

Planning Commission Orientation Manual

Chapter 3: Role of the Planning Commission

II. A Planning Commission Service Commitment Pledge

I, _____, recognizing the important responsibility I am undertaking in serving as a member of the Planning Commission of the City of Kirkland, hereby pledge to carry out in a thorough and diligent manner the duties and obligations in my role as a Commission member.

MY ROLE:

I acknowledge that my primary role as a commission member is (1) to contribute to the City of Kirkland's organizational mission, and (2) to serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council on land use and development issues and comprehensive plan policy.

My role as a commission member will focus on the development and recommendation of broad-based policies, regulations, programs, or services that affect the entire city.

MY COMMITMENT:

I will exercise the duties and responsibilities of this appointment with integrity, collegiality, and care.

I PLEDGE:

1. To establish as a high priority my attendance at all meetings of the commission.
2. To come prepared to contribute to the discussion of issues and business to be addressed at scheduled meetings.
3. To work with and respect the opinions of other members of the commission and to be receptive to diverse viewpoints in commission discussions.
4. To serve the public interest.
5. To represent the City of Kirkland in a positive and supportive manner.
6. To observe parliamentary procedures and to display and expect courteous conduct of Commission meetings.
7. To avoid conflicts of interest in the exercise of my responsibilities as a Commissioner. This will not preclude Commissioners from participating in other civic organizations but will require that discretion be exercised in such participation to avoid a conflict of interest. If such a conflict does arise, the conflict shall be declared before the Commission and the Commissioner shall refrain from voting on such matters.
8. To respect the majority decision and to support the democratic decision-making process.
9. To respect the professional advice of the staff.
10. To support and promote the Statement of Ethical Principles for Planning established by the American Planning Association.

Commission Member Signature

Date

III. B Statement of Ethical Principles for Planning

1. Planning officials ought to serve the public interest.
2. Planning officials ought to recognize the right of citizens to influence decisions.
3. Planning officials ought to recognize the long-range nature of planning decisions.
4. Planning officials ought to strive to expand choice and opportunity for all persons.
5. Planning officials ought to encourage the coordination of activities and efforts in accommodation of all interests.
6. Planning officials ought to avoid conflicts of interest.
7. Planning officials ought to be thorough and diligent.
8. Planning officials ought not to seek or offer favors to special interests.
9. Planning officials ought not disclose or improperly use confidential information for financial gain.
10. Planning officials ought to insure equal access to public records.
11. Planning officials ought to insure that all relevant information is disclosed at public meetings.
12. Planning officials ought to maintain the public confidence.
13. Planning officials ought to respect the professional code of ethics (published by the American Institute of Certified Planners as a guide to its members).

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III. C Kirkland Advisory Boards or Commissions Appointment Policy

It shall be the policy of the Kirkland City Council to make appointments to official advisory boards or commissions generally in accordance with the following:

1. Applicability/Definition. **Unless otherwise provided by statute or the Kirkland Municipal Code**, for the purposes of this policy, the term advisory board shall include the following appointed bodies:
 - Cultural Arts Commission
 - Design Review Board
 - Human Services Commission
 - Park Board
 - Planning Commission
 - Library Board
 - Tourism Development Committee (Lodging Tax Advisory Committee)
 - Salary Commission
 - Transportation Commission
2. Eligibility. Relatives, family members or domestic partners of Councilmembers will not be eligible to serve on City advisory boards. Members of the family of a City employee who works in a department, that provides staff assistance or support to an advisory board, shall not be eligible to serve on that board.
3. Non-Discrimination. The Council shall not discriminate on the basis of an applicant's race, ethnic background, creed, age*, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, or sensory or physical handicap in the making of appointments.

*City council has made age a qualification for specific seats on certain advisory bodies.
4. Concurrent Offices. At no time shall any person serve concurrently as a member of more than one of the above listed City Boards.
5. Terms. Appointments shall be made for four-year terms, unless otherwise provided by statute or Kirkland Municipal Code. Terms shall expire on the 3rd of March of the applicable year. A member being appointed to fill a vacant position shall be appointed to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.
6. Term Limitations. No individual shall serve more than two full four-year terms as a member of a City of Kirkland appointed advisory board; provided, if an individual is appointed to fill 730 days or less of an unexpired term and serves that term, the individual is eligible to apply for and serve two additional four-year terms. If an individual is appointed to fill 731 days or more of an unexpired term and serves that term, the individual would be eligible to apply for and serve for only one additional four-year term.

Attendance. Appointees shall attend 80 percent of all meetings in any 12-month period for which there is no prearranged absence, but in any case shall attend no less than 60 percent of all meetings unless waived by the City Council.

III. C Kirkland Advisory Boards or Commissions Appointment Policy

7. **Appointment/Reappointment.** An open competitive process will be used to fill vacancies. City Council will initiate an open and competitive application process and solicit applicants for the position(s). All advisory board members completing their term who are interested in and eligible for reappointment may be reappointed by the City Council for a second term without an open competitive process.
8. **Criteria for Reappointment.** Information will be sought from the Board/Committee Chairs and the City Manager (or appropriate staff) when considering reappointments. Reappointments are based on the following criteria:
 - **Minimum performance** - attendance, incumbent reads the materials, has a basic understanding of the issues and participates in discussion.
 - **Performance** - has well-thought-out arguments, logically presented, and is a good advocate. Shows ability to analyze complex issues and to judge issues on substantive grounds. Understands difference between quasi-judicial and legislative matters.
 - **Personal relations** - has good understanding of relative roles of Council, Commissioners and staff and is sensitive to staff's job. Is generally respectful of others' viewpoints. Is a good team player, shows willingness to compromise, work toward a solution, without sacrificing his/her own principles.
 - **Growth/improvement** - has shown personal and/or intellectual growth in the position. Has shown improved performance, has taken advantage of continuing education opportunities or other indicia of growth or improvement.
 - **Public benefit** - reappointment provides a benefit to the commission as a body; provides or enhances balance on the commission geographically and/or philosophically.
9. **Reappointment Process.** Prior to the beginning of the open competitive process, an ad hoc committee of the Council will be chosen, by lot, to review and recommend incumbents for a second term. The recommendations will be based upon past performance and made in consultation with the appropriate Board or Commission chair for presentation to the City Council at the next regular meeting.
10. **Application Process.** Openings for advisory board positions shall be widely advertised in local newspapers, as well as other means available and appropriate for this purpose. Applicants shall be required to complete a City application form provided for this purpose, and to submit a completed application by the specified recruitment deadline. Late applications will not be accepted; however, the City Council may choose to extend an application deadline, if necessary, to obtain a sufficient number of applicants for consideration. Copies of all applications will be provided to the City Council.

Appointment Process. Upon receipt of applications, the Council will review the applications and reduce the number of applicants for interview to three applicants for each vacancy. For example, if there were one vacancy on a board or commission, the Council would reduce the pool of applicants to be considered to three. If there were two vacancies, the Council would reduce the pool of applicants to be considered to six. In

III. C Kirkland Advisory Boards or Commissions Appointment Policy

11. cases where the number of applicants for interview require a reduction from the number that have applied, the ad hoc committee of the Council will recommend to the entire Council those to be interviewed for each board or commission and those recommended not to be interviewed.

Interviews of applicants shall be conducted in open session. The chairperson of the respective advisory board (or a representative) will also be invited to attend the interviews, and may participate in the process to the degree desired by the Council. Upon completion of the interviews, the Council shall, in open session, make its reappointments of incumbents and appointments of new members and may designate alternates that could be considered for appointment in the event of a vacancy occurring within six months of the appointment through resignation or removal. Following appointment, the appointee and alternates, as well as all other candidates, will be notified in writing of the Council's decision.

12. **Criteria for Removal.** Failure to continue to meet the criteria for reappointment to boards and commissions and the attendance standard set forth above is cause for the removal of a member of a board or commission by a majority vote of the Council.
13. **Open Government Training Requirement.** Within 90 days of assuming their positions, all members of boards and commissions appointed by the City Council must receive the training required by the Open Government Trainings Act regarding the Open Public Meetings Act.

III. D Planning Commission Mission Statement

The Kirkland Planning Commission is committed to contributing to the enhancement of the quality of life in Kirkland through thoughtful consideration and implementation of comprehensive plan policies and land use regulations.

Essential components of our mission include:

A comprehensive approach to planning issues – We recognize that issues are interrelated and emphasize consideration of all facets of issues, including physical, social, and economic factors.

An on-going dialogue with the citizens of Kirkland – We value the energy, thought, and creativity that Kirkland citizens bring to the planning process and are proactive in seeking opportunities to meet with the public.

Recognition of Kirkland's role in the Puget Sound region – We recognize the mutual interdependence of local jurisdictions and the need for coordinated decision making. We stay informed on regional issues and take advantage of opportunities to work cooperatively with the other cities and agencies in our region.

Respect for the integrity of the public planning process – We support and promote the public decision-making process, respect the majority decision, and recognize our role as advisory to the City Council.

III. E Rules of Procedure of the Kirkland Planning Commission

A RESOLUTION OF THE KIRKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION SETTING FORTH THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS.

SECTION I. MEETINGS:

- A. **Regular Meetings.** The Planning Commission meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, in the Kirkland City Council Chamber, commencing at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noticed.
- B. **Special Meetings.** The Planning Commission shall meet for special meetings at the call of the Chair or a majority of the Planning Commission.
- C. **Open Meeting Requirements and Notification:**
 - 1. The open meeting provisions of state law (RCW Chapter 42.30) shall apply to Planning Commission meetings.
 - 2. Notification procedures shall follow the requirements of the Kirkland Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, State Environmental Policy Act, Shoreline Management Act, and other regulations, as applicable.
 - 3. All special meetings shall be noticed by:
 - a. Delivering written notice personally by mail, fax, or by electronic mail at least 24 hours in advance to Planning Commission members.
 - b. Delivering written notice personally by mail, fax, or by electronic mail at least 24 hours in advance to the newspaper officially designated by the City of Kirkland and to each media publication which has filed a written request with the City.
 - c. Specification of the time and place of the meeting and the business to be transacted.
- D. **Record.** A record will be made of all public hearing proceedings and all other meetings. This record will normally be an audio recording by means of electronic equipment.
- E. **Minutes.** The Department of Planning and Building Department staff will prepare minutes of each meeting that include all pertinent information, motions, decisions made, and actions and votes taken.

SECTION 2. OFFICERS:

- A. **Appointment.** The Planning Commission has the following officers:
 - 1. The Chair;
 - 2. A Vice Chair; and
 - 3. Any other officer that the Planning Commission, by a majority vote, approves and appoints.
- B. **Temporary Chair.** If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent from a meeting, the Planning Commission shall, by a majority vote of those members present, elect a temporary Chair for that meeting.

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- C. **Duties of Officers.** The duties and powers of the officers of the Planning Commission are as follows:
1. Chair:
 - a To preside at all meetings of the Planning Commission;
 - b To call meetings of the Planning Commission;
 - c To sign documents of the Planning Commission;
 - d To act as liaison between the Planning Commission and other City entities; and
 - e To appoint Planning Commission members to serve on other city committees, advisory groups and task forces.
 2. Vice Chair: During the absence, disability, or disqualification of the Chair, or upon the request of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall exercise all the duties and be subject to all the responsibilities of the Chair. The Vice Chair shall also maintain any other responsibilities that are assigned to him/her by the Chair.
 The Chair and Vice Chair and other officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Planning Commission at the first regular meeting each May, and may be reelected.
 3. Chairing the Meetings
 The person chairing the meeting shall make every effort to facilitate the orderly discussion of the Planning Commission and to guide the Commission in providing direction to staff and making recommendations to the City Council.

SECTION 3. ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- A. Generally, the Planning Commission will follow the following order of business at all meetings:
1. Call to order / roll call.
 2. Announcement of agenda.
 3. Comments from the audience on any topic that is not the subject of public hearing - limited to 3 minutes per speaker.

(Note: The chair may limit the comments to no more than three speakers on any one topic. If both proponents and opponents wish to speak, then up to three proponents and up to three opponents of the matter may address the chair.)

4. Hearings.
5. Study Sessions.
6. Unfinished Business.
7. New Business.
8. Reading and/or approval of minutes.
9. Administrative reports and Planning Commission discussion.
10. Comments from the audience – limited to 3 minutes per speaker.

(Note: The chair may limit the comments to no more than three speakers on any one subject. If both proponents and opponents wish to speak, then up to three proponents and up to three opponents of the matter may address the chair.)

- II. Adjournment.

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- B. The order of business may be changed during the meeting by the Chair with the consent of a majority of the Planning Commission members present.

SECTION 4. QUORUM:

A majority of the appointed members of the Planning Commission constitutes a quorum. A quorum must be in attendance or participating via a conference call or other electronic media before business can be transacted. Every motion by the Planning Commission requires approval of a majority of the Planning Commission members present to pass.

SECTION 5. DISQUALIFICATION:

No member of the Planning Commission should participate in any Planning Commission discussion or vote on any matter in which the member has a personal or financial interest potentially sufficient to create a conflict between the interest in serving the public good and the other interest. The other interest may be private gain, financial or personal, and it may benefit the member, a relative, a friend, or an employer. Any disqualified member must leave the room when the matter is presented. The minutes shall show that the member left the room.

SECTION 6.VOTING:

- A. Each member present at a meeting shall cast one vote on each motion. Voting may be by voice call or by roll call.
- B. Although it is the duty of every member to vote, a member may abstain. An abstention has the same effect as a negative vote.

SECTION 7.VACANCIES:

Should any vacancy occur among the membership of the Planning Commission by reason of death, resignation, disability, or otherwise, the City Clerk shall be immediately notified. If a member resigns, the member shall tender his or her resignation in writing to the Department of Planning and Building Department and City Clerk. The Chair of the Planning Commission shall request that the Mayor and City Council consider an appointment to the vacancy on the Planning Commission at the earliest possible time.

SECTION 8. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS:

- A. **General.** The Chair has broad authority over all matters regarding the conduct of meetings. He/ she shall exercise this authority to promote the fullest possible presentation of information and discussion of matters before the Planning Commission while permitting the orderly and timely completion of Planning Commission business.
 - As a general protocol, the Chair of the meeting should introduce the agenda topic, provide for a staff presentation and questions from the Commission, and call for discussion among the Commission members.
 - The Chair should generally provide for each Commission member to offer a comment prior to weighing in on an issue. The Chair should ensure that all members have an opportunity to speak. The Chair should also expedite the discussion in a timely manner and summarize the recommendation or direction from the Commission as appropriate.
- B. **Use of Roberts Rules of Order.** The Planning Commission may refer to the applicable provision of Roberts Rules of Order for guidance for items not addressed by these Rules and Procedures.

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- C. On specific agenda items, other than public hearings which are discussed in Section 9, the Chair may allow comments from the audience as appropriate. This usually occurs following a staff presentation and/or the completion of discussion by the Commission on the agenda item. Comments may be subject to the limitations noted in Section 3.A.

SECTION 9. RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Presentation at the Hearing.

1. The Chair shall declare the Public Hearing open before the staff presentation is given. After the staff presentation and after everyone has had the opportunity to speak, the Chair shall announce that the hearing continues to remain open, but only for the benefit of the Planning Commission members who may seek further information during their deliberation. Reopening the hearing to give persons an opportunity to speak shall require a motion and a vote. If the hearing is reopened, the Commission may limit the topics to be addressed.
2. Nature of Presentation:
 - a. Written Comments. Any person wishing to comment on an application may do so by submitting his/her written comments to the Department of Planning and Building Department before the hearing or the Chair during the hearing. These comments will become part of the official record and shall be considered by the Planning Commission in its action.
 - b. Oral Comments. The Chair shall permit any person to make a brief oral presentation at the hearing. Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker unless otherwise authorized by the Chair. The speaker shall first give his/her name and address.
3. Questions from the Planning Commission. Members may question a speaker on any matter related to his/her comments.
4. Questions from the Speaker. All comments and questions shall be directed to the chair.

B. Planning Commission Deliberation. After all speakers have been heard, the Planning Commission shall close the public comment portion of the hearing, consider all the information and deliberate on the matter. This deliberation shall include:

1. The information submitted;
2. The written comments received;
3. Any presentation and discussion made at the hearing; and
4. The staff report.

C. Planning Commission Recommendation. After discussion and deliberation, the Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council by a motion and approval of a majority of those members present. Once a motion for recommendation has been passed, the Chair shall declare the public hearing closed.

D. Continuance. The Planning Commission may continue the matter by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present on a motion to continue to a specific date. The Planning Commission may also agree to keep the public hearing open solely for written comments to be submitted by an agreed upon date. In that event oral comments would not be permitted unless the Commission decides to re-open the public hearing following additional public noticing.

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SECTION 10. PLANNING COMMISSION CONDUCT AND OPERATIONS

- A. **Planning Work Program**. The Planning Commission shall review the proposed annual planning work program and make a recommendation to the City Council
- B. **Planning Commission Recommendations**. The Planning Commission may make recommendations to the City Council, City Manager's Office, City staff and other City boards and commissions as appropriate. Unless otherwise determined, the Chair is authorized to review and approve the Planning Commission's transmittal memorandum. The Chair shall determine who will present the Commission's recommendation to the City Council.
- C. **Representing the Commission**. The Planning Commission shall act as a body. A member, when representing the Commission may speak or act for the Commission in accordance with the recommendation or direction taken by the Commission. The Chair or Chair's designee shall serve as the official spokesperson of the Commission.

Individual Commission members may speak as an individual, clearly specifying they are speaking as an individual articulating their own views and concerns (e.g. I am speaking as an individual, not representing the Planning Commission.)

- D. **Majority and Minority Opinions**. As determined by the Commission, a minority report may accompany a voted decision or recommendation. An additional spokesperson may be designated to present the minority report.
- E. **Duties and Responsibilities**. Commission members shall exercise their duties and responsibilities with integrity, collegiality and care. Members should establish a high priority to attend all meetings and to come prepared to contribute to the discussion of issues and business to be addressed. Members should respect the opinions of other members of the Commission and be receptive to diverse viewpoints in Commission discussions. Members should represent the Commission and the City in a positive and supportive manner through appearance, conduct and attitude.

SECTION 11. AMENDING THE RULES OF PROCEDURE:

The rules of procedure may be amended at any regular meeting of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the appointed members.

SECTION 12. VALIDITY:

If any part of parts of these rules of procedure are found to be invalid, that part or parts will not invalidate the remainder of the rules.

PASSED by the Planning Commission on the 10th day of January 2013.

III. F Guidelines for Planning Commission Recommendations to City Council

At the Planning Commission Meeting

- I. Prior to submitting a recommendation to the City Council, the Planning Commission must express its recommendation and the supporting rationale in sufficient detail for the Planning Department staff to be able to prepare an accurate written report from the Commission to the Council. The written report will serve as the official record of the Commission's recommendation and provide the basis for a Commission member to transmit the recommendation to the Council in person at a Council meeting.
 - In quasi-judicial matters, the Commission's recommendation and supporting rationale must be in the form of written recommendations, findings and conclusions (RF&C's). Prior to a Commission meeting on a quasi-judicial issue, the Planning Department will prepare a detailed report to the Planning Commission containing the Department's proposed RF&C's. It is suggested that the Commission use the Department's report as a starting point in its deliberations. To the extent that the Commission agrees with the staff recommendation, it may adopt the Planning Department's RF&C's by motion. If testimony or evidence presented at the public hearing leads the Planning Commission to disagree with the staff recommendation, it should identify specific facts and conclusions in the staff report that should be changed when the Commission's report is prepared. These changes, and/or additional findings and conclusions should be directed by motion. It is not necessary for the Commission to have these in written form at the time of the meeting. The motion, however, must be sufficiently clear to enable staff to prepare a Planning Commission Advisory report after the meeting.
 - For legislative issues, the Planning Commission has more flexibility in expressing its recommendation and supporting rationale. A written report must be prepared, but the Commission can approve its recommendation and state the reasons why by motion, again giving direction for the staff to prepare a report after the meeting.

In either quasi-judicial or legislative issues, if Planning Commissioners voting in opposition to an approved motion wish to have their minority position documented in the Commissioner's report to the City Council, they may do so by asking that this be done and expressing the basis for their opposition immediately following the approved motion.
2. Following approval of the motion, the Planning Commission must decide which member(s) will represent the Commission at the City Council meeting. Generally the Commission will rotate this responsibility, provided that the representative on any particular issue should be able to fairly represent the position of the Commission as a whole, including a minority position if one is expressed.

Following the Planning Commission's Meeting

- I. Staff will prepare the Planning Commission's written report to the City Council. For quasi-judicial items, the report will be prepared using the standard Advisory Report format, incorporating the RF&C's directed by the Planning Commission. For legislative items, the report will consist of a memorandum stating the recommendation, supporting rationale and minority opinion, if applicable. In either case, the report will be submitted to the Commission chair for his/her signature. For issues which are unusually complicated, however, the Commission may direct that the report be approved by the entire Commission at a subsequent meeting.

III. F Guidelines for Planning Commission Recommendations to City Council

2. Following approval of the Commission's report, a memorandum of transmittal also will be prepared. This memo will use the usual format for a City Council agenda item (i.e. from Planning Director to City Manager and divided into three sections: Recommendation, Policy Implications and Background). The Recommendation section will state the recommendation of the Commission to approve or deny the proposal. The Policy Implications section will briefly state the nature of the proposal. The Background section will give a brief history of the proposal, including the public review process, and a brief explanation of the Planning Commission's recommendation, including description of any expressed minority opinion.

At the City Council Meeting

1. The staff and the Commission representative will decide who presents first. Generally staff will first present the proposal to the City Council, describing the proposal, highlighting key issues, summarizing recommendations of the Planning Commission and, where applicable, Houghton Community Council, and summarizing concerns expressed by the public. (Later in the meeting, the staff role may shift, in response to questions or direction from the City Council, from "messenger" to assisting the Council in making its decision.)
2. Following the staff presentation, the Commission representative will explain the Commission's recommendation and any expressed minority opinion. For both quasi-judicial and legislative issues, it is important that the presentation be an accurate reflection of the Commission's written report so that the Council understands the thinking of the Commission as a whole, and not his/her own personal opinions. For quasi-judicial issues, this is doubly important in order to maintain the legal integrity of the process. Consequently, the presentation must be a conveyance of information already in the record (although not necessarily verbatim), rather than new "testimony."

For simple or noncontroversial issues, the Planning Commission may find that it is not necessary for their representative to make a presentation to the City Council, but rather offer to answer any questions that the Council may have.

Feedback to the Planning Commission

At the first Planning Commission meeting following the City Council meeting, the Commission representative will report what action the City Council took on the proposal, noting any differences from the Commission's recommendations and why.

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III. G Robert's Rules of Order Simplified

A simplified description of Robert's Rules of Order appears in Preparing for Takeoff. Taken from Brian O'Connell's *The Board Member's Book*, it describes the motion; the second; the discussion, debate and clarification; the vote; and a restatement of the motion. The next level of detail in Robert's Rules involves a situation in which the board may want to make some changes in the original motion before the vote. In the course of the discussion it may become obvious that the motion doesn't quite say what the board now has in mind. The following rules of order depict how a slightly more complicated scenario might unfold:

- The motion.
- The second.
- The chairperson restates the motion.
- Discussion, clarification, and debate.
- Someone moves that the original motion be amended, and another person seconds the idea. (At that point the maker and the seconder of the original or main motion will usually agree to the amendment even though a vote on the amendment has not been taken. Technically, once a motion has been made and seconded, it involves the whole assembly, but if no one offers objection to the amendment, no vote is usually taken.)
- If the persons who moved and seconded the original motion do not agree to the amendment or if anyone else voices objection, there is discussion, clarification, and debate on the amendment itself.
- After the group has adequately considered the amendment, the chairperson restates the motion to amend, and the group votes on the amendment.
- Once the amendment has been accepted or rejected, the group returns its attention to the original motion.
- If the amendment passes, the main motion is now known as "the original motion as amended." If the amendment is defeated, the motion is simply the original motion.
- Debate then proceeds on the original motion. It could be amended again, in which case the new amendment would get informal or formal consideration.
- When the amendments have been disposed of, the board votes on the original motion (as amended, if that's the case). Although the amendment process complicates the motion process slightly, it is simply the group's way of deciding whether the original motion needed some changes before it reflected the combined view of what should be done.
- When the motion is brought to a vote, members may abstain from voting. However, those members should explain for the record why they wish to abstain. The most common reason for abstaining is that a potential conflict of interest exists. The inability of a member to reach a decision is generally not an acceptable reason for abstaining.
- If the main motion is defeated, the same basic proposal cannot be brought forward again at the same meeting. This is designed to keep the losers from filibustering by bringing the same motion up again and again. (There is an exception. If one person who was on the winning side of the vote realizes that he or she may have made a mistake, such as misunderstanding what the motion called for, he or she can move for reconsideration, at which point the board decides whether to allow reconsideration.)
- The motion to "table" is often used improperly in an attempt to suppress a measure. You can, however, use this motion in an appropriate manner to your group's advantage. The group may wish to lay aside discussion and action on a question temporarily until some other question is disposed of. You may do this by moving that the question be "tabled." By doing so you retain the privilege of resuming consideration of the tabled question at any time.

