

Citizen's Guide to City Commission Meetings

This guide, entitled ***Citizen's Guide to City Commission Meetings***, was formulated to help the residents of Bunnell better understand the purpose of the meetings of the City Commission. This guide will also assist in understanding who the members of the City Commission are, what their duties are, and how a meeting is conducted.

As a resident of the City of Bunnell, we encourage you to get involved in all matters that are of concern to you. We invite you to attend all public meetings and welcome your participation in meetings when public participation is opened.

If you have any questions regarding City Commission meetings or should you wish to discuss an issue of importance, please feel free to contact the following staff at:

CITY MANAGER

DR. ALVIN B. JACKSON, JR
437-7500 X 2303
ajackson@bunnellcity.us

CITY CLERK

Kristen Bates, CMC, CBTO
437-7500 EXT. 2308
kbates@bunnellcity.us

DEPUTY CLERK

Bridgitte Gunnells, CBTO
437-7500 x 2321
bgunnells@bunnellcity.us

PARTICIPANTS

Mayor

The Mayor is a member of the City Commission elected at large for a three-year term by popular vote of the registered electors (i.e. citizens) of Bunnell. The Mayor serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Bunnell and presides over all meetings of the City Commission. The Mayor votes on all motions. The Mayor may make a motion or second a motion. In some cases, the Mayor may pass the gavel to allow another member of the City Commission, usually the Vice Mayor, to preside over a matter as needed. Other duties of the Mayor are established in the City's Charter. There are no term limits for the Mayor.

Vice Mayor

The Vice Mayor is a member of the City Commission. They are elected at large to serve a three-year term as a City Commission; however, at the first meeting in April each year, the members of the City Commission will nominate and vote for a Commissioner to serve in the role of Vice Mayor for the next 12 months. There are no term limits on serving as the Vice Mayor. The Vice Mayor will run the conduct of a Commission Meeting when the Mayor is unavailable to attend a meeting and is also granted other duties through the City Charter.

City Commissioner

Commissioners are elected on an at-large basis to serve a three-year term. There are a total of four (4) Commissioners; however as mentioned above, one Commissioner is elected to serve as the Vice Mayor for a twelve-month period, from April to April. There are no term limits for Commissioners.

City Commission

The City Commission is the overall term for the legislative body for the City of Bunnell. The City Commission is comprised of the Mayor, Vice Mayor and three (3) City Commissioners, making a five (5) member board. The City's Charter prohibits the City Commission from being involved in day-to-day operations of the City; they establish and adopt policy but cannot involve themselves in the implementation of those policies. This includes giving direction or directives to any City Staff other than the City Manager. Violating the City Charter or Florida Statutes applicable to Elected Officials can result in a Commissioner facing an Ethics Violation case with the State OR even criminal prosecution.

City Manager

The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Bunnell. The City Manager is appointed by and serves at the discretion and pleasure of the City Commission through a contract. The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day administration of all City departments, programs, activities, and functions of the City in accordance with state law, the City Charter, and the policies adopted by the City Commission. The City Manager sits at the dais during City Commission meetings but does not have a vote on matters heard by the City Commission.

City Clerk

The City Clerk has duties established by Florida Statutes and other general duties as well. Some of the statutory duties of the City Clerk are maintaining City ordinances, Official Custodian of City Records (Keeper of Record), meeting minutes and all official City records, keeping the City Corporate Seal, attesting to City documents and serving as the City's Municipal Elections Official. The City Clerk publishes all City agendas and attends all meetings of the City Commission, is responsible for setting up the board chambers, operating any equipment used during the conduct of meetings, assisting the Commission with conducting the meeting in accordance with the adopted rules of the City Commission, serving as the liaison between the public and the Commission, ensuring all documents approved in the meeting are signed, processed, and recorded as required.

City Attorney

The City Attorney is appointed by and serves at the discretion and pleasure of the City Commission. The City Attorney is a contract position (not a member of staff) and is responsible for advising the City Commission and City Manager on all matters of legal pertinence. The City Attorney sits at the dais during City Commission meetings but does not have a vote on matters heard by the City Commission.

Recording Secretary

The Deputy City Clerk serves as the recording secretary at all City Commission meetings. The recording secretary is responsible for keeping a record of proceedings to complete the draft and official meeting minutes. When the City Clerk is not able to be at a Commission meeting, the Deputy Clerk will act in role of the City Clerk and another City staff member will serve in the role as recording secretary.

Management Staff

Department Directors, such as the Finance Director, Community Development Director, Police Chief, Infrastructure Director, or other City staff may also attend meetings of the City Commission. When required, they will present and report on agenda items under their purview and answer any questions the City Commission or Public may have on those items.

Public

People in the audience, whether residents, business owners, adjacent jurisdiction residents, etc., who could potentially be affected by a decision made by the City. If you wish to voice a concern or provide input on an agenda item, it would be done when “Public Comments” for that item are opened during the meeting. The City limits public comments to four (4) minutes. Those speaking during Public Comments should keep their comments respectful and avoid the use of threats or aggressive language.

MEETINGS

The City Commission may meet in a few different formats- Regular Meeting, Workshop, Special Meeting or Emergency Meeting.

Regular (business) meetings of the City Commission are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of every month, unless it is an observed holiday. The meetings start at 7:00 PM and are held in the Board Chambers of the Government Services Building located at 1769 E. Moody Blvd., Bunnell, Florida. This relocation of the City Meetings went into effect January 1, 2022 until the City's new Administration and Police Department Complex is built.

Workshops are scheduled as needed when the Commission needs to discuss a particular item at length and gather information. No final action (vote) can be taken at a Workshop meeting; however, the Commission may provide staff with direction on the matter so that it could be brought before the Commission at a Regular meeting. The Commission tries to schedule workshops prior to Regular Meetings, but they may schedule them on other days of the week too.

Special meetings may be held on the call of the Mayor or any Commission member with no less than 72 hours' notice to each member and the public. Special Meetings are limited to a sole/single subject matter and no other subject should be introduced at a Special Meeting.

Emergency meetings may be called, with an attempt made to notify the public, by the Mayor or any Commission member, but must be of such importance that the community's health, safety, welfare, lives or the City's finances are in immediate peril. This is often used for declaring a Local State of Emergency.

Note: Both Special and Emergency Meetings are restricted to the subjects matter for which the meeting was called.

In accordance with the City's Charter, the Commission adopts rules and procedures for the conduct of all City public meetings- City Commission and any Volunteer Board or Committee at its first meeting in April following a Municipal Election.

City agendas for all meetings are published on the City's website. But for

Special and Emergency meetings, agendas are published 1 week prior to the date of the meeting; there may be times when publication of an agenda is delayed if Staff is waiting for a document that is needed for an agenda item to be considered, but Staff tries to limit this practice.

MEETING SERVICES & ADA COMPLIANCE

Any person requiring a special accommodation at a City meeting because of disability or physical impairment should contact the City Clerk at 386-437-7500, ext 5, at least 48 business hours before the start of the meeting.

Also, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13166, the City will provide the services of an interpreter to provide meaningful access to individuals requiring this assistance to participate in public meetings.

THE GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS OR “AGENDA”

The general order of a Regular City Commission meeting is as follows:

- A. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
 - Roll Call
 - Invocation
- B. Introductions, Commendations, Proclamations, Presentations
- C. Consent Agenda
- D. Public Comments
- E. Ordinances (Legislative)
- F. Resolutions (Legislative)
- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Reports
 - City Clerk
 - Police Chief
 - City Attorney
 - City Manager
 - Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Commissioners
- J. Adjournment

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG, ROLL CALL AND INVOCATION

The Mayor calls the meeting to order at the time the meeting is advertised to start and leads the Pledge of Allegiance for all in attendance. Roll Call is taken to determine that a quorum (majority) is present. Without a quorum physically being present, the Commission cannot take action. If this happens, the City Commission can only open the meeting, take attendance to determine a quorum and then close the meeting; no decisions can be made without quorum being present. A member of the City Commission or a member of the Public may provide an Invocation prior to the start of “business” portion of the meeting.

INTRODUCTIONS, COMMENDATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS

This portion of the meeting is used for matters that generally require no vote or official action to be taken. These matters can be the introduction of new City staff, new staff at other agencies in the community who work closely with the City in the community, for the Commission to present commendations to City staff, Proclamations requested by other organizations to be declared and presented to the requestor or to allow agencies to provide a brief (no more than 15 minute) informational presentation to the City Commission. To appear in this portion of the agenda, a request must be made to the City. This is done through the City Clerk Office.

CONSENT AGENDA

The use of a *Consent Agenda* is a process whereby all items on the consent agenda for a City Commission meeting can be passed with one single vote of the City Commission. Types of items that are usually placed on the Consent Agenda are: warrants, meeting minutes, contracts and budgeted purchases. If there is an item on the Consent Agenda that needs to be examined, that item may be “pulled” from the Consent Agenda by any member of the City Commission. The item pulled from the Consent Agenda can/will then be discussed and voted on separately. The remaining items left on the Consent Agenda are then passed with one vote.

By using the Consent Agenda process, the City Commission saves time and only discusses items that a Commission member or meeting attendee

feels are necessary to discuss. The use of this process allows for meetings to be run more efficiently.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Agendas for all meetings of the City Commission include a section for “Public Comments.” This gives members of the public an opportunity to comment on items and issues not on the agenda.

Those addressing the City Commission are required to step up to the podium/microphone, state their name and address on the record. This is necessary for minutes accuracy and to determine standing for actions within the City. Those making comments are limited to a four (4) minute time limit. Staff will announce when time has been met. At the discretion of the Mayor the time limit may be adjusted due to the number of people wishing to address the City Commission and/or the length of the agenda. In general, members of the Public get one opportunity to speak during this portion of the meeting; there is no “coming back” to the podium to make follow-up or additional comments.

Generally, Public Comments are not a dialogue. This means neither the City Commission nor Staff will engage in a question-and-answer session or back and forth discussion with the speaker; however, the Mayor may ask the City Manager or City staff to answer questions if possible or to gather more information regarding the subject and continue the discussion with the concerned party outside of the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS OR QUASI JUDICIAL HEARINGS

Ordinances and sometimes certain Resolutions are classified as Public Hearings. Items that are Public Hearings have been advertised in accordance with the applicable state statute or local regulation.

After the Mayor announces the subject/title of the agenda item, the City Attorney will read the “short title” or the condensed language stating the subject matter of either the ordinance or resolution into the record.

City staff may then introduce or further report on the subject.

The Mayor then asks for a Motion from the Commission. Once a motion

and second have been made, the item is “open” for discussion- first by the Commission, then the Public and then the Commission again. Once all discussion is closed by the Mayor, the vote is called for and the Commission votes on the item. All Commissioners must vote

If there is no second to a motion, the motion dies for lack of second. A majority vote of the City Commission is required to adopt an Ordinance or Resolution. A tie vote will result in the motion failing.

Sometimes the City Commission may want additional information that cannot be provided at the meeting, or they have requested some amendments to an Ordinance/Resolution. If the Commission is comfortable that staff can easily make the changes without bringing the ordinance back, a Commissioner will make a motion to adopt the ordinance “as amended” after spelling out the specific changes/additions/deletions wanted. However, when the additional information or changes are too detailed, a member of the City Commission can make a motion to continue or postpone the Public Hearing until a date and time certain.

ORDINANCES

An ordinance means official legislative action of a governing body, which action is a regulation of a general and permanent nature and enforceable as a local law. This could be changes to the City’s Code of Ordinance, Land Development Code, Future Land Use Map or Zoning Map. Each ordinance shall be introduced in writing and shall address one subject matter only. The subject shall be clearly stated in the title (also known as the “Short Title”). No ordinance shall be revised or amended by reference to its title only. Ordinances to revise or amend shall set out in full the revised or amended act or section or subsection or paragraph of a section or subsection.

Florida Statutes require an Ordinance to be read twice.

Ordinances are placed on the agenda for First Reading. Florida Statutes also require an ordinance to be read, by title only, on two separate readings. First reading is a formality required by law to put an ordinance on the books to let the public know the City Commission is considering adoption of the ordinance. If the proposed ordinances “passes” at First Reading, it is scheduled for Second Reading. The Second Reading of an

ordinance is the formal adoption hearing for the proposed ordinance. For an ordinance to be approved (passed) or adopted, it must be approved by a majority vote of the City Commission; in certain matters, such as budgets, a “super” majority vote of the City Commission is required,

There are varying noticing and advertising requirements depending on the subject matter of the ordinance. Some requirements are established by Florida Statute, and some are established by local regulations. The legally required notice and advertising requirements must be met for an item to be heard by the City Commission.

The Mayor will take public comments specifically about the proposed ordinance. This is the opportunity for members of the Public to voice their opinion or concerns about the proposed regulation; these comments are to be limited to the subject matter introduced and should not be about other items on the agenda or that should have been addressed under the Public Comments portion of the agenda.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution means an expression of a governing body concerning matters of administration, and expression of a temporary character, or a provision for the disposition of a particular item of the administration business of the governing body. Each resolution shall be introduced in writing and shall embrace one subject matter. The subject shall be clearly stated in the title. Resolutions are for items that do not require a Public Hearing. The exception to this is setting the Millage rate and adopting the operating budget for a fiscal year is a Public Hearing. A member of City staff may make a report to the City Commission on the subject matter of the resolution.

The Mayor will take public comments specifically about the resolution. This is the opportunity for members of the Public to voice their opinion or concerns about the proposed regulation; these comments are to be limited to the subject matter introduced and should not be about other items on the agenda or that should have been addressed under the Public Comments portion of the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

Items listed under “Old Business” may be issues that were previously on the “New Business” agenda of another Commission meeting. These items may have been continued, postponed, or tabled at a previous City Commission meeting or direction was given by the Commission to staff to bring the item back before the Commission after further research has been completed. If an item appears on this portion of the agenda, the City Commission did not take action when the item last appears on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Items may be listed on the agenda under “New Business” that do not require a resolution or ordinance, but still require a majority vote of the Commission. This section may also contain items presented to the City Commission for the first time and require some direction from the City Commission to City Staff before continuing towards a contract, resolution, or ordinance.

REPORTS

The City Clerk, Police Chief, City Attorney and City Manager each give reports of interest to the City Commission. The City Manager may call upon various department heads to report on issues of interest to the Commission during the City Manager report. Reports by Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Commissioners allow individual members of the City Commissioners an opportunity to bring up items they want to bring to the attention of other commission members or staff, such as reports on the various other Board meeting they might attend. A Commission member may make a report or seek consensus to a specific issue. A full vote of the City Commission should not be required for items brought up during “Reports.”

ADJOURNMENT

This is how the meeting is formally closed. Once adjourned, the meeting is over, and no other actions can be taken on items that were decided on within the meeting. Just because a decision may have been made in the meeting, a member of the Commission may not be able to discuss the matter further if there is a chance it might appear on a future agenda; this is because Florida requires all municipal meetings to be conducted in the “Sunshine.”

COMMISSION MEETING HANDOUTS

If during a Commission meeting a citizen, member of staff, or invited guest distributes any handouts or copies of a presentation to members of the City Commission that was not included in the agenda packet, a copy of said handout shall also be provided to the City Clerk or Recording Secretary. It is required that such documents be included with the official minutes of the meeting.

FLORIDA SUNSHINE LAW

In Florida, many formal standards of conduct for municipal officials are embodied in the Constitution and in State law. These various standards are scattered and Government in the Sunshine or the “Sunshine Amendment” is not in one state statute for easy reference.

Government in the “sunshine” requires the majority of government business be conducted in an open and public manner. There are very few exceptions to this law. Operating in the “sunshine” affects what government officials are allowed to talk about with each other outside of a noticed meeting or in some very rare cases, discuss with constituents. It even affects their ability to respond to comments and things brought up in social media.

If an elected official discusses an item that appears on an agenda or is most likely to appear on an agenda with a constituent, they may have to disclose what and who they talked about on the official meeting record. This means there is not an expectation of confidentiality if you provide information to a member of the City Commission.

The penalties for violating the Sunshine Law can include fines and jail time.


AGENDA INFORMATION


Copies of formal agenda packets for all City Commission meetings are published on the City website or available in the City Clerk's office at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date for regular meetings and with exceptions for Special or Emergency Meetings.

You can sign up to receive e-mail notifications for all published agendas of City Public Meetings on the City's website. Go to the City home page www.bunnellcity.us. Then in the middle of the Home page click the radio button to "subscribe." You will be taken to a page to select what notifications you want to receive in your e-mail. You can unsubscribe at any time. You can also elect to get other notices from the City through this process.

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A complete agenda will also be available for public viewing at the back of the Board Chambers on the agenda table.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

If the City is authorized through Statute, Executive Order or any other regulation, whether temporary or permanent, to conduct virtual meetings, the meeting information will be published on that agenda.

ZOOM Virtual Meeting Information and General Directions
To Participate in a City of Bunnell Commission meeting with Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting by going to <http://bunnellcity.us/meeting>

OR

Via Zoom Mobile App Join with Meeting ID: 944 464 2817

OR

Dial by phone for audio ONLY:

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 944 464 2817

Prior to the start of the meeting please make sure you have silenced/muted all cell phones or noise-making devices, such as TVs or radios, as they can be heard through the meeting audio.