the Council have the authority to make revisions to the minutes subject to a majority vote of the PRBC. Council members having only typographical corrections to minutes are encouraged to provide such corrections to the PRBC Secretary directly and need not wait to submit such corrections at a meeting. *As a time saving measure, even full correction items could be written ahead and passed to the PRBC Secretary before the meeting.*

2. **Council Comment:** Provides members of the Council an opportunity to introduce discussion on matters not currently before the Council including brief announcements, questions of staff and requests for items to be placed on the agenda at a future meeting. The purpose is to allow staff and Council to provide update or share information regarding a particular matter. Examples of appropriate communications would be information of general interest received from outside agencies, comments or inquiries received from individuals or from the public, requests to agendize future items, or announcements of interest to the public

State law provides that Council can take action only on such matters, which have been noticed at least three days in advance of the meeting unless special circumstances are found to exist (as mentioned above). Formal action or approval on non-agendized items is not allowed, and such items should be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting.

3. **Public Comment:** *Each regular Council meeting has time set aside for comments from the public. Comments on agendized items should be held until the appropriate item is called.* Individuals desiring to speak are to address the Council from the speaker podium after giving their name.

Comments should focus on a specific matter within the Council's jurisdiction with reasons for the position taken. Written comments are encouraged during the public comments section or during public hearings. When materials are presented during public hearings, they should be submitted before the public hearing is closed on the item. Comments may be limited so that all have an opportunity to address the Council.

As a general rule video testimony will not be accepted by the PRBC. Videos may accompany in-person testimony but are subject to speaking time limits. To show videos, prior approval must be received and review undertaken by the Town Manager's Office.

Groups or applicant representatives desiring to speak shall address the Council from the speaker podium after giving the name of the group, its purpose if necessary, and the representative's name.

Public hearings shall be opened, followed by staff's brief presentation

of staff report and any appropriate applicant comments, taking a combined total of approximately 10 minutes. Council may question staff or consultant after their presentation. Council will then hear public comment, following which the public hearing is closed.

After public hearings are closed, no member of the public shall be permitted to address the Council or the staff from the audience, except at the discretion of the presiding officer.

4. Regular Business Items: Regular items are shown on the agenda with an estimated time at which they will be considered. Typically, timed items are not considered before the time estimated. Items are often considered later than that shown due to the length of time taken on previous items.

5. Written Communications: The PRBC has established a practice of placing all letters sent to Council members on the meeting agenda so that this correspondence receives wide distribution. This procedure also provides staff in various departments an opportunity to be aware of issues of concern to residents and to initiate appropriate follow-up when necessary. Occasionally, letters or e-mail will be sent to Council members at their residence and town staff may not receive a copy of this correspondence. A copy of letters transmitted in this manner should be provided to staff for inclusion on the PRBC's meeting agenda. This practice does not apply to political correspondence. Letters sent to Council in advance of a meeting yet after the preparation of agenda will be delivered to the Council before the meeting. If letters are provided on the day of or just before a meeting, letters will be placed at the Council members' positions on the dais.

General Procedures

The PRBC utilizes Roberts Rules of Order to conduct Council Meetings.

Presiding Officer: The Council President is the Presiding Officer and acts as Chair at Council meetings. In the absence or incapatown of the Council President, the Vice President serves as presiding officer.

Quorum: Four-Sevenths of the Council members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

Discussion Rules

To assist the PRBC in the development of a structure for orderly discussion of items, rules have been prepared which represent accepted

practices for the management of Council meetings.

1. **Obtaining the floor:** A member of the PRBC or staff shall first address the Council President and gain recognition. Comments and questions should be limited to the issue before the Council. Cross-exchange between Council members and public should be avoided.

2. **Questions to staff:** A Council member shall, after recognition by the Council President, address questions to the *department head or designated staff member*. *If a Council member has questions on an agenda item, that member should contact staff prior to the meeting in order to allow staff time to research a response/answer for the meeting.*

3. **Interruptions:**

a. Once recognized, a Council member is considered to have the floor, and another Council member may not interrupt the speaker except to make a point of order or point of personal privilege. In such a circumstance, the Council member holding the floor shall cease speaking until the point of order or privilege is resolved.

b. Upon being recognized by the Council President, members of the staff shall hold the floor until completion of their remarks or until recognition is withdrawn by the Council President.

4. **Discussion limit:** A Council member should not speak more than once on a particular subject until every other Council member has had the opportunity to speak. Council members are encouraged to discuss items during the decision-making process, *and may ask staff to respond when appropriate. The Council President should allow other members to speak first and then give his/her views and summarize.*

5. **Tabling procedure:** Tabling an item immediately stops discussion and causes a vote to postpone a matter indefinitely or to a time and date certain.

6. **Right of protest:** A Council member is never required to state reasons for a dissenting vote.

7. **Calling for the question:** The purpose of calling for the question is to disallow further debate and put an issue to an immediate vote. A Council member may move to “call for the question” on an item which is being considered. The motion requires a second, is not debatable, and must pass by a five-sevenths vote. If the motion carries, the item is no longer debatable, and the PRBC must vote on it.

8. **Conducting business at a late hour.** After 9:00 p.m. a five-sevenths vote of the PRBC is required to begin consideration of a new item of business.

Letters received by the Council are placed on the agenda.

The Council has adopted a simplified Roberts Rules of Order.

Council members with questions on agenda items should contact staff prior to the meeting.

Other Protocol

Other guidelines have also been adopted to ensure meetings of the Council emphasize the importance of the business being conducted in a professional manner. Council members and staff shall:

1. Work to preserve appropriate order and decorum during all meetings, ***and not blind-side each other in public.***
2. Discourage side conversations, disruptions, interruptions or delaying efforts.
3. Inform the Council President when departing from a meeting.
4. Limit disruptive behavior. The Council President will call persons demonstrating rude, boisterous, or profane behavior to order. If such conduct continues, the Council President may call a recess, request the removal of such person(s) from the Community Chambers, adjourn the meeting, or take such other appropriate action as permitted by the Brown Act. The Council has adopted a policy to discourage applause, booing or other similar behaviors from the public during meetings.
5. Recognize that only the PRBC, staff, advisory body chairs or designated representatives, and those authorized by the presiding officer shall be permitted to sit at the Council or staff tables.
6. Limit breaks of the PRBC to 5-10 minutes. The Council has authorized the Council President to resume the meeting if a quorum exists and other members have not returned from break within this time period.
7. Impose time limits on speakers. While the PRBC encourages and embraces the need for, and right of, public participation, it acknowledges that public comments must, at times, be limited. Therefore, the PRBC authorizes the Council President, as presiding officer, to ***poll the audience for an indication of the number of people wishing to speak, and impose time limits of up to three minutes per speaker when necessary due to the volume of business. After the time limit, Council may ask questions of the speaker for clarification, if needed. Each speaker will be thanked for his or her participation.***

Enforcement of Order: The Police Chief or his designee acts as the Sergeant-At-Arms and may be requested to be present. Any Council member may request the presiding officer to enforce the rules of protocol. Upon motion and majority vote, the presiding officer shall be required to do so.

Values of Respect: The PRBC has also recognized the importance of

approaching the public's business in an environment of personal respect *and courtesy, which* places emphasis on the consideration of policy and avoids personalization of comments. Some general guidelines utilized by the PRBC include:

Discussion should focus on policy matters

Personal criticism of members is inappropriate

Proper decorum should be displayed as other members express their views

Treat members of the public equally

Individual council members should not pack the audience for specific agenda items.

Voting Procedures

When present, all Council members are to vote. Failure of a seated member to orally express a vote constitutes an affirmative vote.

No ordinance, resolution or motion shall be passed or become effective without an affirmative vote.

A conflict of interest shall be declared whenever appropriate and in compliance with state law. The affected Council member will step down from the dais and not participate in the discussion or vote on the item.

Council members may declare general consensus at the discretion of the presiding officer if there are no negative votes or objections.

Upon the request of any Council member, a roll call vote will be taken and recorded.

Tie vote: A tie vote is equivalent to a vote, which has failed. The presiding officer may publicly explain the effect of the tie vote for the audience or may direct a member of the staff to do so.

Courtesy vote: At times, a member will be absent from a meeting. Issues will arise that would pass if that member were present. Another Council member who is present, yet planning to vote against an item, may sometimes alter their vote to an affirmative vote in recognition that the measure would have passed if the absent member were in attendance.

Motions. There are a number of types of motions, each of which must meet certain requirements before a vote can be taken. A reference

The Council has adopted "values of respect" which speak to the importance of focusing discussion on policy rather than personalities.

guide to motions is provided in chart form in Appendix A of this manual.

Reconsideration: Reconsideration of an item shall be allowed in accordance with the following Council guidelines. Resubmitted issues previously acted upon are discouraged; however, requests will be considered by a majority vote of the Council. A member of the prevailing majority must make a motion for reconsideration when the previous vote was taken. The Avon PRBC has determined that any motion for reconsideration should be made within two meetings of the previous action. No motion for reconsideration will be entertained after this deadline unless the PRBC determines significant new information has arisen which warrants such action. If a member is absent from a meeting(s), a motion for reconsideration may be entertained on the first meeting of his/her return.

Notification and Advertising

The town attempts to publicize matters of significant neighborhood or community public interest, which appear on a PRBC agenda, as well as all matters where advertising is required by law. Advertisements may include location maps, project descriptions and, in some instances posting of property, if required, written in plain English in order to fully inform all interested individuals.

Development of Agenda

Council members shall submit agenda items the Wednesday before the PRBC Meeting. The Town Manager or his/her designee will prepare the preliminary agenda. On the Friday before the PRBC meeting the Town Manager or his/her designee will have the preliminary agenda ready for voting by the PRBC members on specific agenda items. A majority vote by the PRBC members will constitute an agenda item for the PRBC meeting. The Final Agenda will be prepared by the end of the day on the Friday prior to the PRBC Meeting.

A motion to reconsider must be made by the second meeting following the original action.

The Brown Act is designed to ensure the public's business is conducted in public.