

**CITY OF LA PALMA**  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

**NUMBER: 3**

**DATE (Adopted/Amended): March 3, 2015**

**SUBJECT: City Committees**

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**POLICY:**

The City Council appoints three citizen committees to advise them on various City policies and actions and to provide enhanced public engagement relative to the affairs of the City. As of the adoption of this Policy, these three committees are Community Activities and Beautification Committee, Development Committee, and Traffic Safety Committee.

Mission and Expectations

Each Council appointed Committee has a purpose or mission as defined in the Municipal Code or other formative document which guides their scope of responsibilities as an advisory body. Due to the important public participation process function served by each of the committees, individual Committee members also have common expectations placed upon them including:

- a. Attend all meetings and notify City staff in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting so that it can be determined whether a quorum for the meeting will exist;
- b. Adequately prepare for meetings;
- c. Show respect for staff and the community; and,
- d. Maintain residency within the City of La Palma.

Through the City Manager, staff shall notify the City Council when a Committee member is not meeting established expectations as defined above, where lack of attendance is having a negative impact on the Committee, or when a conflict of interest appears to exist. The City Council has the authority in such cases to remove and replace such Committee members.

Terms of Office

Committee members may be appointed for up to two, four-year terms.

- a. No person may hold a committee seat for more than two consecutive terms per committee.
- b. Any person may hold a committee seat for more than two terms if he or she does not hold the committee seat for two or more consecutive years following the conclusion of each two-consecutive terms as a committee member (i.e. a member may serve a total of eight consecutive years and there must then be a lapse of time of at least two years before that person can rejoin the committee).
- c. No person may serve on more than one of the three citizen committees concurrently.

- d. Term limits refer only to service on a specific committee. There is no restriction on serving on different committees without a lapse of time in between.
- e. Committee members may resign or be removed by a majority vote of the Council at any time. When a vacancy exists in an unexpired term, the Council may make an appointment to fill the unexpired term.
- f. Youth members of the Community Activities and Beautification Committee are appointed for up to four one-year terms and up to three of the Community Activities and Beautification Committee's eleven seats may be designated for youth representatives. Eligible youth must be 15 to 18 years of age and in the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in addition to being La Palma residents. Terms for youth members begin in conjunction with the start of the school year.

#### Selection and Appointment Process

All vacancies for appointed positions on City Committees shall be advertised, including those associated with expiring terms of office. Vacancies may be advertised prior to the actual expiration of the Committee member's term in an effort to fill vacancies as close as possible to the expiration date. All vacancies on any citizen committee will be filled using the process described below, except that if a vacancy occurs because of a resignation, the Council may either re-advertise using the process described below or appoint an applicant from an existing list to fill the unexpired term, as described above.

- a. City Clerk prepares a *Citizen Committee Availability Notice*. The Notice will detail the current or anticipated vacancy status and identify the committees affected. The Notice will describe the committee's mission and meeting location/time information. The Notice will also specify a specific application deadline and have a minimum filing period of at least thirty (30) days.
- b. Notice will be advertised in the regular pages of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of La Palma, posted at the three designated official posting locations, publicized in various City publications (as timing permits), and highlighted on the City's website. For youth committee members, the Notice will be distributed to high schools serving La Palma youth.
- c. All interested applicants, including incumbents seeking reappointment, will be required to fill out an application. The application forms will be specific for each of the citizen committees and will be available from the City Clerk. Interested members of the community may apply for more than one committee vacancy. Applications for vacant and/or expiring committee positions may be filed with the City Clerk at any time and will be retained until a vacancy occurs.
- d. Applications received prior to the filing deadline will be reviewed by the City Clerk to ensure eligibility of the applicants.
- e. All eligible applicants will be invited to an interview conducted by the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. Where practicable, such interviews should be conducted within 45 days from receipt of an application or close of an application period. At the conclusion of interviews, deliberations will be conducted and recommendations are brought back to the full City Council. Appointment requires a majority vote of the City Council.
- f. Appointments will be announced/approved in a regular City Council meeting.
- g. If after the appointment process, a vacancy still exists on a committee, staff will, at a minimum, continue to publicize the vacancy through the City website until the vacancy is filled.

#### Posting of Agendas and Packets

Regular Agendas for members of City Committees shall be available for distribution at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act. Distribution is via electronic packets. All agendas and packet materials for Regular Meetings, shall be posted to the City's website at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

#### Preparation of Committee Correspondence

Any correspondence deemed necessary by a City committee shall be prepared by the department assigned as staff to that committee and shall be reviewed by the City Manager or his/her designee prior to transmittal. Regular City letterhead shall be used for such correspondence.

#### Speaker cards

Members of the public speaking at a committee meeting are requested to complete a speaker card before addressing the committee. Completion of the speaker card is voluntary; but the Chair will encourage speakers to complete the card. Cards shall be available at the meeting. Cards are delivered to the Chair in chronological order and are kept as part of the official record of the meeting. Speakers will be asked to adhere to a five-minute time limit and are not permitted to transfer their time to another speaker. Large groups are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson to speak on their behalf.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

This policy consolidates and amends prior City Council policies on Posting and Distribution of Development, Traffic Safety and Community Activities and Beautification Committee Agendas and Packets, Preparation of Advisory Committee Correspondence, and City Council Appointed Citizen Committees. This policy seeks to clarify, simplify and consolidate all prior Council policies regarding City Committees into one City Council policy. These prior policies were originally adopted on November 3, 1987, August 16, 1971, and December 18, 1972 respectively.

#### **REVIEW:**

This policy is to be regularly reviewed every three years or more frequently as required.