

# Guidelines for Serving on Citizens Advisory Boards

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JANUARY 24, 2023

# Council Policies

## Appointees are subject to City Council Policies :

- Anti-Harassment
- Code of Ethics, Gift Policy and Disclosure Requirements
- Conflict of Interest
- Please see handbook for a thorough review of policies:
  - [https://charlottenc.gov/CityClerk/Documents/Spring\\_2021\\_Handbook.pdf](https://charlottenc.gov/CityClerk/Documents/Spring_2021_Handbook.pdf)

# Roles & Responsibilities

- ▶ **Members advise City Council on a wide variety of subjects by making recommendations on important policy matters**
- ▶ **Governing Board vs. Advisory Board**
  - Decision-making and policy
    - *Non-binding advice and recommendations and not authorized to make decisions on behalf of the organization (City)*
- ▶ **Members are asked to keep up-to-date on information relating to board interest areas.**

# Roles & Responsibilities

- ▶ **Members shall not represent their individual views through any contacts they have with the media as being representative of the full board unless the board has formally taken a position on the matter.**
- ▶ **Members shall communicate through the Chairperson upon taking a position on any matter of significance (and that may possibly be contradictory to the position taken by the board).**

# Roles & Responsibilities

- ▶ **Members can participate in community events, forums, etc., but not to represent their personal views as those of the board.**
- ▶ **Members' comments to the media should not contradict the board's decisions or the city's policies; a set of board policies can be developed to provide guidelines on members' comments to and interactions with the media.**

# Open vs. Closed Sessions

- ▶ **Open Sessions – all meetings where business is discussed should be open to the public with advance notice (at least 48 hours).**
  - Communication amongst board members should not be made through group emails as this is a form of discussion.
- ▶ **Closed Sessions - A public body may hold a closed session and exclude the public only after a motion, second, and majority vote and citing the permissible purpose under G.S. 143-318.11. Examples:**
  - Confidential or privileged records (usually as it relates to specific personnel matters but not general policy)
  - Attorney consultation with the attorney-client privilege
  - Location or expansion of businesses in the area served by the public body or the purchase of real property
  - To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

# Role of the Board Chairperson

- ▶ **The Chairperson, working in concert with staff support, is the “designated” spokesperson for the board related to actions taken.**
- ▶ **The chairperson advises the Mayor and City Council upon request or in reference to the mission of the board and City Council policy.**
- ▶ **The annual report is the means by which the advisory board shares its accomplishments with the Mayor and City Council. The report should be developed by the Chairperson, board and staff support. The board should vote to approve the final draft of the report.**

# Scenarios for Consideration

- ▶ **You attend a campaign fundraiser for a candidate running for a City Council seat. Everyone in attendance knows you serve on the LMNOP Board. They ask you to share with the group the board's work plan and staff's recommendations regarding a very controversial project.**
  - What do you do or say?



# Scenarios for Consideration

- ▶ You're attending a City Council meeting related to the mission of your board and a person from the media recognizes you as a member of a citizen advisory board. They ask you on camera what your personal opinion is *as a member of that specific citizen advisory board*.
  - What do you do or say?

# Scenarios for Consideration

- ▶ **The advisory board takes action to approve a specific policy recommendation to City Council that you personally don't agree with. One of the other board members that shares your views suggests the two of you work together to make your case to individual Council members.**
  - What do you do or say?

# Questions?

# City Clerk's Office

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