

# MCC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

approved 1/18/12

## **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 7:30pm if quorum has been established. Suggest members arrive at 7:15.  
Regular meeting end-time goal: 9:30 PM. Hard cut-off: 10:00 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
- Deadline for publishing agenda – hard cutoff should not be longer than 72 hrs
- Add item to standard agenda format: “Approval of Agenda”, after public comment and before consent agenda, for reordering and any clarification questions.
- 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”

## **Communications**

- a. General tone** – Always respectful, emphasizing the positive where possible.
- b. Letter writing**
- Efficient process for letter writing:
    - Vote on list of points and designate to individual or committee, followed by email preview opportunity to object before sending; or
    - Item sponsor submit draft letter in agenda packet.
  - 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.
  - Submitting 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**
- Need process to ensure effectiveness, accuracy, transparency – to be determined later.
- g. Attendance at other meetings affecting the Midcoast**
- Define councilmember role when representing the MCC at formal meetings, such as Devil’s Slide Task Force. Do they speak as individual, or carry a mandate from the MCC? Needs further discussion.
  - Going forward, what should the relationship be between MCC and Midcoast Parks/Rec Committee (MPRC)? Needs further discussion, but OK to reach out to MPRC for more collaboration with MCC.

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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.
- Previously formed committees will need to follow the same process to be formally approved by the MCC.
- Chairs of committees shall be councilmembers.
- Assigning tasks is an alternative to creating a committee; do not use a committee if one person can make the decision or accomplish the task.