

Civic Agencies Training: Module No. 3

Roles and Responsibilities



- There are several groups involved in civic agency operations. This module outlines these different groups, and details their responsibilities within the City's civic agency system:
 - Members
 - Alternate Members
 - Chairs
 - Council Liaisons
 - External Liaisons (Park Board, VPD, VPL, VSB)
 - Staff Liaisons
 - Administrative Staff

- Appointed from the community, professional associations, or non-profit organizations;
- Review agenda packages and other meeting materials, and monitor progress of relevant Council business;
- Attend all regular meetings;
- Follow all policies and guidelines related to conduct, communications, and privacy;
- Assist with administrative support, projects, or research that are not the responsibility of staff or liaisons;
- Report activities and progress to Council, in accordance with relevant terms of reference or by-laws.

- May be appointed to a Civic Agency in case any vacancies arise during the term;
- May participate in meetings and discussions with the permission of the Chair, but may not vote on resolutions and do not count toward quorum;
- In the event of a vacancy, may be offered a full, voting seat on the Civic Agency.

- Preside over meetings, ensuring business is conducted fairly, equitably, and according to procedural rules;
- Ensure all participants are treated with respect and dignity;
- Give each member opportunities to share opinions and knowledge, and ensure minority opinions are heard and considered;
- Keep meetings on schedule;
- Work with administrative staff and staff liaisons to prepare an agenda prior to each regular meeting, maintaining awareness of membership's priorities;
- Act as public spokesperson for the civic agency, unless an alternate spokesperson is designated (and only speak publicly to matters agreed upon by the civic agency).

- Do not vote on civic agency matters;
- Attend meetings as regularly as schedules permit;
- Provide advice and information on Council policies and activities with respect to the civic agency's mandate;
- Assist with ensuring that the civic agency's work is within the mandate and jurisdiction of Council;
- Do not act as a “representative” of the civic agency;
- Are not obligated to follow specific civic agency recommendations;
- Do not have exclusive access to the civic agency (other Council members may consult).

- May be elected officials (Park Board Commissioners, School Board Trustees) or staff;
- Do not vote on civic agency matters;
- Attend meetings as regularly as schedules permit;
- Provide advice and information on Park Board, School Board, Public Library, or Police Department policies and activities with respect to the civic agency's mandate;
- Do not act as a “representative” of the civic agency;
- Are not obligated to follow specific civic agency recommendations.

- Do not vote on civic agency matters;
- Attend all regular meetings, and select an alternate liaison if schedules do not permit attendance at a regular meeting;
- Attend other meetings as regularly as schedules permit;
- Assist with keeping the civic agency's work within scope and mandate;
- Provide subject matter expertise and information on related City programs, services, and initiatives;
- Connect civic agencies with relevant staff groups;
- Seek civic agency input and ideas for proposed City programs, services, and initiatives;
- Assist chairs and clerks with preparing agendas;
- Review and advise on draft resolutions from civic agencies;
- May respond to specific requests or recommendations, but do not receive direction from civic agencies.

Administrative Staff (Clerks)

- Do not vote on civic agency matters;
- Attend all regular meetings and special meetings;
- Establish annual meeting schedule and room bookings;
- Maintain attendance and leave of absence records;
- Assist chairs and staff liaisons with preparing and distributing meeting agendas;
- Record “decision-based” minutes and circulate to members, liaisons, and Mayor and Council;
- Provide documentation and advice regarding relevant meeting procedures;
- Post membership lists, meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and other relevant material on the City of Vancouver website;
- Forward correspondence and emails received by the City Clerk’s Office to members for their information or action;
- May respond to specific requests or recommendations, but do not receive direction from civic agencies.

- While the chair is generally the person who facilitates discussion, members, liaisons, and staff are all responsible for ensuring that meetings and other interactions are conducted equitably and are free from discrimination and harassment.
- Civic agencies should be environments that are curious, respectful, supportive, safe (culturally, physically, and psychologically), and open to differing opinions. This may be assisted by the early development of a shared “Community Charter” in your civic agency, which outlines expectations and norms.
- You may wish to elect a chair or vice-chair who identifies with one or more equity-denied communities. At the same time, avoid expecting members from equity-deserving communities to do an excessive amount of work.

- 1. Which role assists with ensuring that a Civic Agency's work stays within scope and mandate, and connects Civic Agencies with relevant staff groups?**
 - A. Administrative staff
 - B. Member
 - C. Staff liaison
 - D. Council liaison

- 2. Which role manages agenda items and keeps meetings on schedule?**
- A. Chair
 - B. Council liaison
 - C. External liaison
 - D. Alternate member

Module No. 3 Quiz Answers

1. C

2. A

- Can you see yourself in the role of a civic agency chair?
Why or why not?
 - If the answer is “yes,” what are some ways that you can ensure the civic agency is a safe and equitable environment?
 - If the answer is “no,” what are some things you would need to feel more comfortable and confident in this type of role (e.g., training, experience, support, etc.)?

Module Complete