

# PIKES PEAK AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEETING PROCEDURES

Adopted March 13, 2024

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Meeting Procedures is to provide guidance to committee meetings of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. These procedures are published to provide members of the general public with information on what to expect at public meetings of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. All committee meetings of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments are open to the public and the media, except closed executive sessions of the Board of Directors.

These procedures are intended to cover all public meetings at the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. Any question of parliamentary procedure will be settled according to the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order, except when they are inconsistent with the bylaws of the committee.

## **MEETING NOTICES**

All meetings that fall under the Colorado Open Meetings Law shall be properly noticed. This will involve a public posting no later than 24 hours before the start of the meeting that will include the time, date, location, and either a formal agenda or the topics to be covered at the meeting. These postings will be made at the bulletin boards at 15 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St., and 14 S. Chestnut St., and online at [ppacg.org](http://ppacg.org).

## **REMOTE MEETING OPERATIONS**

In-person attendance at meetings is preferred, as this provides the most effective platform for committee members and the public to discuss the items on the agenda. Remote attendance through a video or audio conference platform is offered to committee members and the public as a convenience, and individuals joining remotely are responsible for maintaining equipment and connection to properly facilitate participation.

For committee members attending remotely:

- It is expected that the camera is on during the meeting, to provide a visual confirmation of the voting member's identity. It will be required during any closed session of the Board of Directors.
- It is expected to notify staff at [ppacg@ppacg.org](mailto:ppacg@ppacg.org) to provide for planning. A staff member will inform the chair on members who are remote.

Staff is available before the meeting begins to provide support and training but may not be able to accommodate support requests once a meeting begins.

Links for remote participation will be provided upon request to voting members, those who register for public comment, and for those presenting an agenda item. If the technology allows, chat functions will be limited to board members and invited participants.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and provide comment during designated times during the meeting. To best facilitate public interaction, the following guidelines are in place for all meetings:

- Formal agendas have approximate time periods to provide guidance on when an item may be considered by the committee, but anyone preparing to provide comment should be ready at any time. A meeting may go faster or slower than anticipated, or an agenda item may be reorganized at the discretion of the committee.
- Members of the public providing comment remotely will be required to register before the start of the meeting. In person attendance is strongly encouraged, and while advance registration is also recommended, it is not required for those attending in person.
- Members of the public will not be able to use signs or visuals during their comment period. If a commentor would like to provide a handout for board members, it should be submitted to the meeting organizer 24 hours in advance for distribution for any members participating remotely.
- Members of the public will be limited to three minutes per agenda item. Time not used may not be used by anyone else or used for other agenda items.
- Public comment period is an opportunity to provide comment on a matter before the committee, but should not be used to ask questions. Committee members are not obligated to answer direct questions posed during public comment, but may respond to them if they choose to.
- The committee reserves the right to change the parameters of public comment, as long as the parameters remain content neutral.
- Subcommittee, executive committees or workshops of larger committees will not have a public comment period.

## **CHANGE IN MEETING FORMAT DUE TO WEATHER OR OTHER FACTORS**

There are situations when a meeting may be moved to online only due to weather conditions or other factors. If the possibility of a meeting may be moved online is known in advance, the goal is to provide an updated notice at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting, as determined by the chair in consultation with Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments staff.

If a meeting is changed to online only within a 24-hour window:

- Staff will provide updates on the meeting status on the agency's website and social media platforms, and if possible, the physical bulletin boards at the offices. Staff will still work to provide in-person support if conditions allow.

- Public comment requirements for online comment will remain the same. Registration will still be required before the meeting starts.

## **CONDUCT OF MEMBERS**

These guidelines are designed to establish reasonable expectations for member representative conduct and describe the manner in which members should treat one another, staff, constituents, and others they come into contact with. For ease of reference the term “member” is used in these Rules to refer to any member representative or designated alternate.

### Guiding Principles

- Solving problems through consensus and collaboration.
- Ensuring the participation of all interested parties throughout the entire process.
- Being a flexible organization to meet the needs of the region in an ever-changing environment.
- Striving continuously for excellence and high standards.
- Developing a regional view that always incorporates the diversity of our people and the individual needs and identity of our communities.
- Generating trust in the organization by the ethical, respectful, honorable and honest behavior of the committee and staff.
- Championing regional solutions on behalf of our constituents.
- Using teamwork and openness to achieve united, effective and timely efforts for our region.
- Board actions, conversations and discussion should address issues and programs of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments’ scope of work.

### Code of Conduct

#### Respect

- All people are respected, and all perspectives are considered.
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives.
- Articulate local interests to the Board based on facts.
- Express all concerns and opinions on every issue during the meeting.
- Exemplify honesty and trust among members and staff.
- Listen and contribute rather than react.
- Come to meetings prepared and on time.

#### Unity

- Advocate with individual voices and for our local interests but work to govern Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments with one voice.
- Cultivate a sense of group responsibility towards guiding Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and resolving regional issues.
- Strive for and support the overall consensus actions adopted by the committee.

- Focus our energy and resources where the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments can be most effective.
- Focus on solutions that provide long-term benefit to the region.
- Focus on strategic and policy issues and not on administrative or programmatic items.
- Govern with excellence and direct and inspire the organization to achieve excellence.
- Mentor new members
- • Seek opportunities to serve as a positive voice with our external public by proudly representing ourselves as members of the PPACG Board
- Model effective governing for the rest of the area through our actions as the committee
- Communicate publicly all Board decisions and policies

### Rules of Conduct

These rules of conduct are designed to establish reasonable expectations for member representative conduct and describe the manner in which member representatives should treat one another, staff, constituents, and others they come into contact with. For ease of reference the term “member” is used in these rules to refer to any member representative or designated alternate.

#### Members’ Ethical Conduct

Members are expected to comply with applicable laws governing ethical conduct, including those requiring avoidance of conflicts of interest, prohibiting receipt of unauthorized gifts, and prohibiting unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information belonging to the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. Members shall not engage in any activities constituting malfeasance in appointed office.

#### Members’ Conduct with Each Other in Public Meetings

Members are individuals who, with their member jurisdictions, hold a wide variety of values, positions and goals. Despite this diversity, all have been appointed as Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments member representatives to serve their respective jurisdictions’ interests in furthering mutual, regional cooperation. In all cases, this common goal should be acknowledged even though individuals and member jurisdictions may not agree on every issue.

- a) Honor the role of the chair in maintaining order. It is the role of the chairs of the committees to keep the comments of members on track during meetings. Members should honor efforts by the chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is disagreement about the agenda or the chair’s actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason.
- b) Practice civility and decorum in discussions and debate. Difficult questions, rigorous challenges to a particular point of view and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of debate. However, free debate does

not require or justify, and members are expected to avoid making, any intentionally intimidating, slanderous, threatening, abusive or disparaging comments or attacks.

- c) Avoid personal comments that could offend other members. If a member is personally offended by the remarks of another member, the offended member should make notes of the actual words used and call for a "point of personal privilege" that challenges the other member to justify or apologize for the language used. The chair controls the discussion.

#### Members' Conduct with the Public in Public Meetings

Making the public feel welcome is an important part of the public meeting process. No signs of partiality, prejudice or disrespect should be evident on the part of individual members toward an individual participating in a public forum. Every effort should be made to be fair and impartial in listening to public testimony.

- a) Be welcoming to speakers. While questions of clarification may be asked, the member's primary role during public comments is to listen.
- b) Respect for speaker's testimony. Members should be conscious of their activity while others are speaking and avoid facial expressions, comments or other actions that could be interpreted as smirking, disbelief, anger or boredom.
- c) Ask for clarification but avoid debate and argument with the public. Only the chair, not individual members, can interrupt a speaker during a presentation. However, a member can ask to be recognized to pose questions of clarification and can ask the chair for a point of order if the speaker is off the topic or exhibiting behavior or language the member finds disturbing.

#### Members' Conduct with PPACG Staff

Governance of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments relies on the cooperative efforts of members, who set policy, and staff, who advise committees and implement and administer Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments policies. Therefore, every effort should be made to be cooperative and show mutual respect for the contributions made by each individual.

- a) Treat all staff as professionals. Clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual is expected. Unprofessional behavior towards staff is not acceptable.
- b) Never publicly criticize an individual PPACG staff member. Members should never express concerns about the performance of an individual staff member in public, to the staff member directly or to the staff member's manager. Comments about staff performance should only be made to the executive director through private correspondence or conversation. If the concern regards the executive director, it should be expressed within and through the established executive director performance evaluation meetings

- and procedures, within appropriate Board or committee discussions, to the Board Chair or vice-chair
- c) Avoid individual involvement in administrative functions. Members acting in their individual capacity must not attempt to unduly influence staff on the making of appointments, awarding of contracts, hiring of employees, selecting of consultants, processing of applications, or granting of approvals or authorizations
  - d) Do not solicit political support from staff. Members should not solicit any type of political support from staff. Staff may, as private citizens with constitutional rights, support political candidates but all such activities must be done away from the workplace.

#### Non-discrimination and Workplace Safety

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments is committed to providing a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and retaliation. It is also Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments policy and practice to assure equal employment opportunity in all personnel transactions, without regard to age (40 and over), race, sex, color, religion, creed, veteran status, national origin, ancestry, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law, and to promote a safe working environment free from workplace violence and harassment. All Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments officials and staff, including committee members, are responsible for and expected to conduct themselves in accordance with Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, retaliation and workplace violence. Members shall not engage in harassing, hostile or threatening behavior that violates such policies. Violations of these policies are subject to compliance actions under these rules and applicable public law.

#### Compliance

These rules express standards of appropriate conduct expected for committee members, and committee members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that expectations for appropriate conduct are understood and met. The chairs of the committees have the additional role of intervening when actions of members that appear to be in violation of the rules are brought to their attention. Members who intentionally and repeatedly disregard the rules, or who commit a serious infraction of the rules, may be reprimanded, censured, have the matter reported to the designating governing body or elected official that designated the member to the committee, with or without a request that the member be replaced, or subject to other sanctions.

Individual members should point out to the offending member perceived infractions of the rules. If the offenses continue or if an offense constitutes a serious infraction, then the matter should be referred to the chair.