



CITY *of* CALABASAS

A GUIDE TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING PROCESS



James R. Bozajian, Mayor
Mary Sue Maurer, Mayor pro Tem
Fred Gaines, Councilmember
Lucy Martin, Councilmember
Jonathon Wolfson, Councilmember

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Prepared by the City Clerk's Office
May 2011

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

100 Civic Center Way ★ Calabasas, CA 91302
(818) 224-1600
www.cityofcalabasas.com

THE CITY COUNCIL

The City Council is composed of five members elected at-large on a non-partisan basis to serve four year overlapping terms. Municipal elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of odd numbered years, with three Council members selected at one election and two at the next. The Council is the legislative policy-making branch of City government. It is the Council's responsibility to enact ordinances, resolutions and orders necessary for governing the affairs of the City, to approve or amend the annual budget, to authorize contracts on behalf of the City, to act as the final appeal body on rulings of commissions, and to appoint the City Manager and City Attorney and members of City commissions and committees.

The Mayor is selected by the City Council, from one of its members, for a term of one year and serves as the official representative of the City for all legislative and ceremonial purposes. The Mayor is the presiding officer at City Council meetings and executes legal instruments and documents; however, the Mayor is not vested with administrative authority.

TYPES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

All Council meetings are conducted in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950, et. seq.), which requires legislative bodies to hold their meetings in public except under specific circumstances where closed sessions are authorized. Calabasas Municipal Code Section 2.04.050 outlines the rules of conduct for City Council meetings.

Regular Meetings

The regular meeting of the City Council is a vital part of the democratic process in the conduct of the City's affairs. The Council generally meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Special Meetings

Occasionally, the Mayor or City Council will call a Special Meeting to consider specific items. The City Clerk's Office will post a notice of these meetings at least 24 hours in advance.

Closed Sessions

The City Council may meet in closed session before, during or after a meeting to discuss matters such as pending or threatened litigation, conference with real property negotiators, or consideration of appointment, performance evaluation, discipline, dismissal or release of a public employee.

Workshops/Study Sessions

The City Council may conduct workshops or study sessions for a specific purpose, such as the preliminary annual City budget. These sessions are usually informal, though public, and may be held at a place other than the Council Chambers.

THE AGENDA

Agendas for City Council meetings are posted at City Hall, Juan de Anza Park, the Calabasas Tennis & Swim Center, Gelsons and on the City website at least 72 hours before every regular meeting. The entire agenda packet is available online at www.cityofcalabasas.com and copies are available for review at the Calabasas Library and in the City Clerk's Office. An agenda packet and copies of the agenda are available on the back counter of the Council Chambers during the meeting.

ADDRESSING THE COUNCIL DURING THE MEETING

The City Council encourages public participation in the decision-making process and appreciates when residents bring issues of community concern to their attention. Individuals wishing to address the Council on any agenda item may do so at the time the item is considered. Comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes per speaker, but that time limit may be reduced at the Mayor's discretion if there are numerous speakers on a particular item. To ensure efficient proceedings, those desiring to speak are requested to complete a speaker card, which can be found on the back counter, and submit it to the City Clerk prior to, or if necessary, during the time the item is heard.

Public Hearings

In general, a Public Hearing is an item of open consideration heard within a Regular Meeting, for which special notice has been given. Public Hearings are required on specific items, such as zoning changes, appeals, proposed budget and fee changes. After the Mayor opens the Public Hearing, the staff report is presented. The applicant and appellant (if applicable) speak following the staff report and then any concerned individual is able to offer support or present protests on the matter under consideration. The City Council will close the Public Hearing, discuss the matter and render its decision. Occasionally, the Public Hearing may be continued to another meeting.

General Public Comment

The public is welcome to address the Council on Consent Calendar items and any item within the jurisdiction of the City Council and not listed on the agenda during the Oral Communications/Public Comment section of the Agenda, which occurs directly before the Consent Calendar is approved.

Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar consists of matters that are routine in nature, such as minutes, budgeted agreements and resolutions. They are approved under one blanket motion, with the exception of items that are pulled off by Councilmembers for discussion. Those items are considered separately after the Consent Calendar is approved.

New Business/Unfinished Business/Special Items

These are items of a significant nature requiring an oral staff report and City Council discussion. The City Council will accept public comment at the time the item is considered.

Tips for Public Speakers and Audience Members

- ★ When the Mayor calls your name, step up to the podium and state your name and City of residence;
- ★ Speak directly into the microphone and address the Council, not the audience;
- ★ Use the timer on the Clerk's desk as your guide to adhering to time limit;
- ★ Unless speaking during Oral Communications/Public Comment, remember to speak only on the topic under consideration.
- ★ Applauding or other displays of approval/disapproval are discouraged.

TYPES OF COUNCIL ACTION

Motion

A motion indicates Council approval for a procedural action. Generally, a motion is made by one Councilmember and seconded by another, and then the Council votes on the action. A roll call vote may be necessary to determine how all Councilmembers have voted if it is unclear.

Proclamations

A proclamation is an item of the Council's support on various state and local activities or recognition of individuals or organizations for their work. Proclamations are usually presented during the Announcements and Introductions portion of the Agenda.

Resolutions

A resolution constitutes an official written action or decision of the Council and becomes effective upon adoption.

Ordinances

Ordinances are the laws of the City and are the most binding form of action taken by the City Council. An ordinance (except an Urgency Ordinance) is introduced at one meeting and adopted at a second meeting. Generally, the ordinance becomes effective 30 days later.