MAYOR’S WELCOME

On behalf of the Princeton Council and the entire Princeton government, I would like to thank you for your service to our municipality. This handbook was prepared as a reference for those residents who, like you, volunteer to serve on one of Princeton’s boards, commissions, committees, or task forces.

Members of boards, commissions, committees, and task forces advise the Mayor and Council on a wide variety of issues by making recommendations on important policy matters. These recommendations are often the catalysts for innovative programs and improved services delivered to the community.

I, along with the entire Princeton Council, thank you for volunteering your time and expertise to assist Council in making the policy decisions that shape our town and impact all of us who live here. We hope that you will enjoy your tenure as a vital part of the municipal team and sincerely thank you for your willingness to devote your time and energy to serve our community.

Sincerely,

Liz Lempert
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This handbook was based on similar handbooks from other municipalities. We thank Fort Collins, Colorado; Rockville, Maryland; and San Mateo County for their example.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title and Subsections</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Powers and Duties of BCCs</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Special Powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Responsibilities of BCC Members</td>
<td>5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Responsibilities of Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Guidelines</td>
<td>Relationships with Other Board, Commission, or Committee Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Communications Policy</td>
<td>Website and Social Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Getting Things Done</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal Setting</td>
<td>Reports, Memos, and Work Sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Meeting Procedures</td>
<td>11-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courtesy and Decorum</td>
<td>Open Public Meetings Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>Agenda and Minutes</td>
<td>14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Contacts and Checklists</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contacts</td>
<td>Annual Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>Code of Conduct</td>
<td>17-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Government Ethics</td>
<td>Harassment Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exhibit A: Disqualification Rules</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exhibit B: Policy Against Harassment</td>
<td>20-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receipt and Acknowledgment</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. POWERS AND DUTIES OF BCCs

General

The primary mission of Princeton’s boards, commissions, committees and task forces is to advise the Princeton Council, the elected policy-making body of the municipality, through direct citizen participation. Although the specific duties and authority of each board, commission, committee, and task force vary widely, there are certain responsibilities common to all board, commission, committee, and task force members. These guidelines are intended to assist you in your volunteer efforts on behalf of our community.

Boards, Commissions, and Committees are standing bodies, whereas Task Forces are created for a discrete period of time to work on a focused project or set of projects. As a general rule, Boards are regulated by state statute and have some amount of independent authority. Commissions also tend to be regulated by state statute and are largely advisory in nature. Committees are created through municipal ordinance and are strictly advisory to Council. Task Forces are also strictly advisory and are created by municipal resolution. For the purposes of this handbook, boards, commissions, committees, and task forces are referred to herein collectively as “BCCs.”

Except where explicitly specified by State law, BCCs do not make policy decisions. This responsibility legally resides with the Princeton Council and cannot be delegated to any other body.

Special Powers

The following BCCs have special powers as specified by NJ State law:

Board of Health (N.J.S.A. 26:3-1 et seq.)

- Appoints and employs the Health Officer and such other personnel as it may deem necessary.
- Passes, amends and enforces health ordinances such as, but not limited to, those intended to ensure the sanitary conditions of hotels, restaurants, cafes and other public eating houses.
- Establishes a budget based on recommendations of the Health Officer and available funds as allocated by the Council.

Planning Board (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-25 et seq.)

- Maintains and regularly updates the Master Plan.
- Reviews and updates the zoning map from time to time.
- Conducts hearings and review of applications for subdivision, site plan and conditional use approval.
- Provides recommendations as to Princeton’s official Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinances.
- Reviews Capital Projects.
- Decides applications for variances under certain circumstances in connection with site plans and subdivisions.
Zoning Board of Adjustment (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70 et seq.)
- Hears and decides appeals from decisions by the Zoning Officer and Deputy Zoning Officer.
- Hears and decides interpretations of the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinances.
- Hears and reviews applications for variances which would allow departure from Zoning Ordinances.

Construction Board of Appeals (N.J.A.C. 5:23A-1.1 et seq.)
- Hears and decides appeals from decisions of the enforcing agency, such as decisions related to construction and fire sub-codes and escrow charges.

Housing Authority Board (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-17)
- Assists in the provision of safe and decent affordable housing to qualified low-income families and individuals.
- Promotes self-sufficiency initiatives to improve the quality of life and economic stability of its residents.
- Owns and manages 236 family and senior/disabled apartments within five developments throughout Princeton.

Library Board of Trustees (N.J.S.A. 40:54-9 et seq.)
- Operates and establishes policies for purposes of governing the Princeton Public Library.
- Holds in trust and manages all property of the Library.

Recreation Commission (N.J.S.A. 40:12-1 et seq.)
- Plans, develops and implements recreation programs and activities to serve the needs of Princeton residents.
- Oversees and maintains Princeton parks, playgrounds and recreation areas.
- Makes and enforces rules and regulations governing the use of recreation facilities and conduct of its recreation programs and activities, including the establishment of user and participant fees, subject to the review of the Council.
- Collects funds generated by its recreation programs in a revolving trust fund to defray the expense of operating, maintaining and improving the recreation programs, activities and facilities.

Environmental Commission (N.J.S.A. 40:56A-1 et seq.)
- Advises Princeton’s Planning and Zoning Boards about the environmental impacts of proposed development.
- Makes recommendations on natural resource issues.
- Informs residents on ways to protect the environment.
- Develops a natural resource inventory (NRI)-- also known as an environmental resource inventory (ERI)-- for Princeton.
Shade Tree Commission (N.J.S.A. 40:64-1 et seq.)

- Monitors the regulation, planting, care and control of shade and ornamental trees and shrubbery along Princeton’s streets and public places except State and county roads.
- Consults with and advises the Enforcement Officer regarding trees on private and public property.
- Reviews tree surveys, removal plans and planting plans accompanying land development applications referred by the Planning and Zoning Boards.
- Prepares standards for use of funds in the Princeton Shade Tree Trust Reserve.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF BCC MEMBERS

General

There are certain responsibilities common to members of all BCCs:

1. Understand your role and scope of responsibility and be informed of the objectives, scope of responsibility and operating procedures of your individual board, commission, committee, or task force. (For more, see Section I: Powers and Duties)

2. As an individual member of a BCC, you must not represent your own views or recommendations as those of the BCC as a whole unless the majority of the BCC has officially voted to approve such a position. (For more, see Section IV: Communications)

3. Members should represent the public interest and not special interest groups.

4. Members are in a unique position of serving as a liaison between the municipality and its citizens and can help to reconcile contradictory viewpoints and to build a consensus around common goals and objectives. (For more, see Section III: Relationships)

5. Do your homework and be thorough in recommendations by reviewing items prior to the meeting in order to be fully prepared to discuss, evaluate, and act on all matters scheduled for consideration.

6. Plan to attend and participate in all the meetings of the BCC. Alert the Chair in advance of a meeting if you are unable to attend.

7. Supportive relationships with the Mayor and Council and municipal staff are essential for successful operation of any board, commission, committee, or task force. (For more, see Section III: Relationships)

8. Establish a good working relationship with fellow members of your board, commission, committee, or task force. Respect individual viewpoints, allow other members time to present
their views fully before making comments, be open and honest, and welcome new members. (For more, see Section III: Relationships)

9. Appointments to boards, commissions, committees, and task forces are made without regard to political party affiliation. Members are not restricted from participating in political activities. However, members may not use or involve their membership on their respective board, commission, or committee in the conduct of political activities. (For more, see Section VI: Code of Conduct)

Responsibilities of the Chair

Each BCC\(^1\) is responsible for selecting its own chair and vice-chair at the first meeting of each calendar year. The Chair is responsible for the following:

- Assembling the agenda in advance of each meeting.
- Presiding over the meetings of the BCC. In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall preside. In the absence of both the chair and vice-chair, a quorum of those members present shall designate an acting chair to preside over the meeting.
- Acting as conduit, in conjunction with the Council Liaison, for correspondence and requests directed to the staff on behalf of the BCC.
- Representing the BCC in communications with the Mayor and Council.
- Ensuring agendas and minutes are filed in a timely manner with the Clerk and posted on the municipal website via Access Princeton. (For more, see Section VII: Agenda and Minutes)

Responsibilities of the Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for taking the minutes of the meeting and for making any necessary corrections, as approved by the BCC. Some BCCs are staffed with a paid secretary. These tend to be BCCs with special legal powers (See Section I: Powers and Duties). Many BCCs are responsible for electing a volunteer to act as Secretary. A BCC may elect to have an individual member of the BCC serve as the secretary, or to have the members take turns performing the duties of the secretary.

Responsibilities of the Council Liaisons

The Mayor selects Council liaisons to the BCCs each year with the advice and consent of Council. The role of a Council liaison is as follows:

- To serve as the primary two-way communication channel between the Princeton Council and the BCC. At each Council meeting there is time set aside for reports. The Council liaison is expected to update the rest of Council on the recent activities and discussions of the BCC, especially on topics that might culminate in a memo to Council, or a proposed resolution or ordinance.
- To help resolve questions the BCC may have about the role of the Princeton Council, municipal government and the BCC.

\(^1\) The Mayor appoints, with Council advice and consent, the Chair of the Princeton Environmental Commission.
• To provide procedural direction and relay the Princeton Council’s positions to the BCC.
• To facilitate placing the BCC’s recommendations on the Council agenda.
• To help the BCC interface appropriately with Municipal staff
• To advise on proper meeting procedures, answer questions, and in other respects assist the committee to carry on its work.
• To identify and help resolve any problems that may exist with respect to the functioning of the BCC.

III. RELATIONSHIPS

General Guidelines

The following general guidelines help to establish and maintain strong relationships:

• Do your homework.
• Explain actions in concise thoughts.
• Compliment colleagues and staff whenever an opportunity arises.
• Where applicable, try to involve residents in a solution.
• Work for consensus on important issues.
• Be attentive.
• Do not criticize staff or others in public.
• Understand you represent the municipality when interacting with members of the public.
  Take care to treat all with respect and in a professional manner.

Relationships with Other Board, Commission, or Committee Members

Success or failure is often dependent upon the degree of cooperation among the individual members of the BCC. We encourage you to keep the following points in mind in your interactions with other BCC members:

• Always respect other individuals’ viewpoints even though they may be different than your own.
• Allow others adequate time to present their views fully before making comments.
• Evaluation of other members’ viewpoints should be based on what is best for the total community and for all concerned.
• Be open and honest at all times.
• Each member has a responsibility to see that new members are made welcome, become oriented, and receive training.

Relationships with Princeton Mayor and Council Members

It is important to recognize that not all of the recommendations made by the various BCCs will be accepted and approved by the governing body. This does not imply a lack of confidence or disinterest in the advisory bodies’ recommendations. The Mayor and Councilmembers must weigh the advice provided by advisory bodies against a broader scope of considerations as they reach the decisions for which they are responsible. Although a BCC may disagree with the final decision that the Mayor and Council make on an issue, it should not act in any manner contrary to the established policy adopted by the Mayor and Council.


Staff Interaction

Staff members may act as advisors to BCCs and can provide research and administrative services. BCC members should not and cannot direct staff to work on projects without the approval of the Princeton Mayor and Council and direction of the Administrator. To operate the municipality in an effective and professional manner, the Mayor, Council and Administrator need to be aware of the projects on which each Department is working. In addition, BCC members should not make requests of professionals employed by the municipality, including attorneys, without the approval of the Administrator.

The BCCs have no authority to supervise or direct the work of Departments, except in cases where State statute allows.

Correspondence and requests directed to the staff on behalf of the BCC should be routed through the chair and/or the Council liaison.

Relationship with Other BCCs

The Mayor and Council rely on each BCC to approach issues and give advice through the lens of their BCC. Each BCC should respect the expertise of the other BCCs and their role in advising Council and the land use boards on policies related to their domains. For example, when reviewing a development proposal, the Historic Preservation Committee should focus on the historic aspects of the project and the impacts to the local historic district. The traffic-related committees should focus on the traffic safety aspects of a project.

At times, the governing body may work on an initiative that falls across more than one BCC or that otherwise calls for a more holistic approach. In these cases, the Mayor and Council may task various BCCs to work together. BCCs are also encouraged to communicate with one another, especially on issues where their interests might be overlap.

Relationship with the Public

Members serve as a communication link between the municipality and the general public, explaining municipal programs and recommendations, as well as providing a channel for citizen expression.

BCC meetings should be conducted in a manner that is conducive to a productive exchange of ideas and perspectives. Members have an obligation to listen to comments or complaints of the public. A welcome atmosphere should be prevalent, and steps should be taken to ensure that members of the public are free to express their views without fear of ridicule or belittlement by anyone with an opposing viewpoint.

Members should conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates fairness and professionalism. Members should be considerate of all interests and value differences of opinion. Additionally, members should remain open-minded, objective, and make no judgment until all of the available evidence pertaining to an issue has been submitted.
Common courtesy is expected from municipal representatives at all levels of the organization, including volunteers. It is important to recognize that, as a member, your actions and comments are often interpreted to be that of the entire board, commission, committee, task force, and a reflection of the municipality.

**IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

BCCs should communicate their positions to the Mayor and Council or to other BCCs on matters pertaining to the BCC’s purpose and function. The Chair should speak for the Board, unless the Board has expressly authorized another member’s communication. An individual member is free to voice a position, oral or written, on any issue as long as it is made clear that the member is not speaking as a representative of the Municipality, or as a member of a BCC.

Correspondence directed to staff on behalf of the BCC, including requests for information, should be routed through the chair and/or the Council liaison.

BCCs may advise the Princeton Council on advocating for or against legislative or political matters before another body, for example, the State Legislature or the County Freeholder Board. However, only the Mayor and Council can speak for the Municipality.

**Website and Social Media**

Each BCC has a designated page on the municipal website www.princetonnj.gov. Each BCC page should include a description of the mission of the BCC, a listing of its current members, agendas, and meeting minutes. The page should also include a photo – either of the BCC membership or an image related to the purpose of the BCC. BCCs can also use the website as a repository for useful information produced by the BCC, including reports, fact sheets, digital brochures, and FAQs. It is the responsibility of each BCC to ensure its webpage is up to date. Material should be reviewed by the staff and Council liaison(s) where applicable, approved by the BCC, and sent to the webmaster webmaster@princetonnj.gov for posting.

BCCs are encouraged to avail themselves of the town’s social media channels for informing the public of their activities. The municipality operates a Facebook page (@Princeton NJ Government), a Twitter account (@accessprinceton), and an Instagram account (@AccessPrinceton). Announcements about upcoming events, links to recent reports, and other timely information should be reviewed by the staff and Council liaison(s) where applicable, approved by the BCC, and sent to Access Princeton accesspreton@princetonnj.gov for posting. In addition, pictures from recent events can be sent to Access Princeton accesspreton@princetonnj.gov for posting.

The Mayor sends out a weekly email update to the community on current activities and initiatives. BCCs are encouraged to submit information about their upcoming activities to the Mayor for inclusion in the newsletter.

**Communication with Land Use Applicants**

Land use applications requiring Planning or Zoning Board approval are first reviewed by planning and zoning department staff, and then referred to the appropriate advisory committees and boards. Communication should be between the staff and committee/board members only. No members of
an advisory or review committee submitting comments to the Planning Board (including the Shade Tree Commission, Environmental Commission, SPRAB, and Historic Preservation Commission) should have direct contact with an applicant or the applicant’s representatives outside of the formal review process.

**Expressing Individual vs. BCC Views**

As an individual member of a BCC, you must not represent your own views or recommendations as those of the BCC unless the majority of the BCC has officially voted to approve such a position. BCC members who are making recommendations or expressing views which have not been approved by a majority of the BCC members should indicate they are expressing individual opinions and are not speaking on behalf of the BCC or the municipality.

Remember that your actions and statements as a BCC member assume special significance. When making a public statement, members should remind listeners that BCC actions are recommendations (unless otherwise provided by law) and that final action will be taken by the Princeton Council.

Although BCC members may be selected, in part, on the basis of representing specific interest groups, each member should represent the overall public good and not that of an exclusive group or interest.

**Expressing Dissenting Views**

The best time to express opposing views is during the meeting of the BCC with the goal of reaching a consensus conclusion. If a vote of the BCC is split, the members in the minority should state their reasoning for inclusion in the meeting minutes. If the BCC is submitting a memo to the Council or to the Zoning or Planning Board on a matter in which there is a split vote, the BCC may decide to include information about dissenting views within the memo, as applicable. It is not appropriate for individual members or groups of individual members to write separate dissenting memos on behalf of the BCC. The BCC should speak collectively in its recommendations.

**V. GETTING THINGS DONE**

Understanding the following processes will assist you and your BCC in working together with Mayor and Council and the professional staff to successfully accomplish your goals.

**Goal Setting**

At the beginning of each calendar year, Mayor and Council establish their annual goals and priorities with input from the municipal staff and the BCCs. BCCs are encouraged to participate in this process, and to align the annual goals of the BCC to the goals of the Council as a whole. The goal setting process often starts at the end of the prior year when Mayor and Council asks for BCC input on priority needs. BCCs are encouraged to start the process of considering the next year’s goals in October and November.

BCCs are encouraged to create a work plan that describes what you intend to accomplish in the upcoming year as it relates to your functions and duties. Each item in the work plan should set a
rough timeframe for completion. (Think of these timeframes as goals, rather than hard deadlines. If circumstances change, they will not limit your flexibility to respond to new information or conditions in real time.)

**Reports, Memos, and Work Sessions**

At each Council meeting there is time set aside for reports. The Council liaison is expected to update the rest of Council on the recent activities and discussions of the BCC, especially on topics that might culminate in a memo to Council or a proposed resolution or ordinance.

BCCs may ask or be asked to present a report to Council or lead a work session on a topic of interest, or to advise on an upcoming decision via a report or a memo. In addition, BCCs may use memos to bring important issues needing action to the attention of the Mayor and Council. Typically, the Chair will present on behalf of the BCC.

Memos should be voted on and approved by the BCC before submitting. The BCC Chair or Secretary should send the memo to the Mayor and Council and copy the Administrator and Clerk. Memos should be included in the agenda packet of the next scheduled Council meeting under “Correspondence” and archived on the BCC’s webpage on the municipal website. Depending on the content of the memo, the Chair and members of the BCC may be asked to make a presentation to Council or participate in a work session.

Periodically, the Mayor and Council may hold a work session with a BCC. These work sessions serve as an opportunity for open dialogue regarding matters of mutual concern. They also provide a forum to address any issues, including those that may have a budgetary impact.

**VI. MEETING PROCEDURES**

**Courtesy and Decorum**

The rules of order are meant to create an atmosphere where the members of the BCC and the public can attend to business efficiently, fairly and with full participation. And at the same time, it is up to the chair and the members of the BCC to maintain common courtesy and decorum. Only one person at a time should have the floor, and it is always best for every speaker to be first recognized by the chair before proceeding to speak.

The chair should ensure that debate and discussion of an agenda item focus on the item and the policy in question and has the right to cut off discussion that is too personal, too loud or too crude. The chair should ensure everyone is treated with respect: committee members, public, and staff.

Debate and discussion should be focused, but free and open. In the interest of time, the chair may limit the time allotted to speakers, including members of the BCC.

**Open Public Meetings Act**

All meetings of a BCC shall be open to the public at all times, except when the BCC is meeting in a validly convened executive session.
The term “meeting” is defined as a gathering of a quorum (or majority) of any BCC at which any public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken. It is important to remember that the open meeting requirements apply to more than just in-person gatherings. They also apply to telephone conference calls, group emails, or any other means of communication where meeting-like communication can occur. However, the term “meeting” does not include a chance meeting or social gathering at which public business is not discussed.

**Notice Requirement**

Full and timely notice to the public should be given prior to the holding of any meeting of a BCC at which a quorum is in attendance or is expected to be in attendance.

Each BCC chair should provide a list to the Clerk’s Office of the regular meeting dates at the beginning of the calendar year. For special meetings, irregularly scheduled meetings, or rescheduled meetings, notice of the meeting should be filed with the Clerk’s Office at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting. Less notice is permitted only when dealing with matters of such urgency and importance that a delay would be likely to result in substantial harm to the public interest. The chair must confirm any such meetings in advance with legal counsel to the BCC, if available, or with the Administrator or Mayor.

**Executive or Closed Session**

Discussions related to personnel, litigation, and negotiations may be held in executive or closed session. The holding of an executive session is the only time that a meeting of a BCC may lawfully be conducted privately. For most BCCs, the use of executive sessions is an extremely rare event and members are encouraged to obtain advice in advance from the Administrator if they contemplate requesting such a session. During an executive session, the BCC cannot make final policy decisions, adopt resolutions, or take other formal action.

**Meeting Times**

Long-term standing committees have pre-established regular meeting times. Newly formed committees should establish regular meeting times at their first meeting. The first meeting will be set by the Council Liaison(s) and staff.

Committee members can propose a new regular meeting time by having the item placed on an agenda, with the majority of the members voting in favor of changing the regular meeting time. Council and staff liaisons availability, as well as meeting room availability, should be considered when changing the regular meeting time.

**Quorum Requirements**

In order for a BCC to conduct business or take formal action, a quorum of the membership must be present. A quorum consists of the majority of the total number of members specified by the municipal ordinance for that BCC (or state statute, if applicable). This quorum requirement does not change even if a position on the BCC is vacant and the Mayor has not appointed a replacement. In the event that a quorum is not present for a meeting, no action can be taken and those present should adjourn the meeting to a later date and time.
Rules of Procedure

BCC meetings are usually conducted according to standard rules of procedure for the conduct of official meetings as found in "Robert's Rules of Order."

The meeting agenda (See Agenda) constitutes the BCC’s agreed-upon road map. Each agenda item can be handled by the chair in the following basic format:

1) The chair should announce the agenda item number and subject.

2) The chair should invite the appropriate people to report on the item, including any recommendations they might have.

3) The chair should ask members of the BCC if they have any technical questions for clarification.

4) The chair should invite public comments or, if appropriate at a formal meeting, open the meeting to public input. If many members of the public want to speak, the chair may limit the time of each public speaker. At the conclusion of the public comments, the chair should announce that public input has concluded.

5) The chair should invite a motion from the BCC's members. The chair should announce the name of the member who makes the motion.

6) The chair should determine if any member of the BCC wishes to second the motion. The chair should announce the name of the member who seconds the motion.

7) If the motion is made and seconded, the chair should make sure everyone understands the motion. This is done in one of two ways:

   a. The chair can ask the maker of the motion to repeat it; or
   b. The chair can repeat the motion.

8) The chair should now invite discussion of the motion by the members of the BCC. If there is no desired discussion or the discussion has ended, the chair should announce that the BCC will vote on the motion. If there has been no discussion or a very brief discussion, the vote should proceed immediately, and there is no need to repeat the motion. If there has been substantial discussion, it is normally best to make sure everyone understands the motion by having the maker of the motion repeat it.

9) The chair has the power to end discussion and to limit debate when it is no longer productive. The chair's rulings prevail unless overruled by a majority of the members. The chair retains the right to make and second motions, participate in discussions and vote on all matters.

10) The chair takes a vote. Simply asking for the “ayes” and then the “nays” is normally sufficient. If members of the body do not vote, then they “abstain.” If there is a split vote,
the chair can ask for a show of hands or conduct a roll call vote. A simple majority determines whether the motion passes or is defeated.

11) The chair should announce the result of the vote and should announce what action (if any) the BCC has taken. In announcing the result, the chair should indicate the names of the members, if any, who voted in the minority on the motion.

Taking Action
Taking action on an item is one of the most important things a BCC does. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Make sure the proposed action item has been placed on the agenda ahead of time;
- Make sure it falls within the scope of the BCC’s mission and any applicable Council goals and priorities;
- Recognize that normally all BCC actions seeking Council action or commitments will be in the form of a recommendation to Mayor and Council;
- Review the proposed action with municipal staff and Council Liaison(s) in advance, especially if it requires a commitment of municipal staff time or resources;
- Remember that if the BCC is advisory to the Council it should not undertake to act independently;
- If there is a new item the BCC would like to work on, outside of the annual goals, send a request to the Mayor and Council through the Council Liaisons(s) for approval before starting work;
- If the BCC wants to comment to an outside agency or person, for example on a pending bill, send the BCC’s draft comments via the Council Liaison(s) to the Mayor and Council for approval recognizing only the Mayor and Council can speak for the Municipality.
- If an advisory committee receives a request from an outside organization, the request should be forwarded to the Council Liaison(s). The advisory committee should not respond directly to the requestor without authorization via the Council Liaison(s).

VII. AGENDA AND MINUTES

Agenda

The chair should put together an agenda in advance of each meeting with the assistance of designated municipal staff and Council Liaison(s). The Chair will submit the agenda to the clerk at least 48 hours before the meeting to allow sufficient time for posting on the town website.

The agenda shall include the following:
- The name of the committee or board;
- The date, time and place of the meeting;
- A general description of each agenda item that will be discussed;
- Any other information that may be required by law.

Formal action can only be taken on items appearing on the agenda.
Each BCC should provide members of the public with an opportunity to speak to any matter coming within its purview, regardless of whether the matter is on the agenda. The BCC chair can impose time limitations if necessary. The Committee or Board Chair should remind public speakers to state their name and address for the record.

Minutes

Minutes must be taken at any meeting of a BCC at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation or formal action occurs or could occur. At a minimum, the minutes of a meeting should contain the following information:

- Date, time and location of the meeting.
- Listing of members present.
- General outline of each major topic discussed or considered and the outcome.
- Verbatim (to the extent possible) record of all motions along with a list of how each member voted on each motion.
- Statements made by individual board members explaining their vote. (Note: it is especially important that board members state, and the minutes reflect, reasons for dissenting opinions.)
- Detailed recording of all formal action taken.
- Time of adjournment.

Approval of Minutes

BCCs should review minutes and make any additions, deletions or corrections. Each BCC is encouraged to draft, review and approve minutes within 60 days and sooner if possible. The approved minutes should be sent by the chair or secretary of the BCC to the Clerk for posting on municipal bulletin board and Access Princeton for posting on the municipal website.
VI. CONTACTS AND CHECKLISTS

Contacts

Liz Lempert, Mayor
llempert@princetonnj.gov
(609) 924-5176

Marc Dashield, Administrator
mdashield@princetonnj.gov
(609) 924-5176

Delores Williams, Clerk
dwilliams@princetonnj.gov
(609) 924-5704

Christina Iliff, Access Princeton
accessprinceton@princetonnj.gov
(609) 924-4141

Annual Checklist

At the first meeting of the year – either in January for an existing BCC or when a new BCC or task force is initially formed – the following steps should be taken:

- Elect a chair and vice-chair *
- Nominate a secretary to take minutes *
- Approve a meeting schedule for the remainder of the calendar year *
- Verify the phone and email contact for all members of the BCC *
- Send the results of all the above items marked with * to the Clerk and Access Princeton for posting on the municipal website.
- Review this Handbook
- Review goals for the year
- Review BCC webpage to ensure it is up to date.

Meeting Checklist

Before each meeting, the Chair or Secretary should:

- Develop an agenda and send to the Clerk and Access Princeton and to BCC members
- Circulate any backup materials that will be considered, including draft meeting minutes from the prior meeting

After each meeting, the Chair or Secretary should send the following to the Clerk and Access Princeton for posting on the municipal website:

- Approved minutes
- Any approved resolutions, memos, or other communications intended for Mayor and Council
VI. CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction
As representatives of the Princeton government, members of the municipality’s volunteer BCCs are required to comply with the following rules.

These rules require members to abide by certain ethical standards and to comply with the municipality’s harassment policy.

Each member shall upon their appointment sign and submit to the Administrator's office the attached "Receipt and Acknowledgment" stating that they have received a copy of this Code and shall abide thereby.

Local Government Ethics

Members shall abide by the Local Government Ethics Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:9-22.1 et seq. and familiarize themselves with the "Disqualification Rules" attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Members shall not solicit or accept personal gifts of any form from private sources for services rendered or to be rendered as members of volunteer BCCs or in the course of conducting business in their capacity as members of volunteer BCCs.

No member shall be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the municipality, or in the compensation for goods or services furnished to the municipality or any contractor furnishing the same to the municipality; nor shall they participate in any profits of such parties or receive any gift or other reward for actions related to such activities.

Members shall not engage in partisan political activity on municipal time or property, use their position for personal gain, or unlawfully use their position to coerce others. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent members from becoming or continuing to be members of any political party, club or organization, attending political meetings or expressing partisan political views or circulating petitions on public questions outside of working hours and off municipal property. Nor shall members be prevented from voting with complete freedom in any election.

Harassment Policy
To the extent applicable, members shall abide by and conduct themselves in accordance with the "Policy Against Harassment" attached hereto as Exhibit B. This is the harassment policy governing Princeton municipal employees and it shall be equally applicable to volunteer members of BCCs.

Attendance Policy
All members of BCCs shall regularly attend the meetings of the BCC upon which they are serving. Failure to do so may lead to the member’s removal. A BCC member is entitled to request a public hearing to contest their removal.

Eligibility
All members of BCCs shall be residents of Princeton during their tenure on said BCCs unless the enabling legislation or ordinance creating said BCC permits non-residents to serve.

Persons employed by the municipality may not serve on any BCC unless so provided in the enabling legislation.

Members are free to resign at any time.
EXHIBIT A: Disqualification Rules

Members of volunteer BCCs should conscientiously avoid participating in the functions of their respective BCCs on any matter, including but not limited to the establishment of policies or taking action on any application before said BCC, that may involve directly or indirectly a conflict of interest which would prejudice the value of their advice. Members are often persons who by professional personal qualifications have unique involvement in certain specialty fields including but not limited to engineering, law, real estate and medicine, and as such may personally or professionally have an interest generally in the progress of particular points of view or cases in the community, which professional interest is a part of and not detrimental to their function on the respective BCC.

Consequently, it is improper for any member to participate in consideration of or vote on any matter, whether it is an application or policy decision or recommendation (as appropriate), to which they may have a direct or indirect special relationship which could influence their comments, or give the appearance of unduly influencing recommendations of the BCC of which they are a member. It is the obligation of each member to determine whether they have such a special relationship to any matter before said BCC by applying the guidelines set forth herein. In no event shall a member be considered to have a special relationship to a matter merely because of a specific opinion based upon personal beliefs or professional views. A special relationship shall be deemed to exist where economic or personal interest, professional or otherwise, is directly or indirectly concerned with the individual matter.

The following are examples of such explanations:

1. Having been engaged by or having given substantial assistance to the applicant in preparation of any part of their submission.
2. Having a direct or indirect interest in financial results which may result from a ruling on the application.
3. Being the employer, employee, client, associate or relative of the applicant or having a financial or proprietary interest in the application.

The foregoing examples are merely illustrative of the special interest referred to by these rules and are not to be considered definitive limits of the form special interest might take. In any situation when a special interest exists, whatever its form, it shall be the duty of the member affected to make it known to the other members of the BCC and withdraw from consideration of the application in question.
EXHIBIT B: POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT

Harassment Policy

It is Princeton’s policy to prohibit harassment of an employee by another employee, management representative, supplier, volunteer, or business invitee on the basis of actual or perceived sex, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or political status, affectional or sexual orientation, domestic partnership status, atypical heredity, cellular or blood trait, genetic information, disability (including AIDS or HIV infection), liability for service in the United States armed forces, and/or any other characteristic protected by law. While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, teasing, caricatures or representations of persons using electronically or physically altered photos, drawings, or images, and other similar verbal, written, printed, or physical conduct.

If a volunteer member is witness to or believes to have experienced harassment, immediate notification of their BCC chair or other appropriate people should take place. See the Complaint Policy.

Harassment of any employees, in connection with their work, by a volunteer member may also be a violation of this policy.

Notification of appropriate personnel of any harassment problem is essential to the success of this policy and the municipality generally. Princeton cannot resolve a harassment problem unless it knows about it. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all to bring those kinds of problems to the attention of the appropriate officials so that steps are taken to correct them.

Complaint Policy

Volunteer members of BCCs who observe actions they believe to constitute harassment, sexual harassment, or any other workplace wrongdoing should immediately report the matter to their BCC chair, or, if they prefer, or do not think that the matter can be discussed with their BCC chair, they should contact the Council liaison, the Administrator, or Assistant Administrator. The BCC chair must report the complaint to the Council liaison or the Administrator.

Reporting of such incidents is encouraged either when a volunteer member feels that he or she is subject to such incidents or observes such incidents in reference to others. The volunteer member should report incidents in writing but may make a verbal complaint at their discretion. If the volunteer member has any questions about what constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or any other workplace wrongdoing, they may ask their BCC chair or one of the individuals listed above. All reports of harassment, sexual harassment, or other wrongdoing will be promptly investigated by a person who is not involved in the alleged harassment or wrongdoing.

No volunteer member will be penalized in any way for reporting a complaint. There will be no discrimination or retaliation against any individual who files a good-faith harassment complaint, even if the investigation produces insufficient evidence to support the complaint, and even if the charges
cannot be proven. There will be no discrimination or retaliation against any other individual who participates in the investigation of a complaint.

If the investigation substantiates the complaint, appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action will be swiftly pursued. Actions taken internally to investigate and resolve harassment complaints will be conducted confidentially to the extent practicable and appropriate in order to protect the privacy of persons involved. Any investigation may include interviews with the parties involved in the incident, and if necessary, with individuals who may have observed the incident or conduct or who have other relevant knowledge. The complaining volunteer member will be notified of a decision at the conclusion of the investigation within a reasonable time from the date of the report of an incident.
Receipt and Acknowledgment

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the Code of Conduct for Members of Princeton Municipal Voluntary Boards, Committees and Commissions. If you do not understand any portion of the Code of Conduct or its attachments, please contact the Administrator for further guidance.

I, ________________________________, have received a copy of the Code of Conduct for Members of Princeton Municipal Volunteer Boards, Committees and Commissions ("Code"). I understand that the Code of Conduct describes policies governing harassment and government ethics that are applicable to Princeton’s boards, committees and commissions. I agree to abide by these policies.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Member's Signature                      Date

_________________________________________
Print Name