



## **CITY OF WATSONVILLE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

### **CITY OF WATSONVILLE CHARTER ESTABLISHING POWERS, DUTIES AND FUNCTION OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

#### **SECT. 911. PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION:**

##### ***Established***

There shall be a Parks and Recreation Commission consisting of seven (7) members. In the event the Council contracts with other agencies interested in recreation and parks for the joint exercise of any such functions, it shall provide for representation on the Parks and Recreation Commission from such agencies during the existence of such contract or extensions thereof.

#### **SECT. 912. PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION:**

##### ***Powers and Duties***

The Parks and Recreation Commission shall have the power and duty to:

- (a) Act in advisory capacity to the Council and the City Manager in all matters pertaining to parks and recreation;
- (b) Consider the provisions of the annual budget for park and recreation purposes during the process of the preparation of the budget and make recommendations with respect thereto to the City Manager and Council;
- (c) Formulate and recommend to the Council and the City Manager a parks and recreation program for the inhabitants of the City which will contribute to the attainment of the general educational and recreational objectives for children and adults of the City, promote and stimulate public interest therein, and to the end, solicit to the fullest extent possible the cooperation of school authorities and other public and private agencies interested in therein;
- (d) Formulate and recommend to the Council and the City Manager policies for the acquisition, development and improvement of parks and playgrounds and for the planning, care and removal of trees and shrubs in all parks, playgrounds and streets;

- (e) Recommend to the Council and the City Manager as to the acceptance or rejection of offers of donations of money, personal property or real estate to be used for park and recreation purposes; and
- (f) Perform such other duties relating to park and recreation matters as may be prescribed by the Council not inconsistent with the provisions of this Charter.

## **HELPFUL GUIDELINES FOR COMMISSIONERS**

The following are some of the ways in which the Commission can carry out its duties and responsibilities:

- 1) Give due attention and study to park and recreation services as they affect the welfare of the citizens of Watsonville.
- 2) Interpret and explain the park and recreation services of the department to the community.
- 3) Serve as a sounding board for the Parks & Community Services Department staff to test their ideas and plans for programs and services.
- 4) Recommend policies, when appropriate, to the City Council for adoption recognizing that department staff works within the framework of these policies.
- 5) Work to enable civic and service organizations to accomplish results through cooperation with the City and Department that they could not possibly accomplish alone.
- 6) Encourage citizen groups, civic and service organizations, and individuals to give funds, property and manpower for the development and operation of park and recreation facilities in cooperation with the City.
- 7) Work for and encourage community interest in parks and recreation programming, facilities and services.

# COMMISSION BYLAWS & PROTOCOLS

## ORGANIZATION & MEMBERSHIP

The Commission shall consist of 7 members appointed by the City Council in accordance with Section 902 of the Watsonville Municipal Code. Terms of service shall be four years or for the unexpired portion of a term when a member is appointed upon resignation of an incumbent. No Commissioner shall serve more than two consecutive full terms.

Should a commissioner find it necessary to resign their appointment, the Commissioner is to notify the appointing Council member and submit a letter of resignation to the Commission Secretary and/or City Clerk.

## ELECTIONS & OFFICERS

In accordance with Section 904 the Commission shall, as soon as practical following the first day of January, elect from among their members a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The term of office shall be for one year.

## REGULAR MEETINGS

The Parks & Recreation Commission shall meet in regular session on the first Monday of each month at 6:30pm. The Commission may schedule meetings to begin earlier as determined during a prior meeting or due to Commission or Staff need. Variances in meeting start times will be noted on meeting agendas and posted accordingly per the Brown Act. If the first Monday is a holiday or it has been determined that a quorum will not be present, then the Secretary shall determine the next available meeting date.

## SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special Meetings may be called by the Chairperson, Director of Parks & Community Services, or a majority of the members at a time, date and place as specified in agenda.

## AGENDAS

### *Placing an Item on the Agenda*

Items may be placed on the Commission's agenda by staff, the Commission by consensus or by a single Commissioner. Staff places items on the agenda in accordance with the department's mission and City of Watsonville's Strategic Plan.

All Commission Agenda items must be noticed in the print media 72 hours prior to the meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Brown Act, to be discussed.

Commissioners may place an item on the Commission's agenda by making a request:

- a. At a commission meeting under Oral Communications, briefly describing their reason for the request. The item will be placed on the Commission's next regular meeting.
- b. Of the Commission Chair who shall then advise the Commission Secretary to place the item on the agenda.

It is suggested that if an issue of a policy nature needs to be raised and discussed, that item should be placed on the Commission Agenda to allow full Commission input on the importance of studying or further discussing the issue in relation to the overall work program of the Department and City of Watsonville Strategic Plan. Commissioners are encouraged to discuss policy issues with the Department Director prior to placing the item on the agenda.

### **THE AGENDA FORMAT**

Commission Agendas are divided in the following sections:

**1. Roll Call**

Attendance is taken to determine if a quorum is present.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Communications**

The Communications section is divided into three parts:

- a) Oral Communications from the Public
- b) Oral Communications from the Commissioners and Commissioner Liaison Reports
- c) Parks and Community Services Director's Report

Under oral communications the Commissioners may give oral reports, ask for information or present comments from the public on matters of department interest and concern. For example, a resident may have complained to the Commissioner about litter in the parks. The Commissioner may wish to report that at the meeting, if they haven't addressed that with staff prior to the meeting. Oral communications from the public enable residents to bring matters to the attention of the Commission that are not on the agenda. NO action or discussion shall be taken on any item presented except that any Commissioner may respond to statements made or questions asked, or may ask questions for clarification. All matters relating to the Commission will be noted in the minutes and may be scheduled for discussion at a future meeting or referred to staff for clarification and report. Any Commissioner may place matters brought under Oral Communications on a future agenda.

Correspondence addressed or referred to the Commission may be included in the meeting packet or distributed at the meeting. Should any correspondence require consideration by the Commission, the Secretary will place the item on the agenda.

**4. Consent Agenda**

The Commission will approve items deemed customary in nature, including the meeting minutes of the previous meeting(s). This information is recorded. Minutes are sent to the City Clerk's Office for distribution to the City Council.

**5. Reports & Presentations**

The Commission will receive oral and/or written reports from staff on departmental operations.

## **6. Public Hearings**

These matters require the Commission to hold a public hearing at which members of the public are encouraged to give input. The Commission may be required to adopt a resolution to recommend or not recommend a particular item.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

This section of the agenda is for items which have been discussed previously, but the Commission has not made a final determination as to a course of action such as recommending approval, adopting a motion of approval, or denying approval. The Commission may adopt a motion or a resolution depending upon the nature of the item. Items, which are advisory to another Commission or the City Council, will be made by Resolution of the Commission. Motions most often direct staff to a course of action or relate to issues pertaining solely to the Commission. The Commission will encourage public input on items of unfinished business.

## **8. New Business**

This section of the agenda is for items which have not been discussed previously, and the Commission will need to act to approve or not a particular item of business. Commission action could include adoption of a resolution, passing of a motion, or directing staff to provide additional information, if necessary. The Commission will encourage public input on new business items.

## **9. Adjournment**

This section will advise the Commission of the next scheduled meeting date and time.

### **QUORUM**

A majority of four (4) members shall constitute a quorum and is necessary for a meeting to be held.

### **Absence of Members**

Members shall advise the Commission Secretary of their anticipated absence from a meeting. If the absence is known well in advance, the Commissioner may advise the Secretary of the anticipated absence from the meeting anytime preceding the absence. If the Commissioner will be absent due to a conflict, illness or other such reason, the Commissioner should advise the Commission Secretary no later than 4 P.M. of the day of the meeting. If it is determined that a quorum will not be present, the Secretary will then notify the Commissioners that the meeting will be canceled due to a lack of a quorum.

**Note:** Commissioners are urged to notify the Secretary if they are unable to attend a meeting for three very important reasons:

1) *Per the City Council's Protocols: If a member of a board or commission is absent from two (2) consecutive regular meetings of such board or commission, unless excused by motion in such board or commission's official minutes, the board or commission office shall become vacant and shall be so declared by City Council resolution. Additionally, the City Council may declare by resolution a board or commission office vacant if a board or commission member has two (2) unexcused absences within a one-year period.*

2) *Agenda items require four votes for approval. If there is no quorum, the public's time as well as the other Commissioner's time is wasted.*

3) Agenda items are scheduled so that staff may gain the approval (or not) of the commission prior to taking an item to the City Council. A lack of a quorum hinders this important process.

## COMMITTEES

All standing or special committees of the Commission, which may be necessary to carry out the functions and purposes of the Commission, shall be established by the Chairperson or by vote of the majority of the Commission.

Such committees may include, but not be restricted to, members of the Commission. The Chairperson of the Recreation & Parks Commission shall make all committee assignments and appoint the Chairperson of each committee.

Commission committees may make a verbal or written report at any meeting of the Commission. The Chairperson or member of a committee shall present the report on the subject under consideration by such committee. Each committee shall establish its' own quorum upon appointment.

## VOTING

A majority vote of the members present (four) shall be required to carry a motion, proposal or resolution.

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Rosenberg's Rules of Order, as well as the Ralph M Brown Act, will govern procedures of the Parks & Recreation Commission meetings.

## THE PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

When an individual Commissioner is speaking to the press or public groups and makes comments about a parks and community services issue that has already been discussed by the Commission, that Commissioner should state what the action of the full Commission was in addition to how he/she voted and why.

It is important to acknowledge the official Commission action because it entailed deliberations of all Commissioners representing a variety of perspectives that were discussed and officially debated in a public forum on behalf of the entire City.

When an individual Commissioner is speaking to the press or public groups about a community issue and not a parks and community services issue, or a Commission matter, that Commissioner should state he/she is speaking as an individual and not as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

It is not appropriate for an individual Commissioner to issue a press release of any form related to a matter of the City. Any and all press releases related to Parks and Community Services Department matters and/or Commission matters shall be sent to the Director who shall forward it through the appropriate channels including the City's Public Information Officer and City Manager.

When a member of the public approaches an individual Commissioner with an issue, that Commissioner is encouraged to discuss it with the Director or have that person or group contact the Director directly to allow him/her to respond and advise the Commissioner of the response. If the Commissioner is not satisfied with the response, he/she can advise the person or group to talk to the City Manager's Office, a Council Member, or, if appropriate, raise the issue at a Commission meeting.

Individual Commissioners should not make commitments that City problems will be resolved or funding provided without the appropriate involvement of the City Council, boards, commissions and staff. Many decisions require the input and actions of official bodies of the City along with the appropriate opportunity for community input.

Individual Commissioners should be fully aware of the legal constraints regarding public comments. For example, prematurely discussing a planning issue as an individual Commissioner may disqualify that Commissioner from voting. Also, each Commissioner should be well versed in the limitations regarding discussing and deciding issues imposed by the Brown Act. Public comment is an opportunity for members of the public to provide their opinion. It is not the position of the Commission or an individual Commissioner to agree or disagree or enter a debate with the member of the public, only to consider the comment in the context of their deliberation.



**CITY OF WATSONVILLE**  
*Parks and Community Services Department*

**Department Contact Protocols for Commission**

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