

INTRODUCTION

The quality of life and public safety is a major interest of San Dimas residents and the City Council. Commissioners provide an invaluable service in achieving a comfortable and safe community. Your advice will be welcomed by the City Manager and the director of the department with which you are affiliated.

The Commission Handbook has been prepared to aid in orienting you to the functions and activities of the advisory position to which you have been appointed. The handbook is designed to contribute to your general knowledge and understanding of public affairs and to aid you in fulfilling your commission responsibilities.

PURPOSE OF COMMISSIONS

A Commission, Board or standing Committee is established by ordinance or resolution to serve as an on-going advisory group to facilitate public input and citizen participation in the operations of the City. The City Council has the final decision-making authority on any issues dealing with service delivery and the expenditure of city funds.

Appointment to a Commission, Committee, or Board is a privilege and an honor which signifies the City Council's confidence in your desire to participate and serve. It demonstrates the Council's desire to have the benefit of your guidance and participation in the discussion of City operations.

As a member of one of the City's Commissions, Committees or Boards you will focus upon community needs that require your understanding, dedication, enthusiasm, vision, and experience.

As an advisor to the City Council, you must be continually aware that the decisions formed by that body, even after receiving and evaluating your recommendations, are not easily made. The Council has the ultimate political and legal responsibility for the conduct of local government and the welfare of the entire community. Yours is an important role in assisting the City Council to fulfill its obligations to our citizens.

Participation on a Commission or Committee can be a satisfying and challenging experience, as well as a responsibility. It provides an opportunity to become intimately aware of the operating policies and issues of municipal government in general, and of a specific departmental unit. It personifies citizens' participation in their community. It gives you an opportunity to play a vital role in the communication process between citizen and elected representative.

A challenging and meaningful experience awaits you! Immediate satisfaction should come from the sense of a coordinated effort in sharing your thoughts and

insights with those of your fellow commissioners as you deal with a variety of conditions, issues, and situations in our City.

Even more rewarding satisfactions will come as you learn more of the operations of the City's responsibilities and how to be an effective participant in your city government. It must be recognized that not all of the recommendations made by the advisory Commissions, Committees, or Boards will be accepted. Declining the Commission's advice in a given situation does not imply lack of confidence or disinterest in the advisory bodies' decisions. Those receiving the advice must weigh it against other information and considerations as they reach the decisions for which they are responsible.

SECTION I

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT SAN DIMAS

A. HISTORY OF SAN DIMAS

The City of San Dimas is a general law city incorporated on August 4, 1960, located approximately 30 miles east of Los Angeles. The city has a four member City Council and Mayor elected by direct vote of the people. The City is approximately 15 square miles in area with a population of approximately 36,000. The City has a Council-Manager form of government.

San Dimas is a community whose historical roots go deep into the nineteenth century. The first Americans arriving in the locality presently known as San Dimas were a band of explorers headed by Jedediah Strong Smith who camped at a cienega, later called Mud Springs, in 1826. In 1837, two Spanish Dons, Ignacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar, came into these vast semi-arid and wilderness pastures. Their immense land grant was christened Rancho San Jose and was range for great herds of cattle. Outlaws operating from inaccessible haunts in a canyon often made raids on these cattle, and Palomares, expressing his anger, referred to the outlaws as Dismas, the repentant thief on the cross. The Don's allusion suggested a name for the canyon – "San Dimas Canyon." The City of San Dimas assumed its name from the canyon.

Since its incorporation in 1960, the thoughtful and steady growth of San Dimas has transformed the City from an essentially rural to a well-balanced community offering industrial, commercial, and residential living.

An abundance of recreational facilities, including the 2,500 acre Frank G. Bonelli recreational area which lies within city boundaries, popular San Dimas Canyon Park, and nine neighborhood parks are available to citizens of San Dimas. City services are provided on an economical yet highly efficient basis. In addition, the school district is effectively working on the dual challenges of providing first-class education today, while laying the foundations for tomorrow's ever-increasing educational demands.

An impressive, state-of-the-art civic center houses all departments of city services, as well as providing meeting rooms for various community activities. The San Dimas Civic Center includes the City Hall, Stanley Plummer Community Building, the Senior Citizen/Community Center, and the Los Angeles County regional library. The expanded civic center includes a post office, Sheriff's Station, Fire Station and City Maintenance Yard.

B. THE CITY'S MISSION STATEMENT

In December, 1986, the City Council adopted a Mission Statement which guides and directs the policies of the City Council and day-to-day operations of City employees.

The City of San Dimas is committed to excellence in the planning of the community with due consideration for the physical and social environment. The City Council and all city employees are committed to well-maintained facilities and to being responsive to the needs of residents by providing necessary programs.

The City recognizes that its function is to serve the San Dimas residents and businesses and to address their concerns in a cooperative and courteous manner. San Dimas acknowledges that the community has a character which is enhanced by the preservation of its history, historical buildings, and terrain. The City serves as a resource giving all people a sense of belonging to the City through programs, organizations, and activities.

SECTION II

A. CITY COUNCIL

The residents elect four of their fellow citizens to the City Council for overlapping four-year terms. The Mayor is directly elected for a two-year term. The Mayor presides at the City Council meetings and has one vote in the Council, the same as the other four members.

The City Council is the legislative body that makes all policy determinations for the City through the enactment of ordinances and resolutions. The City Council also adopts an annual budget to determine how the City will obtain and spend its funds; appoints all members to advisory boards and committees; the Mayor and Councilmembers represent the City on public and ceremonial occasions; and members carry out a great variety of other municipal responsibilities.

The City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Council meetings are broadcast live and re-broadcast on KWST, Channel 3. They are also available on KWST Video on Demand library, Live Streaming and On-Demand Internet Streaming.

B. CITY MANAGER

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council and is the chief administrative officer of the City. It is the City Manager's responsibility to manage, direct, and coordinate the municipal services and business affairs of the City. The City Manager is responsible for the enforcement of all ordinances passed by the City Council and directs the various departments in the execution of Council policies. In order to keep the Council advised of the needs of the City, the City Manager makes or initiates studies on a multitude of issues and presents to the City Council alternative recommendations and solutions. The City Manager also is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the annual budget to the City Council for its review and adoption.

C. CITY ATTORNEY

The City Attorney is appointed on a contract basis by the City Council. The City Attorney acts as legal advisor to the City Council, City Manager, the various City Departments and all City Commissions, Committees, and Boards. The City Attorney prepares and approves for legality all proposed city ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents.

D. CITY CLERK

The City Clerk is appointed by the City Manager. The City Clerk administers the city-wide records management program and is responsible for the care and custody of all official records and documents of the City. Those records include all City and Agency deeds, contracts, leases, ordinances, resolutions, minutes, and the Municipal Code. The office publishes public notices and ordinances as required by law and assists staff and public in researching information. The City Clerk manages public inquiries and relationships and arranges for ceremonial and official functions.

The City Clerk is the local official who administers democratic processes such as elections, access to city records, and all legislative actions ensuring transparency to the public. The City Clerk and City Attorney act as the compliance officers for federal, state, and local statutes including the Political Reform Act, the Brown Act, and the Public Records Act.

E. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT - CITY TREASURER

Administrative Services includes Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Franchise and Contract Management, Risk Management, Overnight Parking, Transportation, and Economic Development.

The City Treasurer is responsible for managing the City's financial resources.

F. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Community Development Services Department: planning, building and safety and code enforcement. The Planning Division is responsible for long-term planning of the community, development review, subdivision review, and environmental review. The City Engineer provides civil engineering services for the City, such as reviewing proposed construction, drainage, and setting standards for infrastructure (e.g. streets and storm drains). The Building & Safety Division is responsible for administering and enforcing the Uniform Building Codes and the construction section of the San Dimas Municipal Code to ensure minimum standards to protect life and property through plan checks, permit issuance, and inspection. The goal of the City's Code Enforcement program is to promote and maintain a quality living environment for residents. City Codes are developed to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The department also is involved in special projects, such as open space preservation.

G. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Public Works is responsible for administering the City's Public Works program and providing engineering functions. The Department is divided into two divisions: Engineering and Maintenance.

The Engineering Division is primarily responsible for the design, preparation and checking of plans for all facilities within streets' rights-of-way, including those within private developments, and City-owned property. The Division prepares necessary plans, designs and specifications involving streets, storm drains, sewers, parks, and parkways.

The Maintenance Division maintains the cleanliness of all public streets, alleys, and storm drains, and is responsible for the maintenance and repair of City streets, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. The Division is also responsible for the upkeep of City vehicles and equipment.

H. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The Department is comprised of three divisions: Recreation Services, Landscape Maintenance, and Facilities Maintenance.

The Recreation Services activities include recreation classes for adults and children, adult and youth sports programs, teen and senior citizen programs, special events, and excursions. The City's Swim and Racquet Club is the responsibility of this department, as is scheduling of the SportsPlex, a major athletic facility located at San Dimas High School.

The Facilities Maintenance Division cares for all city buildings, including routine custodial care and preventative maintenance as well as the scheduling and reservation of public rooms.

The Landscape Maintenance Division is responsible for the upkeep of all City parks, trees, parkways, medians, and grounds landscaping.

SECTION III

COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The City highly values the input and participation of its community members serving on a Commission, Committee, and Board, and it is beneficial to provide actionable input to the City Council and City staff. To this end, the scope of each Commission, Committee, and Board will be interpreted broadly, and the input, perspective, and recommendations of each Commission, Committee, and Board should be weighed and considered by the City Council and City staff.

Commented [CC1]: Preamble language added to broaden input and consideration of Commission, Committee, and Board perspectives as requested by Council at its 4/7/2021 meeting.

The City Council is assisted by seven (eight) citizen advisory commissions, committees, and boards. These bodies are charged with the following responsibilities:

- ⌚ Advise the City Council and City Manager on matters within their area of responsibility and interest, as prescribed by the City Council and its ordinances and resolutions.
- ⌚ Help focus attention on specific issues and concerns within their scope of responsibilities and recommend actions and alternatives for Council consideration.
- ⌚ Act as channels of communication and information between City government, the general public, and interest groups.
- ⌚ Consider a variety of viewpoints and determine a consensus to provide direction toward achievement of citywide goals and objectives.
- ⌚ Encourage broad citizen participation in the definition and formulation of City goals and actions for their achievements.

The Commissions, Committees, and Boards and their meeting schedules are as follows:

A. DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD

The Development Plan Review Board (DPRB) reviews applications for site design, makes recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding the approval or disapproval of architectural elevation and conceptual landscaping plans for development projects and approves final working drawings consisting of site plans, elevations and various architectural drawings, and suggests modifications or imposes conditions in accordance with the standards set forth in the City’s Municipal Code (Title 18 beginning at Section 18.12.020). The Code charges the DPRB with ensuring that development preserves the rural character and natural beauty of the City and complies with the requirements of the Municipal Code and the General Plan.

DPRB also functions as the License and Permit Hearing Board of the City and has the power to grant all permits required by Chapters 5.28, 5.32, 5.36 and 5.68 of the Municipal Code and to revoke or suspend any permit or license granted by DPRB.

The DPRB includes **four** public members, including one Planning Commissioner, one member appointed by the Chamber of Commerce and **two** members appointed by the City Council. The other members of the Board are the City Manager, Director of Community Development and Director of Public Works or their designee. The staff liaison to the DPRB is the Senior Planner.

Commented [CC2]: Revised from 3 to 4, removing Councilmember from the membership, and increasing the number of public members appointed by the Council from 1 to 2. Change in the ACM to the Director of Community Development to reflect change in organizational structure. Changes due to 4/7/2021 City Council meeting.
Commented [CC3]: Same as above.

B. EQUESTRIAN COMMISSION

The Commission shall review and make recommendations to the City Council concerning issues that impact the equestrian community; reviews the City’s equestrian trail system and recommends improvements and new trails.

The Commission meets on the first Tuesday of odd months, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers Conference Room.

The Commission shall consist of **seven** members who will be appointed to two-year terms with a maximum length of service of three full consecutive terms. The staff liaison to the Commission is the Assistant City Manager.

Commented [CC4]: Revised from 5 to 7 during the 4/7/2021 City Council meeting.

C. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

The Commission reviews plans and programs relating to existing and new parks; and makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the development of recreation activities within the community.

Commission meetings are held on the third Tuesday of odd months, at 6:00 p.m., in the Senior Citizen/Community Center meeting room.

The Commission consists of seven Commissioners who will be appointed to two-year terms with a maximum length of service of three full consecutive terms. **One Commission will be a Youth Commissioner who serves one-year term increments.** The staff liaison to the Commission is the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Commented [CC5]: Added to avoid potential confusion that this commission has either members.

D. PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission participates in the administration of the zoning laws and policies of the City. The Commission makes recommendations to the City Council regarding land use, zoning; reviews proposed development projects, and advises as to the overall development and maintenance of the General Plan of the City. The Commission also conducts necessary public hearings to administer the planning laws and policies of the City and acts on applications for zoning amendments, conditional use permits, variances, subdivisions, and other related functions as may be assigned by the Council. The Commission's powers and duties are specifically enumerated in State planning law (Government Code Section 61500 et seq.) and in the City's Municipal Code (Section 2.40).

There are five members of the Planning Commission who serve two year terms with no maximum length of service. The regular public meetings of the Planning Commission are held the first and third **Tuesdays** at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The staff liaison to the Commission is the **Director of Community Development**.

Commented [CC6]: Changed from Thursdays to Tuesdays

Commented [CC7]: Updated to reflect change in position.

E. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

The Commission receives presentations and updates on a variety of public safety topics offering their observations and thoughts; enlists and represents the community interest to support the work of law enforcement, crime prevention, and other public safety issues.

The Commission generally meets the third Tuesday of odd months, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers Conference Room.

The Commission is composed of **five** members appointed by the City Council and two members that serve as members of the San Dimas Sheriff's Station Civilian Advisory Board. Commissions are appointed to two-year terms with a maximum length of service of three full consecutive terms. The staff liaison to the Commission is the City Manager.

Commented [CC8]: Revised from 10 to 5. Current members may exhaust terms, including any subsequent 2-year terms, if reappointed.

When member reaches 6 years, the member terms out of the position and the position is eliminated. This will continue until the commission goes from 10 to 5 city members.

F. SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Commission shall review plans and programs for all activities relating to senior citizens; and make recommendations to the City Council on appropriate policies and programs to involve and to benefit senior citizens throughout the community.

The Commission meets the first Thursday of odd months of the year, at 6:00 p.m. in the Senior Citizen/Community Center meeting room.

The Commission shall consist of nine members who shall be appointed to two-year terms with a maximum length of service of three full consecutive terms. The staff liaison to the Commission is the Director of Parks and Recreation.

G. GOLF COURSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Committee receives presentations and updates regarding the operations of the San

Dimas Canyon Golf Course. They may make recommendations to the City Council regarding the operation of the Golf Course and Clubhouse and coordinates with the lessee response to customer complaints regarding the maintenance, condition, and operation of the golf course, as needed.

The Committee consists of three members of the Recreational Facilities Authority; two representing the City of San Dimas and one representing the City of La Verne and two public members appointed by the San Dimas City Council. At their discretion, the Cities may appoint an elected official or public member to serve as an alternate.

The two public members of the Committee shall be eligible to serve three consecutive two-year terms, with reappointment to be confirmed by Council at the conclusion of each term.

The Committee meets quarterly, at the San Dimas Canyon Golf Course on the third Tuesday of January, April, July and October at 7:30 a.m. The staff liaisons to the Committee are the City Manager and the Director of Parks and Recreation.

SECTION IV

A. APPOINTMENTS

Applications for commission, committee, and board appointments must be submitted to the City Clerk's office. A separate application is required for each body to which the applicant is seeking appointment. Applications are maintained by the City Clerk's office in an active status for one year, after which time they become inactive and new applications must be submitted if the applicant still wishes to be considered for appointment.

When a vacancy occurs, a notice shall be published and applications solicited. All active applications for that commission, committee, or board are forwarded to the City Council for review, and a Council subcommittee may conduct interviews. If the number of applicants does not exceed the number of commission vacancies, the application deadline may be extended. After completing interviews of the applicants, the City may choose to extend and continue the recruitment process. An applicant is appointed to fill that vacancy by the affirmative vote of the majority of the City Council. Appointments to newly created advisory bodies are made in the same manner.

It should be noted that appointment to a City commission, committee, or board is recognition of expertise and interest in a specific area as well as an honor bestowed upon a citizen. Members of an advisory body serve at the pleasure of the City Council and may be removed from their appointment at the Council's sole discretion. The City Council can also adjust the number of commission seats as it sees fit.

Pursuant to policy approved in 2001, members of a Commission, Committee, or Board cannot concurrently serve on two or more commissions.

B. TERM OF OFFICE

With the exception of the Planning Commission and Development Plan Review Board, candidates are appointed to a term of two years and can serve a maximum of three terms **or as otherwise specified under Section III**. After serving three consecutive terms, Commission, Committee, or Board members must wait one year before being eligible to reapply for service on the same commission. If they serve one year or longer of an unexpired term, it is considered a term and therefore, are eligible to serve two additional terms.

Planning Commissioners are appointed to two-year terms; however, there are no limits to the number of terms that members may serve.

The City Clerk shall notify the City Council of expiring terms of office for any member presently serving on a Commission, Board or Committee. Upon receipt and review, the City Council may reappoint an eligible member; fill the vacancy from an existing list of active applications; or direct the City Clerk to advertise the vacancy.

Commented [CC9]: Added to clarify potential inconsistency to terms listed in Section III under each Commission.

C. APPOINTMENT OR ELIGIBILITY OF FORMER EMPLOYEES

To be eligible to serve on a Commission, Committee, or Board, former employees must wait one year after being discharged from regular or part time City service.

D. APPOINTMENT OF EMPLOYEE’S RELATIVE

Commented [CC10]: Revised to clarify spouses.

It shall be the Commission applicant’s responsibility to disclose any relation to a current city employee, particularly in the city department the Commission serves. Employed relative is defined as a relation to either the Commissioner or the Commissioner’s spouse as follows:

| Relative of Commissioner | Relative of Spouse |
|--|-----------------------|
| Spouse | Brother |
| Brother | Sister |
| Sister | Parent or Step Parent |
| Brother’s spouse wife (sister-in-law) | Grandparent |
| Sister’s spouse husband (brother-in-law) | Child or stepchild |
| Grandparent | |
| Child or stepchild | |
| Child’s spouse | |

Furthermore, the Commission member shall agree to abstain from any discussion or recommendation on matters that may directly or indirectly benefit, influence, or affect their employee relative. Commission member shall not become involved in any way to seek influence on behalf of the employee relative or become involved in any way with the supervision or work performance of the relative employee. Failure to follow these requirements and guidelines may lead to the Commissioner being released from their appointment to the Commission.

E. APPOINTMENT OF RELATIVES OF CITY COUNCIL OR CITY MANAGER

No relative of a member of the City Council or of the City Manager shall be appointed to or serve on any Commission, Committee or Board. If any such relationship arises, the Relative’s seat is immediately vacated. “Relative” shall be defined as a City Councilmember’s or City Manager’s:

Commented [CC11]: Separated into another subsection as requested by City Council on 4/8/2021.

- Spouse
- Sibling
- Child or Stepchild
- Child’s spouse
- Brother’s Spouse/Sister’s Spouse
- Parent/Parent-in-law
- Grandparent/ Spouse’s grandparent
- Grandchild
- Cousin
- Uncle or Aunt
- Nephew or Niece

Commented [CC12]: Added at 4/8/2021 City Council meeting.

F. COMMISSION SEEKING PERSONAL INTEREST OR BENEFIT

A Commission member shall not seek any personal interest or benefit from their participation or service as a Commissioner. They must abstain from any discussion or recommendation on matters that may directly or indirectly benefit themselves, their local business, or the interest of any family member, friend or associate. Commission members are not to seek influence of other commissioners or the city staff to obtain any personal interest or benefit for themselves, family, friends or associates. Failure to follow these requirements and guidelines may lead to the Commissioner being released from their appointment to the Commission.

G. RESIGNATION

If an appointee resigns from office before the end of the term, a letter announcing the resignation shall be forwarded through the City Clerk to the Mayor. Copies will be forwarded to the City Council, the City Manager, and the commission, committee or board secretary.

Commented [CC13]: Changed from City Manager to City Clerk to reflect the Clerk's role in administering Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

Commented [CC14]: Changed from City Clerk to City Manager. Same reason as above.

H. ATTENDANCE

It should be emphasized that regular attendance at meetings is critical to the effective operation of any commission, committee or board. Such attendance ensures a steady flow of communication and keeps everyone abreast of current topics under discussion. As a result, a member may be removed when absent from three consecutive meetings in a term, when a pattern of repeated absences becomes apparent, or by majority vote of the commission, committee or board for good cause, except in the case of illness or excused absence by prior permission of the commission, committee, or board. Any removal is subject to ratification of the City Council. Nothing herein shall limit the City Council's sole discretion to remove any member of any commission, committee, or board at any time for any reason pursuant to Paragraph A.

Commented [CC15]: Section revised to ensure adequate involvement of public member and to require City Council ratification of removal.

I. BENEFITS

Planning Commissioners shall receive a \$50 per meeting stipend. No other Commissioners and Committee Members receive any monetary stipend. Members are covered by workers compensation while providing service as Commissioner or Committee appointee.

Commented [CC16]: Corrected to reflect previous Council action.

J. INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

Any commission, committee, or board member who is required to travel in the performance of his or her duties, attend an authorized meeting or conference which is of benefit to the City shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for transportation, meals, lodging and incidentals pursuant to the City's Travel Reimbursement Policy. It should be noted that spouses will not be covered for any such expenses.

In the event that a member purchases an item(s), with prior approval from city staff, for

the benefit of that commission, committee, or board, or for a City-sponsored activity or event, a receipt for that item(s) must be submitted before the member may be reimbursed. All reimbursement requests must be pre-approved by the senior staff member assigned to the commission, committee or board.

Officials should recognize that some expenditures may be subject to reporting under the Political Reform Act and/or other laws, or may be prohibited altogether. All city expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act. Planning Commissioners are required to file Form 700-Statement of Economic Interests (GC § 87200)

K. ETHICS AND OTHER TRAINING

In order to meet the requirements of California state law (AB 1234), the City Council and Planning Commissioners, as well as all appointed advisory members of any body of the City that is subject to the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act ("Open meeting law") ~~and who receive stipends or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred,~~ shall be required to receive no less than two hours of training in general ethics principles and ethics law at least once every two years, (or as frequently as the law may subsequently be amended to provide.) Newly appointed advisory members should complete the required ethics training within the first six months of appointment. Officials shall submit copies of their certification to the City Clerk within thirty (30) days of completion of the curriculum.

The City Council and Planning Commissioners, as well as all appointed advisory members of any body of the City will also be required to participate in training on Rosenberg's Rules of Order, and Sexual Harassment within the first year of appointment.

Live training sessions are offered throughout the year and self-study courses are available online at www.cacities.org. Follow the directions below:

- 🕒 Click on the Institute for Local Government tab at the top
- 🕒 Then select Ethics, Ethics Laws, and
- 🕒 Click the self-study link on that page.

In addition, other training material and/or classes are available through the City Clerk's Office. If you have questions whether or not to attend an Ethics Training session, Rosenberg's Rules or Order, and/or Sexual Harassment training, please consult with your City staff liaison or City Clerk.

If you have questions whether or not to attend an Ethics Training session, please consult with your City staff liaison or City Clerk.

Commented [CC17]: Removed to reflect that all advisory committee should be subject to the Brown Act and be required to obtain general ethics training.

Added by Council to ensure every member receives appropriate training.

SECTION V

OPERATING PROCEDURES

A. REGULAR MEETINGS (California Government Code § 54954)

The commissions, committees, and boards will have an established meeting schedule for each year. Such meetings are considered regular meetings.

If it is known in advance that a quorum cannot be achieved, consideration should be taken to notify all members and persons interested in the business before the body. A notice must be posted by the secretary advising the public that the meeting had been canceled due to a lack of quorum.

If it is known in advance that there is a lack of business for the commission, committee, or board to address, a regularly scheduled meeting may be canceled. A notice shall be posted by the secretary within 24 hours of the cancellation, informing the public that the next regularly scheduled meeting has been canceled due to a lack of business.

B. ADJOURNED MEETINGS (GC § 54955)

If for any reason the business to be considered at the regular meeting cannot be completed, the body may then adjourn to a specified time and location. A notice announcing the adjournment must be posted in the standard location within 24 hours of the adjournment. This type of meeting is referred to as an adjourned meeting.

C. SPECIAL MEETINGS (GC § 54956)

Special meetings are those called by the advisory body in order to discuss an important issue that needs to be addressed outside of the regular meeting date and time by delivering personal notice to each member and to the public press and posted in City Hall at least 24 hours in advance of such special meeting. **A special meeting may be called by 1) the Chair and Staff Liaison or 2) by concurrence of a majority of the board, commission or committee membership.**

D. QUORUM

A quorum consists of a majority of the members of the commission in attendance at a meeting. A quorum is required to conduct business at any meeting, whether or not it is a regular, adjourned, or special meeting. The Staff liaison or Chair should be notified if a member knows in advance that he or she will be absent.

E. RALPH M. BROWN ACT (GC § 54950 et seq)

The Brown Act is a state law enacted in 1953 that requires all local government business to be conducted in open and public meetings, with the exception of a limited number of defined subjects that may be discussed in a closed session of a local government body. Those exceptions to open and public meetings include, but are not limited to, discussions of personnel matters, pending, proposed or anticipated litigation with the City Attorney where open discussion would be detrimental to the City's interest.

The purpose of the Brown Act is to facilitate public participation in local government decisions and to curb misuse of democratic process by secret legislation by public bodies.

The Brown Act applies to the legislative body including, but not limited to the City Council, Commission, Committee, or Directors, and shall include any board, commission, committee or other body on which officers of a local agency serve in their official capacity as members. It includes, but is not limited to, the Planning Commission, Equestrian Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Public Safety Commission, Senior Citizens Commission, Development Plan Review Board, Golf Course Advisory Committee, Oversight Board, and other ad-hoc or permanent boards or commissions of a local agency.

The Commission shall provide for the conduct of business by the Commission, the time and place for holding regular or adjourned meetings, and a brief description of each topic to be discussed. The agenda for the meeting must be posted in a public place in public view a minimum of 72 hours before a regular meeting and 24 hours prior to a special meeting. Furthermore, no discussion or action may be taken on those items which are not listed on the meeting agenda. No action may be taken on an item at any meeting without a quorum.

The Brown Act expressly prohibits serial meetings. Typically, a serial meeting is a series of communications, each of which involve less than a quorum of the legislative body, but which taken as a whole involves a majority of the body's members. This would also include situations in which technological devices are used to connect people at the same time. Commissioners, Committee Members, and Board Members are also required to disclose any communication they have had regarding an agenda item.

Minutes of the proceedings must be taken to be entered into the public record.

INFORMAL PUBLIC HEARING

Commented [CC18]: Informal Public Hearings removed.

F. FORMAL PUBLIC HEARING

A formal public hearing is one that must be conducted according to state laws or City ordinances and is designed to solicit comment from the general public.

An official Notice of Public Hearing will be published in a local paper of general circulation.

G. HEARING PROCEDURES

Hearings held by an advisory body should be fair and impartial. If a member is biased or has a personal interest in the outcome of the hearing, that member should disqualify himself/herself and not participate.

Persons and/or groups who may be affected by the subject of the hearing should be given sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing and a reasonable opportunity to be heard. They may be represented by counsel and be permitted to present oral and documentary evidence. They should also be permitted to rebut any statements made by others.

At the appropriate time, the chair should open the hearing and explain to the audience the hearing procedures. If there are numerous persons who would like to participate, and all represent the same views and opinions, the chair may ask that a spokesperson be selected to speak for the group. If this arrangement cannot be made, the chair may restrict each speaker to a limited time (generally three minutes) so all may be heard. Irrelevant and off-the-subject comments should be ruled out of order by the chair.

The usual procedure after the hearing has been opened is for staff to present the staff report, followed by commissioners' questions relating to the report. Proponents should be given the opportunity to present their case first. This is followed by an opportunity for opponents to present their case. The proponents then have an opportunity to offer a rebuttal to arguments against their case.

After all interested persons have had an opportunity to speak the hearing is closed, ending audience participation. Commission, committee or board members may discuss the proposal and take an action on the proposal.

A summary of the hearing proceedings is prepared by staff and forwarded to the City Council for their information. In certain instances, recommendations made to the City Council should be in the form of a resolution (i.e. Planning Commission recommendations for zone changes.)

H. MOTIONS

When a member wishes to propose an idea for the body to consider, the member must make a motion. This is the only way an idea or proposal from a member may be presented to the body for discussion and possible action. A motion goes through the following steps:

1. The member asks to be recognized by the Chair.
2. After being recognized, the member makes the motion (I move...)
3. Another member seconds the motion.
4. The Chair states the motion and asks for discussion.

5. When the Chair feels there has been sufficient discussion, the debate is closed (i.e. “Are you ready for the question?” or “Is there any further discussion?”).
6. If no one asks for permission to speak, the Chair puts the question to vote.
7. After the vote, the Chair announces the decision (“The motion is carried” or “The motion fails,” as the case may be.)

Phrasing a motion is often difficult and corrections may be necessary before it is acted upon. Until the Chair states the motion (Step 4) the member making the motion may rephrase or withdraw it. After an amendment, the amended motion must be seconded and then voted upon. It is particularly important when a motion is amended that the Chair restates the motion in order that members are clear as to what they are voting on.

In making a motion, members should try to avoid including more than one proposal in the same motion. This is especially important when members are likely to disagree. If a member would prefer to see proposals divided and voted upon separately, the member should ask the Chair to divide the motion. If other members do not object, the Chair may proceed to treat each proposal as a distinct motion to be acted upon separately. The request to divide may also be made by motion.

I. ADJOURNMENT

When a commission, committee, or board has finished its business, a motion to adjourn is in order. This motion is not debatable; therefore, it is the duty of the Chair to see that no important business is overlooked.

If the body wishes to meet before the next regularly scheduled meeting, a motion may be made to adjourn the meeting to a designated time and place. If this is done, a notice of the adjourned meeting must be posted on the door of the regular meeting place within 24 hours after the time of adjournment.

J. AGENDA

Any item that a member wishes to include on a future agenda must first be agreed upon by **two members** of that commission, committee, or board. **Requester should provide sufficient detail to determine the nature of the topic to be discussed. Staff may add more detail as reasonable to inform discussions. Nothing shall restrict the Chair and Staff liaison from adding items to the agenda as appropriate to execute the commission, committee, or board’s charge.**

In accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, no action may be taken on an item that has not been placed on the noticed agenda, except when it has been determined by majority vote that the matter in question constitutes an emergency (GC 54956.5) or there is a need for immediate action which cannot reasonably wait for the next regularly scheduled meeting (GC 54954.2(b) (2)). And that the need to act arose subsequent to the agenda being posted.

Commented [CC19]: Revised from consensus to two members to align with City Council process for agendizing.

Added to ensure adequate disclosure for the Brown Act.

Added to ensure BCC can execute its responsibilities.

K. MINUTES

The staff liaison is responsible for the preparation of minutes of all commission meetings. Written minutes, upon approval by the commission, committee, or board, constitute the official record of the actions taken and a summary of the important topics raised in the discussion.

Additions and corrections of the minutes may be made only in public meetings, with the approval of the body, and not by the private request of individual members. Minutes are not deemed official until approved by the Commission.

It is the policy of the City Council that minutes are not verbatim. They are, instead, action minutes, recording the essence of the decisions made and significant action taken.

For the convenience of the recording secretaries, meetings may be recorded in order to facilitate the preparation of minutes. However, any tapes of meetings do not become part of official city records and can be destroyed at any time if the purpose for which it was made and retained was solely to facilitate the preparation of the minutes of the meeting.

Minutes of all meetings are to be forwarded to the City Council and the City Clerk after approval by the Commission.

L. AGENDA PACKETS

Agenda packets detailing the items of business to be discussed and any communications to be presented generally will be prepared by staff and delivered to the members of the body within a reasonable amount of time before the meeting, but no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting. In order to be prepared for meetings, members should read these packets and contact the Chair or staff if there are any questions regarding information presented in the staff reports.

M. POLITICAL REFORM ACT

The Political Reform Act states that public officials shall perform their duties in an impartial manner, free from bias caused by their own financial interest or the financial interests of persons who have supported them. The Political Reform Act establishes regulations regarding Conflicts of Interests and Campaign Receipts and Expenditures.
(Gov. Code Sections 87100-87350)

In accordance with State law, City Officials, Planning Commissioners, and employees are required to annually disclose all financial interests that may be affected by decisions made in their official capacity, including investments, real property and income. Disclosure is made by filing Conflict of Interest statements with the Fair Political Practices Commission upon assuming office, on an annual basis, and when leaving office. Filed forms are public documents and must be made available upon request.
(Gov. Code Section 81002(c))

Councilmembers and Planning Commissioners must also disqualify themselves from making or participating in making or influencing any governmental decision that will

have a foreseeable material financial effect on any economic interest of the Council Member, Planning Commissioner, or certain family members.

N. CITY OF SAN DIMAS MUNICIPAL CODE

Commented [CC20]: Updated website reference

The Municipal Code consists of codified ordinances, as well as the Zoning Code that define the regulations and laws that help guide how the city operates and functions. The purpose of the code is to make laws accessible and provide documentation of past legislation. It is available on the City's website at www.sandimasca.gov and a copy in the Office of the City Clerk.

O. AREA OF INTEREST

When a commission, committee, or board is established by the City Council, the specific duties of that body are set forth in the ordinance or resolution that creates it. It is implicitly understood that the advisory body is limited to the consideration of those matters which are specifically assigned to its jurisdiction. In special or unusual circumstances, when interest spreads into an area beyond its jurisdiction, the commission, committee, or board should formally request specific authorization from the City Council to consider the matter and to formulate recommendations in that area. In some cases, the Council will call a joint meeting or study session with a commission or committee to explore an issue or issues in depth.

P. SUB-COMMITTEES

- ⌚ In certain instances a commission, committee, or board may determine that it is necessary to form a sub-committee to study a particular matter relating to that body in some detail.
- ⌚ A sub-committee may be formed by a majority vote of the commission, committee, or board members taken at a regular meeting but may not be comprised of a majority of the members.
- ⌚ Appointments to the sub-committee are made by the consensus of the commission, committee, or board.
- ⌚ A sub-committee is a temporary committee which will usually last no longer than six months.
- ⌚ After the completion of the particular study and presentation of recommendation to the commission, committee, or board, the sub-committee should be disbanded.

Q. ROLE OF CHAIR

It is incumbent upon the Chair of the commission, committee, or board to ascertain the responsibility of his/her advisory body and to limit the discussion and deliberation to appropriately assigned areas of responsibility.

The Chair exists to encourage the input of ideas, to guide discussions in a logical and orderly fashion, and to overall facilitate the decision-making process. He or she should clarify ideas as they are discussed and repeat motions made in order that all members fully understand the wording of the item on which they are voting.

The Chair and the staff may be in contact prior to each regularly scheduled meeting in order to coordinate activity pertaining to items pending before the commission, committee or board.

SECTION VI

RELATIONSHIPS

A. INTERACTION WITH STAFF

The City's staff works for and is responsible to the City Manager and it is therefore the City Manager's responsibility to allocate staff's time and efforts. Commissioners should not attempt to direct or decide the priority of work for the department or the individual staff person. These bodies should, however, set priorities for their own agendas in order that staff may best use the time available for commission, committee, or board business. **The Commission may request information or research on a matter from City staff that either does not result in more than roughly an hour of staff time or in the case more time is required, is weighed by the appropriate department head against priorities, workload, and fit with the recommendations or actions City staff are considering for City Council. At any time, the City Manager or department head may bring a commission, committee or board request to the City Council for review and consideration.**

In contacting city personnel on official business, the proper channel is through the staff liaison assigned to the commission, committee, or board.

It is not expected that every staff recommendation will be followed; but, based on the technical knowledge of staff personnel, consideration should be given to their proposals and recommendations. The commission, committee, or board may choose to agree or disagree with a staff recommendation. In the latter case, staff has the option of including his/her recommendations in the staff report to the City Council. Any differences in opinion will be discussed at the Council meeting.

The City Council expects that a mutually respectful and professional relationship is maintained between the staff personnel and the commission, committee, or board. The effectiveness of an advisory body is hampered by internal tension and personality conflicts. In the event a conflict does arise between an individual member and the staff, the member should approach the chair who will, in turn, try to mediate the conflict. If the problem cannot be solved at the lowest level, the Chair will approach the head of the department to which that commission, committee, or board is related. As a last resort the matter will be brought to the attention of the City Manager. However, it should be emphasized that every effort should be made to maintain a respectful and professional relationship with staff in order to facilitate and enhance the body's operation and effectiveness.

A City body is comprised of a diverse group of people and it is inevitable that not everyone will agree on an issue all of the time. However, all efforts should be made to maintain amicable relations among the individual members. Personality conflicts only hamper an organization's effectiveness. Nevertheless, in the event that a personality conflict does arise between individual members, it is the chair's responsibility to try to mediate and resolve the problem. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the chair should approach the staff liaison to the commission, committee or board.

Commented [CC21]: Aligns requests to the City Council standard and provides an avenue for the City Council to approve a request that is substantial or impacts departmental operations.

B. INTERACTION WITH CITY COUNCIL

The primary responsibility of commissions, committees, and boards is to advise and make recommendations to the City Council. It is the Council's role to absorb the advice and recommendations offered by numerous sources and to make decisions to the best of its ability. Because the City Council is in such a position to see the broader context and is aware of other concerns, it may not always follow the recommendation offered by individual commission, committees, and boards.

Although there may be disagreement with the City Council on an issue, once the Council has established its position, the commission, committee, or board, or individual members should not do anything contrary to the established policies and programs adopted by the City Council.

With the exception of the Planning Commission, a Councilmember(s) shall be assigned to a commission, committee, or board as a liaison. The Council liaison(s) attend the meetings, but with the exception of Golf Course Advisory and DPRB are not voting members of the board.

Business transacted with the Council should be in writing from the body as a whole and forwarded through staff who will then forward it to the City Manager's office. The City Manager will review all reports, findings, and recommendations and forward to the Council those matters within its province.

When a member of an advisory body addresses the City Council at a public meeting, it should be made clear whether he/she is speaking on behalf of the advisory body or as an individual citizen. **Either the Chair or another member appointed by the commission, committee, or board to represent the body shall speak on behalf of the body to the City Council.**

Commissions, committees, and boards and their individual members should not attempt to predict Council action, either publicly or privately. However, they may and should interpret Council policies or identify trends in Council thinking.

C. INTERACTION WITH THE PUBLIC

Members are encouraged to become aware of public opinion relating to their field of influence. They should welcome citizen input at meetings and ensure that the rules and procedures for these public meetings are clearly understood.

Members should conduct themselves at public meetings in a manner that is fair, understanding, and gracious. Members should be considerate of all interests, attitudes, and differences of opinion. They should also take care to observe the appearance as well as the principle of impartiality.

Members should not accept gifts from applicants or other persons concerned with matters which have been or might come before the commission, committee, or board.

Commented [CC22]: Reflects the Council's direction to remove Council from DPRB, replace the role with a public member due to the potential conflict should an item be appealed to the City Council.

Clarifies how a body may represent official positions to the City Council.

Commented [CC23]: Provides clarify when statements are officially on behalf of a board, commission or committee.

Board members, Commissioners, and Committee members should always remember their public or private statements, including in the news media or on social media, may be perceived as representing the City or as being made on behalf of the City, or may be perceived as representing official City policy.

Board members, Commissioners, and Committee members should take care not to state or imply that their views, expressions of opinion, or other statements are an official policy, statement, position, or communication of the City or represent the views of the City or any City officer, employee, board, commission, or committee, unless specific permission has been given to the Board member, Commissioner, or Committee member by the City Council or the City Manager to speak on behalf of the City.

Board members, commissioners, and committee members should explicitly clarify that their statements are their sole positions and views, and not representing the City, boards, commissions, or committees when such statements could reasonably be interpreted to be official policy, statement, position, or communication.

In respect to matters before a board, commission, or committee, such body may appoint a member of the body to represent its position to the City Council or on behalf of the board, commission, or committee, but such representation shall not conflict or imply that the position is a position of official policy, statement, position or communication of the City unless such was approved by the City Council.

SECTION VII

COMMISSION EFFECTIVENESS

Organized groups exist to complete certain tasks and to achieve certain agreed upon purposes and goals. A commission, committee, or board is a set of individuals held together by a web of inter-relationships and feelings. Members have feelings about themselves, about the group and the group's tasks.

The nature and intensity of these feelings set the "climate" of the advisory body at any given moment. A positive climate encourages member involvement and responsibility to take actions.

Optimum participation is achieved when members experience encouragement for their contributions, freedom to honestly and freely express their feelings and freedom from internal group strife which interferes with carrying out the body's tasks.

Optimum productivity is achieved when the body's stated tasks are understood. Members should keep tasks visibly and clearly defined.

A. FUNCTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

Effective commission, committees and boards usually pay attention to the following functions and behaviors:

- 🕒 Prioritizing tasks
- 🕒 Anticipating problems
- 🕒 Analyzing problems
- 🕒 Setting clear objectives
- 🕒 Developing actions-options
- 🕒 Deciding
- 🕒 Active listening
 - Not interrupting
 - Listening to feelings

- Not judging others
- Summarizing and feeding-back
- 🕒 Supporting your colleagues
 - Accepting their ideas
 - Showing warmth
 - Creating opportunities to involve members
 - Building on members' ideas
 - Encouraging different ideas
- 🕒 Confronting what's happening
 - Questioning your and others' assumptions
 - Dealing directly with conflict
 - Focusing attention on the idea, not the person
- 🕒 Diagnosis Skills
 - How are you working together?
 - Who isn't involved?
 - Where is your help needed?
 - When are YOU going to help?

B. EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Public hearings or citizen input meetings are difficult to manage. Participants are usually highly motivated and often nervous. When you have a group of potential adversaries in one room, the possibility of uncontrolled conflict is very high. As commission, committee, and board members, your role is to guide conflict to positive results, not to eliminate it, which is usually not possible.

The following suggestions should help manage conflicts and confrontations effectively:

- Anticipate conflicts by doing your homework so you can concentrate on the dynamics of the meeting rather than learning about the topic at hand.
- Treat all sides fairly. Set the rules of the hearing early and make sure everyone abides by them without exception.
- Explain carefully the purpose of the public hearing and what action is expected at the conclusion of the hearing. Insistence on playing by the rules is your best tool for conflict management in public hearings.
- All persons speaking must clearly identify themselves, not only for the record, but also so that you may address them by name.
- Set an acceptable time limit for testimony (generally three minutes) and stick to it.
- Make decisions as promptly as possible. Many commission, committees and bodies get so bogged down in procedural distractions, petty details, and endless searches for more information that the issue never seems to get resolved.
- Try not to overreact to inflammatory comments. Most are expressions of frustration and do not require answers. Try to turn frustration to constructive avenues. Ask questions. Be specific if you can. Refer to the speaker by name. Reinforce areas where you agree. Do not return insult for insult. Your insults

can turn the audience against you for your lack of control and **fairness**.

- Try to avoid speaker-to-audience conversation. The purpose of a hearing is to help your commission, committee, or board act, not to engage in debate.
- If other members have questions of the speaker, permit these questions only during the speaker's time at the podium.
- Be careful not to prejudge the action of the commission, committee, or board. Use the hearing to gather necessary information about the project and individual desires concerning the proposal. Members should not express their views on the proposal until after testimony has ended. Their comments and questions should not suggest a position one way or the other.
- Once testimony has ended, each member should be invited to discuss their views on the proposal.
- View the public hearing as an example of basic democracy in action at the local level. Make it your personal goal to make the public hearing work.

SECTION VIII

Commented [CC24]: NEW SECTION: To clarify how the handbook is approved and revised.

APPROVALS AND MODIFICATIONS

The Commission Handbook will be approved by the City Council, and any changes proposed by the City Manager or requested by the City Council will be presented annually to the City Council for review and approval or more frequently as required.

It is encouraged that the Commission Handbook be presented to the City Council annually, even if no changes are recommended, to allow for regular review.

CONCLUSION

The City would like to thank you for accepting this position and for devoting your time and effort to become actively involved in the affairs of your community. It is sincerely hoped that you will enjoy your participation in the governing process in the City of San Dimas as a member of one of its advisory bodies, and that you will feel totally free to call upon any of its representatives for advice, background information, or assistance.

It is with this in mind that this brief handbook has been prepared. Please consider it a guide as you begin your new duties as a member of an advisory body and not as an all-inclusive restrictive set of regulations.

Welcome aboard.