



Agenda

City Council Joint Worksession - All Hands Worksession

Monday, November 03, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Kachemak Bay College Campus

Homer City Hall

491 E. Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603
www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Zoom Webinar ID: 965 8631 4135 Password: 792566

<https://cityofhomer.zoom.us>
Dial: 346-248-7799 or 669-900-6833;
(Toll Free) 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247

CALL TO ORDER, 6:00 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 6)

DISCUSSION TOPIC(S)

- [a.](#) Memo CC-25-257 City of Homer All Hands Training with City Council, Commissions and Boards

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minutes)

ADJORNMENT

Next Regular Meeting is November, 10th, at 6:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.



MEMORANDUM

City of Homer All Hands Training with City Council, Commissions and Boards

Item Type: Informational
Prepared For: Homer City Council, Commissions, and Boards
Date: October 30, 2025
From: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

- A. Role of Commissions and Boards and Tools to Use
 - a. Commission and Board Pamphlet
 - b. Commission and Board Scopes of Duties
 - c. Types of Meetings
 - d. Commission/Board/Staff/Council Relationships
- B. Legal Matters
 - a. Open Meetings Act
 - b. Conflict of Interest
 - c. Ex-Parte Communication (Planning Commission)
 - d. Parliamentary Procedures
 - i. Roberts Rules of Order
 - ii. Commission & Board Rules of Procedure
 - iii. City Council Rules of Procedure
 - iv. Bylaws
- C. Meeting Facilitation
 - a. Rôle of the Chair
 - b. Meeting Flow
 - c. Minutes
 - d. Decorum and Rules re: Public Participation
- D. Annual Work Plans
- E. Mock Meeting

Attachments:

- Commission & Board Training Info 2025
- HCC 2.58 Boards and Commissions



ANNUAL COMMISSION AND BOARD TRAINING

WHERE DID WE COME FROM

Boards and Commissions are created by City Council via Ordinance or Council may create temporary advisory bodies at the request of a Commission or Board via Resolution, providing there is specific tasks outlined and a timeframe that the temporary body is enacted, such as a Steering Committee or a Task Force. Once the work has been completed and or final report provided, then the temporary body is disbanded.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CONDUCT OF COMMISSIONERS/BOARD MEMBERS/AUDIENCE MEMBERS

While the meeting is in session, members should not interrupt the proceedings or any member that has the floor. A member, once recognized, should not be interrupted when speaking unless it is to call them to order. If a member is called to order, they should cease speaking until the question of order can be determined. If determined to be in order by the Chair, the member should be permitted to proceed.

After being recognized by the Chair, members may briefly question individuals speaking during audience participation or testifying during a public hearing, but may not enter into a back and forth discussion with the individual.

Be very careful when suspending the rules to allow members of the audience to speak or participate in a discussion topic. There may be the perceived precedence and the Commission could be called out on it if they allow one person to speak and not others.

No member of the Audience should be allowed to call out or speak outside of the public comment periods during the meeting. It the responsibility of the Chair or Vice Chair/Acting Chair to address the situation. In lieu of the Chair the Clerk will address the situation.

COMMISSIONER/BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members represent the entire community and should use their knowledge of the community and their unique position to articulate local values. Public meetings provide an opportunity for direct interaction between the board and commissions and community residents. Meetings give the local residents an opportunity to see the commission/board in action and give members the chance to hear, first-hand, about the concerns of local residents.

In addition to understanding, educating, and guiding the community in its development, members need to understand their role as advisory to the City Council.

CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chair's responsibilities include presiding at the meetings and maintaining order, working with the staff liaison to develop agendas, conducting the meetings in a fair manner, keeping the

commission/board discussion on track and germane to the subject, and rules on recusals. When the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair carries out the duties of the Chair.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff liaisons are staff professionals with significant work responsibilities in addition to their commission/board liaison activities. In general, the liaisons are individuals whose work responsibilities relate to that of the commission/board. Liaisons do not work for or at the direction of the commission or board; they are assigned by the City Manager and follow the direction of the City Manager. They are professionals who provide guidance, issue analysis, and recommendations, and ensure the intent of the commission or board is relayed to administration and the City Council in a timely manner.

The Recording Clerk is responsible for ensuring timely meeting notifications, taking meeting notes that can be developed into a meeting summary, providing parliamentary assistance, and guidance when needed.

HOW THE OMA APPLIES TO A COMMISSION/BOARD

The OMA applies to every "governmental body", which includes "an assembly, council, board, commission, committee, or other similar body of a public entity" that has the authority to establish policies or make decisions for a public entity or to advise or make recommendations to the public entity. Although both decision-making bodies and advisory bodies are included under the OMA, the repercussions for violations of the OMA differ depending on the nature of the body.

Legislative Capacity – When a City governing body is called upon to institute or remark upon policy and procedure, it is acting in its legislative capacity and is subject to the OMA. For example, a commission/board is acting legislatively when it conducts acts such as recommending changes to Homer City Code or plans/policies.

Advisory-Only “Meetings” – A body with only the power to advise or make recommendations, but has no authority to establish policies or make decisions for the public entity, has a "meeting" when:

- More than three members or a majority of the members, whichever is less, are present;
- There is a gathering of governmental body members; and
- This gathering is "prearranged for the purpose of considering a matter upon which the governmental body is empowered to act." AS 44.62.310(h)(2)(b).

Considerations To What Constitutes An Advisory-Only “Meeting”:

- Meeting must be prearranged for the purpose of considering matter upon which the body is empowered to act. Chance encounters will not constitute a meeting, even if the members discuss a matter on which they could advise or make a recommendation.
- A matter on which the body is permitted to act includes every step of the deliberative process, from brainstorm sessions to fine-tuning a proposal.
- More than three members or a majority of members, whichever is a smaller amount, must be present for a meeting to occur.
- A social gathering arranged for a given social purpose and not prearranged to discuss matters on which the body can act is not a meeting.

Teleconference Meetings – The OMA expressly permits meetings via teleconference. When voting in a teleconference meeting, all votes should be taken via roll call so the public can identify how each member voted. Although Homer City Code provisions regarding teleconference participation only

applies to City Council members, the OMA grants the same convenience to other commission and board members (which are outlined in commission/board bylaws).

Serial Communications – If four of the members email each other (such as selecting “reply all”) about a matter that the body is authorized to collectively act on, a meeting could occur. Similarly, if a majority of the members of a subcommittee that consists of two or more members email each other (such as 2-3 commissioners/board members working on a project together) about the same kind of matter, a meeting could occur. See AS 44.62.31 0(h)(2)(A).

QUORUM (HCC 2.58.020 (d))

Four commission or board members shall constitute a quorum of seven members; and five commission or board members shall constitute a quorum of eight members.

VOTING (HCC 2.58.020 (e))

Each member, including the chairperson, shall vote, and shall not abstain from voting, unless such member claims a conflict of interest, in which event the member shall be excused from voting. The member shall then state for the record the basis for the abstention.

Four affirmative votes of seven members and five affirmative votes of eight members are required to pass a motion.

Voting will be by a roll call vote, the order to be rotated; or by unanimous consent if no objection is expressed.

Voting by proxy or absentee is prohibited.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Findings of fact are the specific reasons given by city code to either approve or deny an application or request. Findings of fact should be, as the name implies, based on fact and substantial evidence rather than opinion. Findings should be provided by the Commission for actions brought before them such as conditional use permits or zoning code amendments or zoning map amendments. A commission should be reviewing the Staff Report and analysis of the application in accordance to the applicable code. If they believe an application does not comply with existing code then that can be used as a supported finding.

When a recommendation or action is motioned by a planning commission member, findings of fact should be stated in support of the motion. These findings of fact should be included within the meeting minutes as an official record of the planning commission’s reasoning for its decision.

Findings may be provided by Staff in a report or in the agenda, or the planning commission may identify findings based on their own research. If staff did not provide the planning commission with findings or if the planning commission decides to take action contrary to staff’s recommendation, adequate findings must still be provided.

The following is an example of a planning commission motion and findings of fact related to a rezoning request.

The planning commission recommends that the governing body deny the proposed rezoning based on the following findings of fact:

1. The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan's future land use map.
2. The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan's goals and policies related to the location of high density residential housing.
3. The proposed rezoning would permit uses that are inconsistent with surrounding land uses and would create negative impacts on adjacent property owners. This includes commercial uses that are inconsistent with the single-family residential character of the area.
4. The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with adopted plans for the general area and could constitute spot zoning, leaving the city vulnerable to a validity challenge.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES/ROBERTS RULES

Per Homer City Code 2.58.050(i) meetings shall be conducted under the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR).

Basics of Robert's Rules of Order

To ensure the meeting runs smoothly and effectively, it is important to familiarize yourself with basic motions and who is responsible for what. Below are the most common motions used:

Main Motion – A motion is a formal proposal by a member, in a meeting, that the body take a certain action. Typically the Chair will announce a business item, staff or a member will provide a report, and one or more motions to carry out the recommendations in the report may be introduced.

1. Member raises hand and waits for recognition from the presiding officer.
2. The member states the motion. Motions should be a clear, in-the-positive statement of action.
3. Another member must second the motion to continue.
4. The presiding officer states the motion. (This puts the motion on the floor.)
5. Presiding officer calls for discussion on this motion. The member who introduced the motion has the right to speak first. Members wishing to discuss the motion raise their hands and wait for recognition from the presiding officer before speaking, enabling everyone to share their opinions.
6. Presiding officer calls for a vote on the motion.
7. Presiding officer states results of vote and resulting action.

Motion to Amend – During discussion, it may become apparent that an amendment (modification) to the original motion is necessary. Anyone may request to amend the original motion, but the proposed amendment must be related to the subject of the main motion.

1. Member raises hand and is recognized from the presiding officer.
2. Member states the amendment.
3. Amendment must be seconded.
4. Presiding officer states the amendment.
5. Presiding officer calls for discussion on the amendment.

6. Presiding officer calls for a vote on the amendment, and announces result. If the amendment passes, the motion on the floor is now the amended motion. If the amendment fails, the original motion remains on the floor.

Motion to Postpone to a Certain Time – A member may move to delay action (voting) on a motion to a certain time, commonly the next meeting. A postponed motion is considered unfinished business and automatically comes up for further consideration at the next meeting (or designated date) under Pending Business.

1. A member makes a motion to postpone the motion to another date specified (usually the next meeting).
2. Motion must be seconded.
3. Presiding officer states motion.
4. Presiding officer calls for discussion.
5. Motion is amendable and debatable.
6. Presiding officer calls for a vote, and states result of the vote and action taken.

Motion to Suspend the Rules – Used if the Commission/Board wishes to do something during a meeting that it cannot do without violating one or more of its regular rules. Commonly used to address agenda items out of order after the agenda has been approved or allowing an unscheduled visitor to address the body.

1. Can be made any time that no question is pending.
2. A member makes a motion; “I move to suspend the rules to hear New Business, Item C. before New Business, Item A.”
3. Is out of order when another has the floor.
4. Motion must be seconded.
5. Motion is not debatable or amendable.
6. Motion must have two-thirds majority approval.
7. Presiding officer calls for a vote, and states the result of the vote and the action taken.

Motion for Point of Order – Used when a member thinks the rules are being violated or more commonly when discussion does not pertain to the topic of the motion on the floor.

1. Does not have to be recognized by the presiding officer.
2. Does not need to be seconded.
3. Is not debatable. The presiding officer may allow explanation; “The current discussion is not germane to the matter at hand.”
4. Is not amendable.
5. Is ruled on by the presiding officer. The presiding officer may seek the advice of the Clerk or more senior members present.
6. Cannot be reconsidered.

Motion for Reconsideration – Used to bring a motion back before the Commission/Board for further consideration.

1. Can only be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side (aye if the motion was adopted/no if the motion was lost.)
2. Motion must be seconded.
3. Motion cannot be amended.
4. Only the merits of the reconsideration are debatable.

5. Requires a two-thirds vote to adopt a motion to reconsider.
6. Presiding officer states the result of the vote and the action taken.

Call for the Question – Used to immediately close discussion and the making of subsidiary motions except the motion to “Lay on the Table.” Commonly used to bring an immediate vote on one or more pending motions.

1. Takes precedence over all debatable or amendable motions to which it is applied.
2. Yields only to the subsidiary motion to lay on the Table, privileged motions and all applicable incidental motions.
3. Must be seconded.
4. Is out of order when another has the floor.
5. Is not debatable or amendable.
6. Requires a two-thirds vote to adopt a call for the question.
7. Cannot be reconsidered.

Withdraw a motion – Conditions for withdrawing or modifying a motion depend on how soon the mover states their wish to withdraw it.

1. Before a motion has been stated by the Chair it’s the property of its mover, who can withdraw without consent of anyone.
2. After a motion has been stated by the Chair it belongs to the meeting as a whole and the maker must request permission to withdraw or modify their motion.
 - a. Mover - *Chair, I ask permission to withdraw the motion*
 - b. Chair – *Unless there is objection the motion is withdrawn*

HYBRID MEETINGS

When participating in a meeting by Zoom:

- Keep your camera on whenever possible and be aware of what’s visible on your screen. This allows a semblance of normalcy as if we’re in the same room together, and makes it easier for the Chair to call on commissioners/boardmembers.
- Mute yourself if you aren’t speaking. Too much background noise disrupts the meeting and the person currently speaking.

COMMITTEES/SUBCOMMITTEES

Occasionally, subcommittees are created for fact finding/information gathering for the purpose of advising the full board/commission on issues that the commission or board will take into consideration when advising the City Council. Only those members of the commission/board appointed to the subcommittee are considered subcommittee members and it is their numbers that determine whether or not a quorum is present. Members of the public and staff may be invited to the subcommittee meetings to provide reports and information but are not considered members for the purposes of voting or determining a quorum.