



SUBJECT: Boards, Commissions and Committees Attendance Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and ensure consistent attendance at regularly scheduled Board, Commission and Committee (BCC) meetings by BCC members, and to outline a process to address non-attendance. This policy applies to all BCCs.

DEFINITIONS

“Regular Meeting” means meetings occurring at the date, time and location set by formal action of the BCC.

“Special Meeting” means any meeting other than a Regular Meeting.

“BCC Attendance Report” means a written document prepared by the City Clerk reflecting the attendance of each BCC member for each Regular Meeting held during a fiscal year.

“Fiscal Year” means July 1 to June 30.

“Excused Absence” means a pre-planned absence from a Regular Meeting of the BCC which is reported to the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison prior to the start of the meeting and the absence is due to one of the reasons listed in Section 3.1(b).

“Unexcused Absence” means an absence not reported to the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison in advance of the meeting, or an absence that is reported in advance of the meeting but is not due to one of the reasons listed in Section 3.1(b).

POLICY

1. Attendance

1.1 Each BCC member is expected to attend all Regular Meetings and as many Special Meetings as possible. When a BCC member knows in advance that they will be absent from a meeting,

the member will give advance notice to the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison¹ as soon as possible and before the meeting begins.

- 1.2 Each member may have up to two (2) Excused Absences and up to two (2) Unexcused Absences in any Fiscal Year before the City Clerk or City Council (in the case of the Library Board and Board of Port Commissioners) may take action regarding attendance.
- 1.3 The BCC staff liaison (or the Executive Director of the Port in the case of the Board of Port Commissioners) will determine whether each absence will be designated as an Excused Absence or an Unexcused Absence and the designation will be recorded on the BCC Attendance Report.
- 1.4 Unexcused Absences from three (3) Regular Meetings during any Fiscal Year may result in a member being removed from the BCC.
- 1.5 If a BCC member is absent from two (2) Regular Meetings in any fiscal year, staff will contact the member to convey details of their attendance record as they relate to this policy by providing the following notice:
 - (a) The BCC staff liaison will make initial contact with the member to discuss their attendance record and prepare the member to receive written notification.
 - (b) Following initial contact by the BCC staff liaison, the City Clerk will issue written notification to the member regarding their attendance record, including possible action that may be taken if the member exceeds the number of allowable absences as referenced in Section 1.2. The City Clerk's notification shall also include information about the Leave of Absence provision (see Section 5).
- 1.6 A member must be present for at least fifty percent (50%) of the meeting in order to be counted as present except as provided in Section 1.8.
- 1.7 If a Regular Meeting is cancelled for lack of business, Election Day, summer recess, winter recess, or due to a declared local state of emergency, that meeting will not be counted against members for the purposes of calculating meeting attendance.
- 1.8 For purposes of this policy, a member's non-participation in an agenda item due to a conflict of interest will not be considered an absence with regard to Section 1.6 of this policy. If a Regular Meeting is held for the purposes of discussing a single agenda item for which a BCC member has a conflict of interest, that member's non-participation in the meeting will not be considered an absence with regard to Section 1.2 of this policy. Non-participation due to a conflict of interest will be noted in the BCC Attendance Report.

¹ In applying this policy to the Board of Port Commissioners, all references to the "Chairperson" shall mean the Executive Director of the Port and all references to the "BCC staff liaison" shall mean the "Clerk of the Board of Port Commissioners" unless otherwise noted.

- 1.9 If a quorum is not established within fifteen (15) minutes of the noticed start time of a Regular Meeting of the BCC, the meeting may be cancelled. When an Unexcused Absence of a BCC member results in the cancellation of a Regular Meeting, the BCC staff liaison will inform the City Clerk of which members were in attendance for recordation in the BCC Attendance Report.
- 1.10 The City Clerk will provide the City Council with the BCC Attendance Report semi-annually.
- 1.11 The City Council will take into consideration BCC member attendance at Regular Meetings when considering reappointments.
- 1.12 This policy will supersede all BCC-adopted attendance policies.

2. Process for Removal

- 2.1 If a member of any BCC other than Library Board or Board of Port Commissioners has three (3) Unexcused Absences from Regular Meetings during any Fiscal Year the City Clerk may declare that member's seat vacant.
 - (a) This policy authorizes the City Clerk, in coordination with the City Manager, to exercise discretion when determining whether a member should be removed based on the circumstances of the absences, the member's service record, and the needs of the BCC on which the member serves. After analysis, if the City Clerk determines that a member should not be removed, a written determination will be issued to the member and a copy provided to the City Manager, Mayor, and BCC staff liaison.
 - (b) If a member's seat is declared vacant, the member will be notified in writing on the date their seat is declared vacant. Such declaration is appealable to the City Manager. An appeal must be filed in writing addressed to the City Manager within fifteen (15) City business days of the date of notification. The City Manager or designee will issue a written decision on the appeal, which will become final upon the date of the decision and is not subject to any further administrative appeal. This Section 2.1 does not apply to the Library Board or the Board of Port Commissioners (see Section 2.2).
- 2.2 If a member of the Library Board or the Board of Port Commissioners has three (3) Unexcused Absences from Regular Meetings during any Fiscal Year, the City Clerk will notify the City Council as soon as is practicable for Council consideration of removal of the member. Removal of a member requires a five-sevenths (5/7) vote of the City Council and is not subject to any further appeal.

3. Excused Absences

- 3.1 Excused Absences will be limited to those that meet the following requirements:
 - (a) The absent member must have informed the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison of their intended absence prior to the start of the meeting, and

(b) The absence is due to one of the following reasons:

- i. Death in the family (parent, sibling, spouse, domestic partner, child, half-sibling, stepsibling, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, stepparent, or stepchild) or a close relation not listed herein
- ii. Personal illness or illness of a family member (parent, sibling, spouse, domestic partner, child, half-sibling, stepsibling, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, stepparent, or stepchild) or a close relation not listed herein
- iii. BCC-related business
- iv. Personal leave, such as a vacation
- v. Emergency
- vi. Required military service
- vii. Required employment or educational commitment
- viii. Religious or cultural holiday
- ix. Parental leave

3.2 Failure to inform the Chairperson or the BCC staff liaison prior to the start of the meeting will result in an Unexcused Absence unless the BCC staff liaison (or the Executive Director of the Port in the case of the Board of Port Commissioners) determines that extenuating circumstances prevented such advance notice. Details of this determination will be provided to the City Clerk when reporting meeting attendance.

3.3 Whether an absence is an Excused or Unexcused Absence will be noted by the staff liaison at the time of reporting meeting attendance to the City Clerk. The determination will be reflected in the BCC Attendance Report prepared by the City Clerk and provided to the City Council.

3.4 All BCC members will be limited to two (2) Excused Absences during any Fiscal Year unless the member requests and is granted a leave of absence.

3.5 Absences beyond the two (2) Excused Absences afforded to each BCC member, for an excused or unexcused reason, will be considered an Unexcused Absence unless the member requests and is granted a leave of absence.

4. Unexcused Absences

4.1 If a member is absent from a Regular Meeting without properly informing the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison in advance of the meeting, the meeting minutes will reflect the member's absence as an Unexcused Absence. While emergencies do occur, all BCC members are encouraged to inform the Chairperson or BCC staff liaison in advance of an absence.

4.2 Unexcused Absences from three (3) Regular Meetings, may result in the member's seat being declared vacant.

5. Leaves of Absence

- 5.1 A leave of absence may be taken for anywhere from one Regular Meeting up to a period not to exceed three (3) months upon following the process identified below. The basis for a leave of absence includes, but is not limited to:
- i. Medical leave for personal illness or illness of a family member (parent, sibling, spouse, domestic partner, child, half-sibling, stepsibling, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, stepparent, or stepchild) or a close relation not listed herein
 - ii. Required military service
 - iii. Required employment or educational commitment
 - iv. Parental leave
- 5.2 All members are allowed to take one (1) leave of absence in any Fiscal Year.
- 5.3 Parental leave and medical leave for any period not to exceed three (3) months may be automatically taken by a BCC member upon written notification to the City Clerk (or, as to members of the Board of Port Commissioners, upon written notification to the Clerk of the Board of Port Commissioners who, in turn, must notify the City Clerk) as soon as the need arises or as is practicable prior to commencement of the actual leave of absence. To the extent possible, the BCC member should provide sixty (60) days advance notice of the leave of absence.
- 5.4 For all other types of leaves, a request for leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the City Clerk and the Mayor as soon as the need arises or as is practicable prior to commencement of the actual leave of absence. To the extent possible, the BCC member should submit the request with sixty (60) days advance notice of the requested leave of absence. The City Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, will determine whether to grant the leave, except with regard to a member of the Board of Port Commissioners, in which case the Mayor will determine whether to grant leave. A determination regarding the leave of absence request will be issued in writing promptly following receipt of the request.
- 5.5 Requests to extend any leave of absence, including parental leave, will be considered on a case by case basis. A request to extend a leave must be submitted in writing to the City Clerk and the Mayor prior to the conclusion of the initial leave of absence. The City Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, will determine whether to grant the extension except with regard to a member of the Board of Port Commissioners, in which case the Mayor will determine whether to grant an extension. A determination regarding the extension request will be issued in writing promptly following receipt of the request. An extension of a leave of absence for up to an additional three (3) months, for a total uninterrupted leave not to exceed six (6) months, may be granted to the BCC member.
- 5.6 Any absences beyond the approved leave of absence timeframe will be recorded and subject to the determinations outlined in Section 3 – Excused Absences and Section 4 – Unexcused Absences.