City of West Linn Community Advisory Group Handbook

City of West Linn

City's Mission

The City of West Linn is committed to be a visible, innovative and progressive government. It is enthusiastic in its approach, effective in its delivery of services and equally responsive to the needs of its community.

We strive to create a harmonious community based on comprehensive planning and an appreciation for its natural beauty and rich history.

West Linn provides opportunities to live, work and play within the city.

To best serve our community, the City of West Linn recruits and maintains qualified professional employees who take pride in their work.

City's Vision

The City of West Linn is a vibrant and safe community in which to live, work and play now and into the future.

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Introduction

Serving on a Community Advisory Group can be a rewarding experience for community service minded individuals. It is a way for the community to participate in local government and to contribute to the improvement of the community. Effective government depends on the participation of a dedicated and diverse group of Board and Commission members. Your participation helps to maintain an effective and responsive local government.

West Linn's Form of Government

West Linn operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The Mayor and City Councilors are responsible for establishing policy and providing direction to the City Manager, as defined in the West Linn Municipal Code and Charter. The Mayor and City councilors are elected at-large and serve staggered four-year terms.

Mayor: The Mayor serves as the City's political head and chairperson of the Council. The Mayor presides over deliberations, enforces the rules of the Council, and appoints the members of the City boards with Council approval. The Mayor is the formal representative of the City.

City Council: The City Council consists of the Mayor and four Councilors elected on a nonpartisan ballot for four-year terms. Council sets City goals, enacts legislation, adopts policies and plans, adopts a budget, and oversees the City Manager and City Attorney.

City Manager: The Council hires a City Manager who manages the City's staff and departments. The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City.

West Linn's Community Advisory Groups

West Linn's community is invited to participate in City government through serving on one of our Community Advisory Groups (CAGs). West Linn currently has 14 CAGs. Information regarding Community Advisory Groups is found in West Linn Municipal Code, Chapter 2.

These CAGs provide guidance and expertise on important policy issues that affect the City. CAGs are advisory to the City Council and provide an invaluable service to our community by providing greater understanding of community concerns, values, and perspectives. CAGs are not legislative bodies and cannot establish policies or enact law; they serve to make

recommendations to the City Council. The City Council can accept, reject, or modify any recommendations of the committee.

City Council may create CAGs to aid the Council in the conduct of public affairs. All CAGs are governed by the West Linn Municipal Code, West Linn Charter, State law, and Public Meeting Laws.

All CAGs shall consist of seven members each, except for the Audit Committee which is one community member, the Budget Committee which shall consist of five members and the Youth Advisory Council which will vary between 10 to 20 members. All members shall be selected based on their qualifications. All members shall serve a four-year term, except members of the Committee for Community Involvement community members who serve a two-year term, and appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term. All regular terms shall commence with appointment and shall expire on December 31st of the term year.

Each committee member has the obligation to work cooperatively with other committee members. Committee members should exercise self-discipline and strive to be objective, fair, and courteous with each other as well as with staff and the public. Respect for the time of other committee members, staff and the public is important. In 2019, Council passed Ordinance 1704 setting forth the policy and procedure for reporting and investigation of workplace harassment which every CAG member is required to acknowledge that they have received a copy of and agree to act in accordance with the policy.

Members of all CAGs serve at the pleasure of Council. A CAG may recommend to Council removal of one of its members for misconduct or non-performance of duty. Non-performance of duty occurs if a member has unexcused absences from three meetings within a calendar year. Council may remove any CAG member prior to the expiration of the member's term. Written notice of removal shall be provided to the affected member. If a member resigns or is removed, the Mayor may appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

Meetings. CAGs shall meet as needed to accomplish the duties assigned to the group, the Council goals and other business needs of the City. Most committees will meet once per month, except for the Audit Committee which meets once a year, the Budget Committee which meets biannually, and the Committee for Community involvement which meets when there is a communication plan involving land use. Committees may meet more or less frequently depending on need.

Committee members are expected to read and study agenda packet materials and ask staff clarifying questions prior to each meeting in order to be prepared for discussion.

Rules of Procedure. A CAG shall conduct its meetings in accordance with the West Linn Municipal Code, City Charter, and State law.

Current Community Advisory Groups

Arts & Culture Commission: The Arts & Culture Commission partners with artists, arts organizations and cultural heritage groups by providing opportunities to showcase and educate others about their work, host events that celebrate the intersection of the arts and culture, and advises Council regarding purchasing and increasing access to the arts.

Audit Committee: It is preferred that the Audit Committee community member is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). The Audit Committee provides independent review and oversight of West Linn's financial reporting processes, internal controls, and independent auditors. It helps to ensure that management properly develops and adheres to a sound system of internal controls and that procedures are in place to assess management practices. It provides a forum in which auditors and other interested parties can discuss concerns.

Budget Committee: Appointments to the Budget Committee shall be in accordance with ORS 294.414. This committee creates and maintains fiscal responsibility for the City. They review and approve the budgets submitted by the City Manager and Directors.

Committee for Community Involvement (CCI): The CCI serves as an advocate for community involvement. The CCI is responsible for advising Council and other bodies on the development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of a Community Involvement Plan that promotes and enhances community involvement in land use planning.

Economic Development Committee (EDC): The EDC advises Council regarding the development, implementation and updates to the City of West Linn Economic Development Plan, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and Community Development Code. The EDC stays current on economic development issues, makes recommendations, and assists the City in promoting a pro-business environment.

Historic Review Board (HRB): Each member appointed to the Historic Review Board shall have a demonstrated interest, knowledge or competence in historic preservation and, to the extent possible, in one of the following fields: archaeology, architecture, building construction, history, landscape architecture, law, local history, real estate or urban planning. If possible, at least one member shall be an architect experienced in historic preservation. The majority of the members shall reside within the City of West Linn.

Library Advisory Board (LAB): The LAB advises the Library Director, City Council, and Staff in establishing policy and in planning and developing objectives and services for the West Linn Library Service District. Membership on the LAB shall provide for fair representation of all served library patrons, including Board membership from outside City limits.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB): The PRAB provides feedback and is a sounding board for prioritizing and implementing policies and projects as they relate to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Planning Commission (PC): The PC members usually possess a particular competence in the field of municipal planning by way of their profession, trade, or governmental service. Members advise the City in matters pertaining to land use and comprehensive planning. The voting members of the commission may consist of (limited to two members each) the same kind of profession, trade or occupation. They are responsible for land use planning and ensuring that development within the city is in compliance with the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and development code.

Public Safety Advisory Board (PSAB): The PSAB reviews and makes recommendations on issues such as crime prevention, traffic safety, fire safety, and police/fire/community partnerships as well as promote public education on crime related issues and disaster preparedness.

Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB): The SAB makes recommendations and provides community involvement with City sustainability efforts.

Transportation Advisory Board (TAB): The TAB provides advice regarding the Transportation System Plan (TSP), Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) transportation projects, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) improvements, general transportation issues, and encourages alternative transportation systems along with other duties as assigned by the City Council.

Utility Advisory Board (UAB): The Utility Advisory Board was established pursuant to Chapter X, Section 45 of the City Charter to make recommendations to the City Council concerning rates for water. These recommendations shall pertain to those legislative matters to be decided by the City Council concerning or affecting rates, such as master facility plans and service levels as they relate to rates. The Utility Advisory Board may also make recommendations regarding such other City-owned utilities as the City Council from time to time may determine.

Youth Advisory Council (YAC): The Youth Advisory Council was established to engage the youth of West Linn to serve the City through community oriented discussions and projects aimed at improving their quality of life.

Ad Hoc Committees

An ad hoc committee or Task Force may be created by the Council for a particular purpose, to accomplish a specific task or project.

The duration of the committee and scope of work are limited to a specific assignment. After the completion of the assignment, the committee is disbanded.

Ad hoc committees are not legislative bodies and cannot establish policies or enact law; they serve to make recommendations to the City Council. The Council can accept, reject, or modify any recommendations of the committee. The Council relies on various committees to increase the variety of viewpoints on City issues. By concentrating on specific areas, committee members can expand the level of expertise in which to address an issue and can conduct detailed analyses that the Council itself may not have the time to pursue.

Duties and Responsibilities

Responsibilities. CAGs shall have special interests in the subject matter area of the CAG to which they were appointed. The City Council shall provide direction, and when possible, a work plan for the CAG to work on during the year. In addition to the duties and responsibilities established for CAGs in Municipal Code Section 2.025, the City Council may from time to time assign other duties or projects as the Council deems appropriate.

Council Goals. CAGs are encouraged to establish annual goals and action items that reflect any specific duties, projects, or goals the Council has assigned or established. CAGs are expected to suggest, support, and advance Council goals and are encouraged to look for ways within the scope of the group's responsibilities to do so.

Annual Report. Each board, commission, committee, and neighborhood association will annually report to the Council on its activities for the previous year, including their recommendations. The report will be prepared in a format prescribed by the Council.

Food and Beverage. Because of budget constraints, departments are unable to provide food and beverages at committee meetings. Committee members may choose to provide food and beverages within their membership and at their own expense. Committee members and their staff liaisons are expected to setup the room and clean up after themselves.

Subcommittees. A CAG may request that the City Council establish a subcommittee. Prior to voting to request the Council to approve creation of a subcommittee, the CAG shall first request and consider a report from staff regarding the costs and time involved in staffing the subcommittee. Any request to form subcommittees shall contain:

(a) An explanation of the function of and need for the subcommittee;

(b) The number and any qualifications of its members;

(c) The staff analysis of the cost and time involved in staffing the subcommittee; and

(d) If the subcommittee is an ad hoc subcommittee, a deadline for completion of the ad hoc subcommittee's responsibilities.

Relationship to Council

CAGs are appointed pursuant to the Council's authority and shall have only those powers and functions expressly delegated by the Council. With the exception of certain delegated quasi-judicial actions, most advisory commissions and boards do not make final decisions but instead make recommendations, act in an advisory capacity to the Council, and help the Council implement its goals.

Council as Final Decision Maker. No CAG shall have the authority to expend City funds, or to obligate the City for payment of any sum of money, except as expressly delegated or authorized by prior approval of the City Council. Proposals by boards and commissions for endorsement or sponsorship of events, activities or programs must receive approval by City Council as provided by resolution.

Council Liaison. The Mayor may appoint a liaison from Council to each CAG. The Council liaison and the chair of the affected CAG shall have joint obligation to keep the Council and the CAG informed of relevant City or CAG information. The Council liaison may change annually. Council members may attend CAG meetings; however, may not chair or vote at any meeting of any CAG. A Councilor may not speak on behalf of the Council unless authorized to do so by the Council.

Councilors shall respect the separation between policy making and advisory boards, commissions, and committees by:

(a) Not attempting to lobby or influence boards, commissions, and committees on any item under their consideration. It is important for the advisory body to make objective recommendations to the Council on items before them.

(b) Attending meetings of assigned liaison bodies, but should avoid becoming involved in the body's discussions without first explaining his or her role as a Council liaison.

(c) Not voting at the body's meeting on any item.

Communication. A committee may want to submit to Council a work plan, status report, findings, or recommendations at a Council meeting. All recommendations to Council shall be prepared by the staff liaison and signed by the CAG chair. Any documents shall be provided to the City Manager's Office in advance of the meeting so they may be included in the meeting agenda packet. The City Manager's Office shall inform the staff liaison when there is room available on Council's agenda. The committee may choose to give a presentation at the meeting, in which case, the presentation should be provided to the City Recorder at least 48-hours in advance of the meeting.

Joint Meeting. Requests for joint meetings shall be submitted to the City Manager's Office from the staff liaison stating the reasons for the meeting.

Testifying. A member of any CAG may testify before the Council only as an individual, not on behalf of the CAG, unless the member has been designated as a spokesperson for the CAG on the applicable issue or topic.

City Logo and Stationery. A City Advisory Committee shall not release a letter or news release without prior approval from the staff member assigned to their committee. Advisory Committees may not use City letterhead without prior approval from City staff. Advisory committees represent the City of West Linn and it is imperative that staff know of any communication that involves the City. If there is a disagreement amongst the advisory committee and staff, the City Manager will decide the matter. The City Manager may then refer the issue to the City Council if deemed necessary.

Staff Support for the Committee

The City Manager shall determine which department or staff person will serve as liaison to each CAG when appropriate, feasible, and within budgetary limitations. The staff liaison provides professional, neutral advice based on their expertise and experience. They offer guidance, continuity, insight into City policy and set the agenda in coordination with the chair. Staff shall participate in all CAG discussions; however, shall not vote on matters.

The staff liaison supports the group as a whole and does not work for individual members. Staff remain under the direction of the Department Director and City Manager, not the committee. Requests for staff to perform specific work, projects, or reports should be approved by the Department Director or City Manager to ensure that the resource allocation is in accordance with the City's overall priorities and does not impose on the City's financial resources.

Training

The City provides annual advisory board training for all committee members, usually in January. The City does not provide paid training or cover travel expenses for committee members. Committee members are encouraged to expand their knowledge base and expertise by attending various community events and public meetings and by engaging with City staff, members of other committees, and other community members.

The Chair works with the staff liaison to welcome and provide specialized orientation to the new CAG members. Orientation should include a review of this manual, recent minutes, current projects, applicable policies, meeting time/place, Council goals, and the CAG's purpose.

Meetings

Public Meetings. All meetings of CAGs are subject to strict compliance with the public meeting laws of the State of Oregon. Meetings must be held within the city limits of West Linn, open to the public, may not be held in a place where discrimination is practiced, and must be American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible. House Bill 2560 was passed January 1, 2022, stating that meetings must allow the public the ability to attend and access the meeting by remote means. This includes the opportunity to give oral testimony remotely. This could be as simple as a telephone call-in number with a cell phone on speakerphone, or it could be a full hybrid video setup. When attending meetings via videoconference, it is advised that the committee member leave their video on so members of the public can see they are participating.

Meeting Agenda. The agenda must include the committee's name, date, time, location of the meeting, hybrid/remote instructions and items that will be discussed. A meeting exists when a quorum is present. If members are unable to be there in person, they may attend via telephone, internet, etc. All CAG Meetings are open to the public.

If business from a meeting is being continued to a meeting date that is not at a regularly scheduled time, the CAG can notice the meeting by announcing the date and time for the continuation of the meeting. The chairperson, at the request of a quorum, may call a previously unannounced special meeting for a time not earlier than 24-hours after the notice is given.

Quorum. If the members in attendance do not constitute a quorum within fifteen minutes of the scheduled start time, the meeting is cancelled, and all topics advertised are automatically added to the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting. If quorum is not possible due to conflicts of interest, bias or recusal, the matter shall be forwarded to the Council without any further action by the CAG. A quorum of a committee of five is three members. A quorum of a committee of seven is four members. Quorum is based on the number of committee members appointed to the committee.

Attendance. A member should provide at least 48 hours' notice to both the chair and staff liaison regarding any planned absence from a scheduled meeting of the CAG including if a member has to leave early as it may affect quorum. If an unexpected emergency causes a member to be absent from the meeting, the member shall strive to notify the chair and staff liaison within a reasonable time in advance of the meeting to prevent an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences are grounds for removal.

Chair and Vice Chair. Each CAG shall elect a chair and vice chair from its membership as soon as possible after Council appoints the members each calendar year. No member shall serve more than two consecutive one-year terms as either chair or vice chair. Vice chair shall exercise the duties of the chair in the chair's absence. In the event that the chair and vice chair are both absent, the remaining members shall elect one of the present members to act as temporary chair.

The chair shall preside at all meetings, approve the agenda, sign correspondence on behalf of the committee, and represent the committee before Council with the approval of the committee. They are responsible for maintaining communication with the Council and staff liaisons assigned to the committee, and ensuring that minutes are produced for each meeting.

The chair presides over the meeting to ensure the work of the committee is accomplished. The chair must exert sufficient control to eliminate irrelevant, repetitions, or otherwise unproductive discussion. The chair must ensure all viewpoints are heard and considered in a fair and impartial manner.

Committees should follow parliamentary procedure such as Robert's Rules Parliamentary Procedure.

Minutes

State law requires written minutes of all committee meetings and meetings shall be recorded. Under public meetings law, the recordings must be preserved for one year after the meeting minutes are approved. The staff liaison or a committee member may take minutes. Minutes must contain the following information:

(a) members present;
(b) motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances and measures proposed and their disposition;
(c) results of all votes and the vote of each member by name;
(d) the substance of any discussion on any matter; and
(e) a reference to any document discussed at the meeting.

Any material distributed during the meeting is public record and must be provided to the staff liaison.

The minutes must give a true reflection of the matters discussed at the meeting and the views of the participants. Draft minutes should be made available to the public within two weeks of the meeting and will generally be approved at the next meeting of the committee.

Unintentional Public Meetings

Public Meeting Law applies to all meetings of a quorum, even if a meeting is for the sole purpose of gathering information to serve as the basis for a subsequent decision or recommendation by the governing body. The public must be aware not only of the decisions of government, but also of the information upon which such decisions were made. The purpose of the meeting triggers the requirements of the law. Informal gatherings, field trips, and trainings are not considered meetings; however, members must avoid any discussions of official business when a quorum exists.

Electronic communication could be considered a public meeting. Members should be cautious when emailing, texting, etc. when discussing committee business.

Committee Membership

Recruitment and Appointment. Recruitment for advisory groups occurs at the end of each calendar year, with new appointments to be confirmed by Council in December or January. Vacancies are advertised in the City's newsletter, on the City's website, on social media, and in the West Linn Tidings. Applicants must complete an application. Applications are located online: https://westlinnoregon.gov/citycouncil/current-community-advisory-group-openings-application or hard copies are available upon request at City Hall.

The Council will interview applicants for the Planning Commission, Budget Committee, and Historic Review Board and may include interviews for other Boards and Committees. The Mayor, with the approval of the Council, shall fill all vacancies of City committees, boards and commissions.

Reappointment. Members may be reappointed; however, shall submit application material in the same manner as any applicant. The City Manager's Office notifies members whose terms are expiring in order to provide them an opportunity to apply for reappointment.

Membership Rosters. The City Manager's Office shall maintain a membership roster for each committee. Rosters shall include term of office and all relevant contact information for each member. Members are responsible to notify the City Manager's Office and their staff liaison with any updates to their information or if they no longer meet applicable residency or other membership requirements of the committee.

Serving on Multiple Committees. To ensure opportunities for community participation, a member shall not be appointed to more than two CAGs.

Eligibility of City Employees

City employees who live in West Linn may serve on advisory boards and must follow the eligibility requirements as any other committee member.

Ethics and Accountability

Conflict of interest. Committee members need to provide objective advice to the Council. Members need to avoid any instance or appearance of conflict of interest. Committee members should recuse themselves whenever they have any direct or indirect financial benefit in the action or recommendation proposed. State law requires that public officials may not use their position for financial gain.

City Grants. Serving on a CAG does *not* make the volunteer ineligible for a grant unless specifically stated otherwise in a particular grant program. If a community member is applying for a grant and serves on a CAG that recommends grant approval, they must recuse themselves from the meeting where the recommendation is made to be eligible for that grant.

City Representatives. Committee members are representatives of the City and are expected to adhere to City policies.

Political Campaigning. Oregon law governing political campaigning by "public employees" includes all public officials who are not elected, whether paid or unpaid, including board, committee, and commission members. ORS 260.432, Restrictions on Political Campaigning for Public Employees, prohibits public employees from being involved in promoting or opposing any political committee or initiative, referendum or recall petition, measure, or candidate while on the job during working hours. Appointed committee members are acting in official capacity when they are at a meeting of the committee, working on a duty assigned by the committee, working on official publications or written materials of the committee, or when appearing at an event in an official capacity.

Statement of Economic Interest: Members of the City Council, Planning Commission, and Historic Review Board are required to file Annual Verified Statement of Economic Interest with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. Additional information is available from the Oregon Government Ethics Commission at: Oregon Government Ethics Commission: Welcome Page : State of Oregon

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