

# Town of Laguna Vista

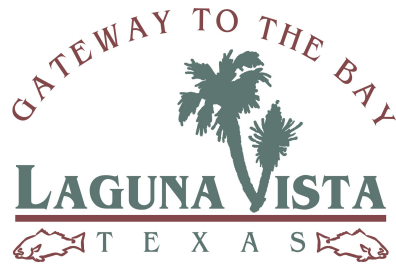


## Advisory Board Handbook

(Revisions by City Manager on December 13, 2013)

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## **Advisory Board Handbook**

### **Section 1. Introduction**

Welcome and thank you for accepting this appointment to one of the Town's advisory boards. Because your time and talents are valuable, the Town Staff has put together this handbook to make the transition to your Board as informative and efficient as possible.

The Town Council consists of the Mayor and six Council Members elected at large by the voters of Laguna Vista.

The City Secretary is responsible for generation and maintenance of all records, elections, certifications, and postings of the Town.

The City Manager is appointed by the Town Council to oversee the daily operations and implement the policies established by the Town Council.

The Municipal Judge is appointed by the Town Council and presides over all court proceedings based on Town ordinances and as prescribed by laws of the State of Texas.

## **SECTION 2. Membership Board and Commission Summary**

### **2.1 Membership on Town Boards and Commission (FAQ)**

#### **A. How many boards or commissions can I serve on?**

A person is allowed to serve on more than one permanent advisory board or commission at a time.

#### **B. How long can I serve on this board? Can I be reappointed?**

A person may serve more than one term of office with confirmation by the Town Council.

#### **C. What if I miss a meeting?**

Attendance by members is important to the proper functioning of all Town boards and commissions. There are two rules that govern attendance at meetings:

1. Voluntary absence from three consecutive meetings of a board or commission results in the automatic resignation of a member. An absence from a meeting may be excused by a board or commission, or by its chair, if it results from illness or from a factor beyond the control of a member. It is the member's responsibility to seek an excuse for an absence. Once three voluntary absences occur, the member's position is referred to the City Secretary for appointment of a replacement.
2. Absence of a member from a certain number of meetings during the preceding 12 months results in automatic resignation of the member. This rule applies whether the absences are voluntary or excused, and whether or not they are consecutive. For a board or commission that meets quarterly, two absences trigger a resignation. For other boards or commissions, absence from 25% or more of meetings triggers a resignation.
3. Every effort will be made by residents, serving in any of the Town advisory boards and commissions, to notify the City Secretary, City Manager, or the Chair of the board or the commission at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting that he or she will not be attending the meeting.

**2.2 ADVISORY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS** These are the advisory boards and commissions appointed by the Town Council:

- A. Parks and Recreation Board
- B. Planning and Zoning Commission
- C. Board of Adjustments
- D. Community Development Corporation

- E. Public Library Board
- F. Board of Ethics

**2.3 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF THE TOWN** Below is a brief overview of these advisory boards and commissions:

**A. Library Board**

The Library Board consists of seven members confirmed by the Town Council. The Library Board acts in an advisory capacity to the Town Council for the continued development and improvement of the Laguna Vista Public Library. The Library Board meets monthly.

**B. Parks and Recreation Board**

The Parks and Recreation Board consist of seven members appointed by the Town Council. Board acts in an advisory capacity to the Town Council in matters regarding acquisition, development, improvement, equipment and maintenance of all Town parks, playgrounds and facilities. The Parks and Recreation Board meets monthly or as required.

**C. Planning and Zoning Commission**

The Planning and Zoning Commission consist of seven members appointed by the Town Council. The Planning and Zoning Commission ensures planned and purposeful development of the Town of Laguna Vista and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, to protect the integrity of our natural resources and neighborhoods, and to enforce State and local statutes and Ordinances. The Planning and Zoning Commission meets monthly or as required.

**D. Board of Adjustments**

The Board of Adjustments also considers variances and special exceptions to the design standards established in the Zoning Ordinance. The Board of Adjustments meets as required.

**E. Community Development Corporation Board**

The Community Development Corporation Board consists of seven members appointed by the Town Council, with the Mayor and City Secretary as Ex-Officio members. The Community Development Corporation Board oversees community development activities of the Town. The Community Development Corporation meets as required, with the exception of the first Thursday, in February of each year for the annual meeting.

**F. Board of Ethics**

The Board of Ethics, pursuant to Section 11.01 of the Home Rule Charter, consists of five members appointed by the Town Council.

### **SECTION 3. General Rules of Procedures**

**3.1. General Rules of Procedures.** Each advisory board or commission will follow the same rules that apply to the Town Council as regulated by Ordinance 2004-27.

**3.2. Rules of Decorum.** The following general order shall be used by a board or commission agenda:

- A. Call to order
- B. Attendance roll call
- C. Citizens' Forum/Presentation
- D. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting(s)
- E. Items for board/commission discussion
- F. Items for board/commission action
- G. Staff Report
- H. Adjournment

**3.3. Texas Open Meetings Act.**

**3.3.1 Agendas.** The meeting agenda should be based on the order of business. The agenda should clearly describe each matter to be discussed by the board or commission.

**3.3.2 Chair's Duties.** At the meeting, the Chair should introduce each item as it appears on the agenda. Items may be considered out of order with the informal consent of the board or commission.

**3.3.3 Note.** Under the Open Meetings Act, a board or commission may not discuss a matter not listed on the agenda. A board or commission may agree to place the matter on a future meeting agenda.

### **SECTION 4. TYPES OF ACTION/MOTIONS**

The following actions may be taken on items that appear on the meeting agenda:

**4.1. Approval-** means the item is approved as proposed.

**4.2. Conditional Approval-** means approval for the item will take effect upon the occurrence of certain conditions.

**4.3. Approval as Amended-** means the item is approved with changes from the original proposal.

**4.4. Table or Postpone-** means postponement of consideration of the item, either until a definite time, or indefinitely. Action on the item at a subsequent meeting requires the item to be placed on the agenda for that meeting.

- 4.5. ***Withdraw Motion***- made by person who made the motion. Does not require a formal vote unless a member objects to the withdrawal.
- 4.6. ***Amend***- usually consists of striking out, inserting, adding, or substituting words, sentences or paragraphs to the subject of the original motion.  
Voted upon separately from the original motion.
- Note:** ***A friendly amendment***, agreed to by persons who made and seconded a motion, does not require a separate vote from the original motion.
- 4.7. ***Recess***- A temporary break in a meeting may be called by the Chair. Does not require a formal vote unless a member objects to the recess.
- 4.8. ***Limited Discussion or Debate***- The Chair may establish time limits on each person addressing the board or commission, or upon each member who comments on an issue. Does not require a formal vote unless a member objects to the limits.

## SECTION 5. VOTING

- 5.1. **Voting Methods.** Each board or commission should decide which of the following methods to use to conduct voting:
- A. Roll call- Members vote as their names are called by the recording secretary.
  - B. Show of hands- Members vote by raising their hands in response to the chair's cues.
  - C. Voice-Members vote by verbally responding to the Chair's cues.
- 5.2. **Recording Vote.** Whatever method is chosen should permit the recording secretary to identify how each member votes, especially in the case of split votes, abstentions, etc., in the minutes of the meeting.
- 5.3. **Order of Motion.** Each vote shall be preceded by a motion and a second.
- 5.4. **Chair's Voting Privileges.** The Chair is not entitled to make a motion or second; or to vote, except to break a tie vote.
- 5.5. **Voting Criteria.** A quorum (majority) of the members of a board or commission must be present for a vote to take place. Voting is decided by a majority of the members present, unless otherwise provided by law or by board or commission policy. A tie vote results in failure of the motion voted upon.
- 5.6. **Announcement of Voting Results.** The Chair, or recording secretary, should always announce the result of each vote. Until this announcement is made, a member is entitled to change his or her vote.

## SECTION 6. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS/CONTROL BY CHAIR

- 6.1. Presiding Officer.** The Chair, or in the Chair's absence the Vice-Chair, presides over meetings. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the board or commission should elect an Interim Chair for that meeting, or until the Chair or Vice-Chair arrives.
- 6.2. Order.** The Chair is responsible for promoting and maintaining order in meetings.
- 6.3. Speaker Conduct.** A person, including a member of a board or commission, should obtain recognition from the Chair before addressing the board or commission. The Chair may allow open discussion, however, in informal settings such as workshop meetings, or during question and answer session.
- 6.4. Discussion Topics.** The Chair should control discussion to insure that it focuses on the issue and not on any person. Personal remarks and attacks are not permitted.
- 6.5. Open Forum.** Members of the public may address the Town board or commission during citizen comment period, if such a period is on the agenda for the meeting, during a public hearing on an agenda item, or at other times with the permission of the chair:
- 6.6. Chair.** The Chair should exercise control over persons who abridge the rules of procedure or disrupt the meeting in the following ascending order of action:
  - A. Call the person to order, advising the person of the infraction.
  - B. Advise the person that the infraction must cease immediately or the person will be ordered to leave the meeting.
  - C. Order the person to leave the meeting. If the offending person is a member of the board or commission, the Chair shall call for a vote on the expulsion of the member from the meeting.