

All Hands *Training*

City Council, Boards, and Commissions
November 3, 2025



Our Goals

- Understand each others roles and responsibilities
- Review tools we have for effective collaboration
- Lay the Legal Foundation
 - OMA! Ex-Parte!
- Provide and practice tools for effective meetings
- Ensure future space for questions and follow-up!



City Council

Elected by the people of Homer
Mayor is also elected

Mayor facilitates, sets agendas, serves as the figurehead. Can vote to break a tie, holds some veto power that the Council can overturn.
Council sets the laws and authorizes the budget for the City

BUDGET

ORDINANCES

HIRING: CM + ATTORNEY

PRIORITIES



Commissions & Boards

Library Board

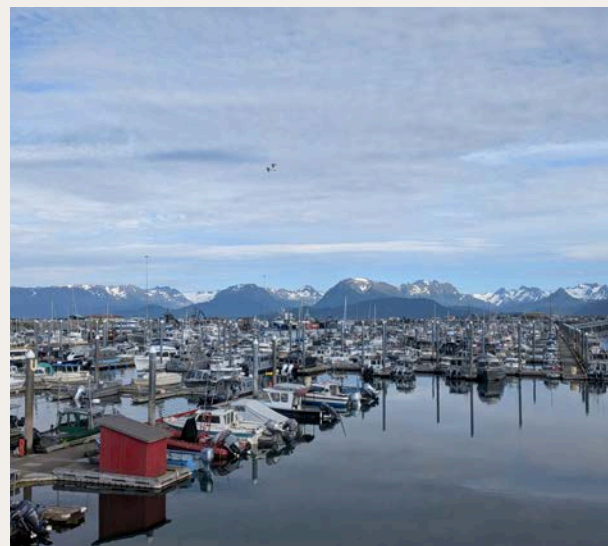


PARCAC



Established by the City Council (HCC 2.58)
All are advisory bodies to the City Council
**Planning Commission is slightly different, as they have another role in addition to their advisory role

Port & Harbor



EDAC



ADA



Planning**



Our Roles & Responsibilities

members

Use your experience & knowledge to articulate local values
Be prepared for meetings
Respect one another & staff
Understand the role & responsibilities of your position
Be mindful to not represent the body
Members are either elected by the citizens of Homer or appointed by the Mayor & confirmed by the Council

staff

Provide guidance, issue analysis, and recommendations as professionals
Provide paths forward and clear feedback on City capacity
Staff work for the City Manager

clerks

Ensure timely meeting notifications
Take minutes
Provide parliamentary assistance & guidance as needed
Clerks work for the City Manager

attorney

Provides legal guidance to the City, represents the City in legal matters
Hired by the City Council, works closely with City Manager



Our Tools + Chair!

HCC & BYLAWS

Outlines duties, responsibilities
The rules of the road, outlining quorum, requirement to vote, conflict of interest, establishes purpose, and directs use of Robert's Rules of Order (more to come on that soon!)

OPERATING MANUAL

Provides the lay of the land for the City Council in terms of operating and expectations

CHAIR

Responsible for setting the tone and facilitation of meetings. Still can vote like any other member, but should be mindful of their role and speak last. Is not responsible for obtaining consensus, nor controlling the decision of the group. Should be working with staff to set agendas.

AGENDAS

Deadlines are IMPORTANT and are expected to be followed. The agenda order is set in bylaws and Council Operating Manual. You cannot discuss items not on the agenda during meetings.



Types of Meetings

Regular, Legislative Meetings

happen when the body is together to act in its legislative capacity, such as considering changes to Homer City Code or budget ordinances.

Advisory Only Meetings happen whenever more than three members or a majority – whichever is less, are discussing matters the body has the authority to act upon – including brainstorming, fine-tuning, and deliberations.

We'll talk about "quasi-judicial" meetings shortly!



We are a Municipal Government working for the people of Homer.

By State Law, the Open Meetings Act (AS 44.62.310–312), **ALL MEETINGS** must be publicly noticed.

Unless in Executive Session, the public must be able to be present at meetings.

SoWHAT IS NOT A MEETING?





WHAT'S NOT A **MEETING** *probably....*

- A non-majority number of your body discussing an issue. Two members are pretty safe, three can be okay.
 - BUT – BE CAREFUL OF CREATING A serial meeting!! If Sally is talking with Bruno about an issue, that's okay. If Bruno and Carla are also talking about that issue, be cautious...they're at three... and if Bruno, Sally or Carla loop in Josie.... now they have joined together four people outside of a public meeting and have violated the OMA
- Social events where you're not talking ANY City business
- Members of the public talking to you!

**APPEARANCE OF A VIOLATION
CAN BE ENOUGH**



Ex Parte

FROM, OR ON ONE SIDE ONLY

In our **Legislative Roles**, we are considering issues that affect many people
When we are contemplating **Quasi-Judicial** decisions, we are making decisions
that impact the rights of an individual.

THE RULES ARE DIFFERENT.

EXAMPLES:

Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), variances, grandfather
rights/noncompliance, platting, appeals/Board of
Adjustment and Board of Equalization

*Pending Matters count – applications have been filed,
matters are on the agenda, appeals are possible*



Ex Parte

Ex parte communications SHOULD BE STRICTLY AVOIDED
IF they happen, they **MUST** be disclosed

If you didn't learn information while you were on the record in a meeting, it's probably ex parte.

Individuals have the right to due process and impartial decision-makers. They have the right to know *what information* is being used to make a decision.



Conflict of Interest

HCC 1.18.045

We have specific definitions to adhere to for conflict of interest. **It is your responsibility to disclose!**

DEFINITION: Substantial Financial Interest

A gain or loss of more than \$1,000 in a single transaction, or more than \$5,000 over 12 months.

“IMPARTIALITY” is super important, and pertains to *quasi-judicial* actions only. Do you have a personal connection to the action at hand? A member should declare. If they request recusal, it shouldn't be voted upon. If they aren't sure, the body can vote.



**If you're
recused –
leave the
room!**

Parliamentary Procedures

*How to have great meetings, even when
it's complex!*

How We Get From A to Z
Have Difficult Conversations
Stay On Topic

Get Business Done
Have Efficient and Effective Meetings





ROBERT'S RULES

PRIMER

- Agendas
- Motions = How You Take Action!
 - I move to adopt
 - I move to amend the motion by ...(be specific)
- Vote on the amendment first, then then amended (or not) main motion
- Lean on the clerks to help if you get lost
- **STAY ON TOPIC, WHICH IS THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR!**

ROBERT'S RULES

MORE MOTIONS



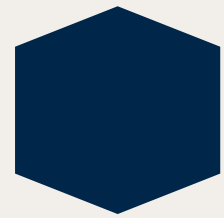
- **Postpone** – a motion to a specific date
- **Point of Order** – call out rules being broken, most commonly when the discussion is not pertaining to the motion on the floor
- **Suspend the rules** – i.e. changing the order of the agenda (requires $\frac{2}{3}$ affirmative votes to pass)
- **Call for the Question** – used to immediately end discussion and more motions (requires $\frac{2}{3}$ affirmative votes to pass)
- **Reconsideration** – brings a motion back up, can only be done if you voted on the winning side

WE WILL HAVE CHEAT SHEETS AT THE DAIS!

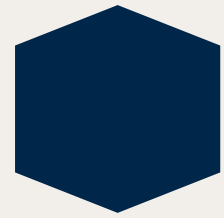
Meeting Minutes



Also follow Robert's Rules of Order



Are action summaries, not detailed and not a record of discussion



Videos are posted for 3 months, retained for five years



Meeting minutes are an important record of the decisions made by each body, and follow the legislation

Public Participation

- Be clear and consistent with everyone
- Give respect and appreciation to those who testify
- Hold boundaries for no applause or other commentary from the audience
- Public comments should be on topic, if applicable, and can be critical but should refrain from slander
- Do not engage in back-and-forth dialogue during public comment
- But what if someone brings up a topic you want to talk about?!



Annual Work Plans!

City Council has developed a strategic projects list of priorities from the many existing plans and projects, from the CIP to the Comp Plan. Commissions and Boards have had “strategic plans” in the past, but we are going to be moving to Annual Work Plans

What can get done with the interest and capacity of the members + staff, and aligned with purpose and scope as set forth in bylaws and HCC?

Are the actions in line with priorities set through existing City documents (Council strategic projects, Comp Plan, the myriad of other City plans)?

Council approval with check-ins, possibly aligning quarterly strategic plan worksessions



Mock Meeting



**THANK YOU for
your service!**

***Questions &
Discussion***

