Get Your Public Meetings Back on Track! Tips and Tricks for Effective Meetings

ILG Webinar April 12, 2018 11:00AM-12:00PM



Speakers

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Moderator

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The Institute for Local Government

ILG is the non-profit research and education affiliate of







California Special Districts Association

Districts Stronger Together





ILG Mission

- Promoting good government at the local level
- Practical, impartial and easy-to-use materials



Have a question for our panel?

- Please type your questions into the question box at any time during the webinar.
- We will read your questions during the question period at the end of the webinar.





Quick Poll - Who's online?

Which of the following best describes you?

- Local government official or staff
- State, regional or other governmental agency
- Nonprofit or community-based organization
- Private sector or consultant
- Other



What Will You Learn More About Today?



- Best practices in chairing a meeting; key duties of chair
- Components of a successful meeting
- How to deal with disruptive audiences and divisive topics



Why Engage the Public?

Better identification of community values and needs

More informed residents

Improve local agency decision—making

More community buy-in and support





Why Engage the Public?

Faster project implementation

Increased community participation and leadership development

Increased trust in local government



INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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What is the role of the meeting chair?

Job #1: Traffic Cop & Air Traffic Controller

Get everyone from where they are to where they want to go and keep them from crashing into one another.



Remember: You are not the star.



What is the role of the meeting chair?

Job #2: The Play-by-Play Announcer

Keep everyone *refreshed* as to where you are and where you are headed.

Keep everyone *refreshed* as to the rules of the road.

What are the goals of the meeting chair?

Make sure everybody thinks they got a fair shake (because they did!)

- ✓ Were they heard? If possible, ask each member by name.
- ✓ Was their point of view allotted the time it was entitled to?
- Was it a safe space to be heard?

The importance of being extra prepared

Know the rules The 80-20 rule applies

Know the material

Wait and listen

Synthesize what you have heard

Get the body to yes

The Chair can help find the common thread and pull together what seem to be disparate thoughts but are often a coherent view of the body.

The importance of good working relationships



Have you fostered a good relationship with your colleagues before you sit down at the dais?



Have you made public comments that will make it hard to be collegial?

How to handle hostile public comment

Remember, it's not personal – even when it is.

Not always a representative sample.

Don't engage.

Be open to legitimate criticism that may come your way.

How to handle hostile public comment

There may be something worth listening to, albeit its delivery in a rough package.

Be polite, clear and firm.

The power of a recess.

Create a safe space.

How important are procedural rules?

You need to have at least a basic sense of the rules governing the body. Again, remember the 80-20 rule.

Do you have a parliamentarian? If so, use them. Let them take the heat. But remember, the parliamentarian is <u>not</u> the presiding officer.

Be consistent, but don't be too rule driven.

Make sure everyone at the table has the same basic sense of the rules.

The rules are means to an end, not an end in and of themselves.

Focus too much on the rules and you've lost sight of the real purpose of the rules: to have a good meeting and a good result.

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Thomas D. Jex





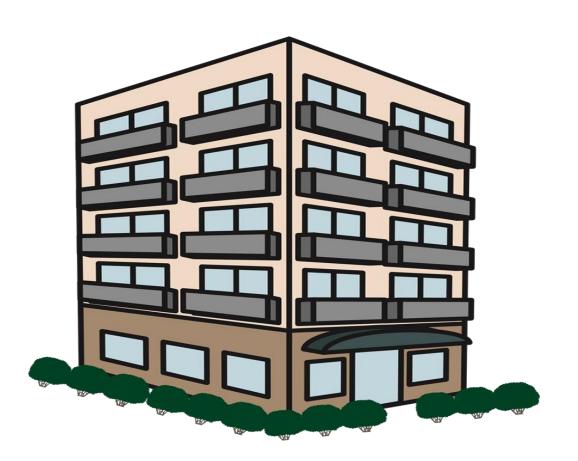
April 12, 2018

A Contentious Public Meeting

 Some tips and strategies to help the meeting run better



A Condo Project



<u>Mayor</u>

- Review Agency's procedural rules
- Go through some "what if" scenarios
- Set the tone at beginning of meeting



City Manager

Behind the scenes meetings and planning

City staff helping audience



Council Member

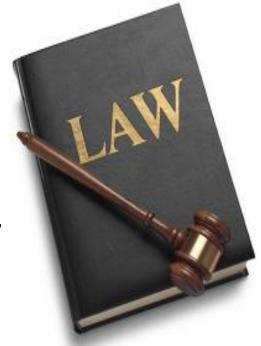
Statements from fellow council members to remind audience

Everyone deserves a chance to share their comments



City Attorney

- Brown Act allows a legislative body to remove persons who willfully interrupt a meeting (Govt. 54957.9)
- Members of the press or "other news media" must be allowed to stay



Enhancing Public Participation

- Community outreach
- Meeting format, location, time
- Methods of engagement
- www.ca-ilg.org/pebasics
- www.ca-ilg.org/enhancing-publicparticipation

Enhancing Public Participation

Local agencies inform, consult or deliberate with the greater community in a variety of ways. Resources in this section provide decision makers information on how to enhance their public engagement efforts.

For officials interested in understanding the options and opportunities associated with broadening and deepening their public engagement activities, please check out the Institute's resources on public engagement.

Making Your Open Public Meetings More **Effective**

This tip sheet outlines the basics of California's open meeting laws as well as tips for both local officials and the public to help ensure a successful meeting.



Making Your Open Public Meetings More Effective



Tools for Effective Meetings

- Chairing a Meeting
- Enhancing Public Participation
- Parliamentary
 Procedure
- Technology and Meetings
- www.cailg.org/MeetingReso urceCenter





Q&A





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Stay updated!

- Additional upcoming 2018 webinars.
- Slides and materials to be posted on ILG's website and email with link sent out.







