

COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT STANDING RULES (DRAFT)

The mission of the Commission on the Environment is to improve, enhance, and preserve the environment; and to promote San Francisco's long-term environmental sustainability as laid out in Section 4.118 of the City Charter.

The Commission shall comply with all applicable laws, including but not limited to the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Government Code Section 54950 *et seq.*), the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Cal. Government Code Section 81000 *et seq.*), the San Francisco Charter, the San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance (San Francisco Administrative Code Section 67.1 *et seq.*), the Compensated Advocacy and Officeholder Accounts initiative (San Francisco Administrative Code App. 11); and the Improper Government Activities Ordinance, San Francisco Administrative Code Section 16.400 *et seq.*

In addition to the Commission Bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order, the City and County of San Francisco's Good Government Guide, and all applicable laws noted above, the Commission on the Environment has adopted the following procedures otherwise known as Standing Rules (SR):

SR- 1 Meeting Attendance Policy (Adopted November 28, 2006)

The Commission on the Environment's Bylaws, Article III states the following in reference to attendance requirements:

Section 7: Excused Absences

If a Commissioner provides prior notification of absence from Commission and Committee meetings to the President of the Commission, then such absence is considered an excused absence. If no prior notice is received by the President or Secretary of the Commission, then the minutes shall note that the absence is unexcused.

Section 8: Absence from the State

Any member of the Commission who plans to be absent from the State of California for an extended period shall notify the President of the Commission.

Purpose

The following policy is designed to establish minimum attendance standards for appointed members of the Commission on the Environment and its Committees. In the event of any conflict between any provision of this policy and any provision of a City ordinance or other applicable law (collectively, "Laws") governing the Commission on the Environment that establish more stringent attendance requirements for members of the Commission on the Environment, the conflicting provision of such Laws shall govern.

Attendance Requirements

Except in the event of a notified absence (defined below), each member of the Commission on the Environment is expected to attend each regular or special meeting of the Commission on the Environment. The Commission secretary or clerk ("Secretary") shall maintain a record of members' attendance.

Notified Absences

A member's absence shall constitute a "notified absence" where the member, in advance of the meeting, informs the Secretary or other person whom the Commission on the Environment has designated that the member will be absent. An absence due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness or emergency shall also qualify as a notified absence where the member reports such absence to the Secretary as soon as reasonably possible. The Secretary shall record as non-notified all absences involving neither advance notice nor unforeseen circumstances.

Report to the Appointing Authority

The Secretary of the Commission on the Environment shall report all instances of non-notified absences as well as any instance of three consecutive absences of a member from regular meetings in a fiscal year to the member's appointing authority.

Annual Attendance Report

At the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary of the Commission on the Environment shall submit a written report to the appointing authorities of the Commission on the Environment's membership detailing each member's attendance at all meetings of the Commission on the Environment for that fiscal year.

SR-2 Operations and Procedures; Agenda-setting criteria (Adopted September 22, 2009)

Agenda-setting criteria

In deciding which items to place on any agenda of the Commission on the Environment or its committees, those responsible for agenda setting will consider these guidelines:

- A) Periodically review the relevant language in the City Charter and the Commission on the Environment Bylaws. (See excerpts that follow.)
- B) Assure adequate time on the agenda for required items, such as budget approval, adoption of strategic plan, nomination and election of officers, adoption of approved pesticide list, and so on.
- C) When the number of items proposed for an agenda would result in an overly long meeting, consider the following in prioritizing items and selecting a reasonable number, given the estimated time that each would take:
 - 1) To what degree is the item consistent with the COE's purpose?
 - 2) If the item is to be a public hearing, is it more appropriately heard at COE than at some other department or agency? Might it warrant a joint hearing with some other commission? Are there sufficient staff resources to follow up on recommendations generated in such a hearing? Are the means available to assure that all relevant parties are notified of the hearing, especially if it's controversial?

- 3) If the item is informational only, with little or no discussion anticipated, could that information be better provided in a written report emailed to commissioners and posted on the website?
- 4) If an action item, has it gone to the appropriate committee for a recommendation? If not, is the matter urgent enough to declare an "emergency" that warrants bypassing the committee stage?
- 5) Can the item be postponed to a future meeting?
- 6) Would the item be more appropriate for a committee rather than the full commission? Or, should it go to a committee before it goes to the full commission?
- 7) In determining which committee an item should go to, or go to first, review the Bylaw provisions regarding committee duties:

Section 7: Operations Committee

The Operations Committee shall have general responsibility for the budget, financial planning and operations of the Department of the Environment. This Committee shall work with the Director and make recommendations to the Commission for the financial well-being and effective administration of the Department's programs and activities, including the management of environmental programs, duties, and functions which have been assigned to the Department pursuant to Section 4.118 of the City Charter or by ordinance. This Committee shall also oversee the public education and outreach to the community on environmental issues and address issues regarding the environmental well-being of the City.

Section 8: Policy Committee

The Policy Committee shall have general responsibility for and oversee the long-term planning and policy development activities of the Department of the Environment, including the Department's assessment of San Francisco's environmental conditions, the development and update of plans for the long-term environmental sustainability of San Francisco, and the review and development of recommendations on any policy proposed for adoption by any City agency regarding conformity with the long-term plans for environmental sustainability. Specifically, the Policy Committee will focus on developing a plan for San Francisco to achieve the goal of zero waste to landfill by year 2020, and will explore resource conservation opportunities in the areas of water and toxins reduction. Furthermore, the Policy Committee shall work with the Operations Committee and the Director of the Department of the Environment, to develop recommendations regarding restructuring of environmental programs and activities among the City agencies and departments.

It is also possible that the item might best be assigned to a special, short-term committee or task force:

Section 9: Other Committees

The Commission and/or the President, at his or her discretion, may establish other committees or task forces on an ad-hoc basis to perform tasks or functions as necessary, or to address issues outside the purview of the standing committees.

The Commission on the Environment Mission, from the Commission on the Environment Bylaws:

The mission of the Commission on the Environment is to improve, enhance, and preserve the environment; and to promote San Francisco's long-term environmental sustainability as laid out in Section 4.118 of the City Charter.

From the City Charter:

SEC. 4.118. COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

The Department of the Environment shall regularly produce an assessment of San Francisco's environmental condition. It shall also produce and regularly update plans for the long-term environmental sustainability of San Francisco.

Pursuant to the policies and directives set by the Commission, and under the supervision and direction of the department head, the Department shall manage the environmental programs, duties and functions assigned to it pursuant to Section 4.132 or by ordinance.

The Commission shall have the authority to review and make recommendations on any policy proposed for adoption by any City agency regarding conformity with the long-term plans for environmental sustainability, except for those regarding building and land use.

The Commission may investigate and make recommendations to all City agencies related to operations and functions, such as: solid waste management; recycling; energy conservation; natural resource conservation; environmental inspections; toxics; urban forestry and natural resources; habitat restoration; and hazardous materials.

The Commission shall conduct public education and outreach to the community on environmental issues, including, but not limited to each of the categories listed above.

SR-3 Speaker Presentation Time (Adopted September 22, 2009)

- 1) The agenda item sponsor, in consultation with the Commission President, Executive Director and Commission Secretary, will come to an agreement with each speaker for that item regarding the length of time to be allotted for that speaker's prepared presentation;
- 2) The agreed upon presentation times will be indicated on the agenda item request form to be submitted to the Commission Secretary at least seven days in advance of the meeting;
- 3) The agreed upon presentation times will be indicated on the meeting agendas; and
- 4) Prepared presentations will be timed. Speakers will be allowed, if they wish, to speak for the full amount of time agreed upon in advance.

SR-4 Correspondence Process (Adopted March 26, 2013)

Commission Secretary receives public correspondence or communication either by mail, fax, email, telephone, or at a public meeting.

The Commission Secretary will maintain a spreadsheet of all correspondence. The spreadsheet will include the following columns: Name, organization, email, phone, date received, topic of correspondence, and status. The spreadsheet along with any related correspondence will be sent on a weekly basis to the Director and the Commission President.

Commission President and Director are empowered to respond on the Commission's behalf or assign the communication to the appropriate program area to provide input into a response to be drafted by the Department's technical writer.

The communication is transmitted to Commissioners and the Director by email. An acknowledgement of receipt of communication form letter is transmitted to the communicator by the Commission Secretary. The response letter would include (1) a timeframe that the communicator can expect to hear back from the Commission and/or Department as soon as possible and not more than 30 days and (2) would include information on upcoming Commission and Committee meetings whereby public comment can be provided.

If the correspondence is an inquiry, Commissioners would receive a message in the correspondence transmittal that the Commission President and Director would be formulating and coordinating a response to the communicator in consultation with program staff and technical writing staff. Commissioners are provided with the opportunity to suggest that the topic be scheduled for a public meeting or an opportunity to weigh in on the response. If the communication is thanking the Commission or does not require a response, the Commission Secretary will prepare an acknowledgement letter thanking the communicator for the correspondence with a copy to the Director and Commissioners.

The Commission Secretary is copied on all staff responses and transmits responses to Commissioners and the Director via email. The response letter will include a cc to Commissioners, Commission on the Environment, the Commission Secretary, and the Director. The Commission Secretary includes a record of the communication in the Secretary's Report for each meeting and provides status updates of communication received and responded to through email and in subsequent Secretary's reports. The correspondence and responses are kept in an electronic chronological public correspondence file by meeting date.

SR-5 Emergencies by which Policy Committee acts on behalf of the full Commission. (Proposed for Adoption May 28, 2013)

In case of an emergency when a decision is clearly in the purview of the Commission and there isn't time to bring the matter to the full Commission to be effective, the Policy Committee will have the ability to act on behalf of the Commission. The action taken will be reported at the next Commission meeting.

SR-6 Public Comment and Commissioner Discussion. (Proposed for Adoption May 28, 2013)

Public Comment is available at the beginning and near the close of the Commission meeting on matters that are not related to an agenda item. Public comment is also available under each agenda item for Commissioners to consider as decisions are being made. There will be an opportunity for Commissioner-discussion before and after public comment before a decision is made.