



Meeting Policy; Remote Format

The City of Missoula has determined that given current CDC and MCCHD guidance as well as the City Business Continuity Plan, Missoula Neighborhoods is advised to conduct meetings as follows:

- Community Forum will operate in keeping with other City of Missoula boards and will remain a virtual meeting made available by Escribe and broadcast on MCAT with the goal of being made accessible community-wide.
- Neighborhood Council and Leadership Teams will remain virtual conducted over Zoom Webinar until further notice. We are optimistic we will return to safe, in-person meetings at City-approved outdoor public locations with reasonable group sizes in accordance with the Health Officer Order on Event and Group Gathering and the next phase of the City of Missoula Business Continuity Plan.

Meeting Procedures; How-To Guide

Meeting Setup

When you would like to setup a Leadership Team Meeting please follow the below process and know the Missoula Neighborhoods staff is here to help you along the way.

1. Start by contacting other Leadership Team members to choose a date, time and discussion items. Sometimes a quick poll to determine a time may be helpful.
2. Contact Missoula Neighborhoods to inform us about the meeting time and request the agenda template which is also available on our website. contact@missoula-neighborhoods.org
3. Add all discussion content to the agenda and email the complete agenda to neighborhood staff. Please note that before posting we will make some necessary and helpful edits on your behalf.
4. Staff will post the meeting agenda that includes a link to previous meeting minutes and the join the meeting Zoom information. This will be posted to the City website under the Calendar section on the main page and under the Neighborhood Agendas and Minutes page. The agenda will be sent out through the neighborhood's listservs with as much notice as possible and no more than 2 weeks in advance.

Meeting Minutes

At the start of your meeting please start by identifying the Secretary or team member who will take notes. After the meeting, the secretary types the minutes and emails them to the neighborhood staff who will post this to the website. If needed edits or corrections are identified before or at the next meeting, those changes will be made and re-posted to the City website.

Sunshine Laws and Open Meeting Laws:

Sunshine laws are regulations requiring openness in government or business. The laws make meetings, records, votes, deliberations and other official actions available for public observation, participation and or inspection.

The Montana Open Meetings Law legislates the method by which public meetings are conducted. The law defines meeting as any gathering of a quorum of the members of a public body, including the use of electronic equipment, so as to deliberate and decide on public policy. If violated, a suit must be filed within 30 days. If a court finds a violation it may void any action taken at the meeting in violation.

Open Meetings Law Montana Code 2-3-201 et seq.

Closed: Matters involving individual privacy and litigation between government entities and private parties. Citizens may file suit to overturn decisions made in allegedly illegal meetings. However, in 2006, the Montana Supreme Court ruled that citizens who challenge a decision must prove that it caused them "actual harm" over and above that of an ordinary taxpayer or citizen.

Neighborhood Council System:

The purpose of the Community Forum is to provide an arena for designated representatives of Neighborhood Councils to come together, share information and make recommendations to the City government on City-wide issues. Some of the functions shall be to

Share skills and resources in order to increase the capabilities of individual Neighborhood Councils;
Identify and discuss issues of concern brought forth by any Neighborhood Council;
Provide coordinated support for issues to be presented to City government agencies;
Increase citizen participation in City government, bridging the gap between citizens and government;
Serve as a training ground for leadership;
Serve as an educational and communication forum to increase knowledge of activities and issues in individual neighborhoods;

Provide two-way communication between neighborhoods and City Council.

MEMBERS:

The Community Forum consists of one voting member selected by and representing each Neighborhood Council, according to the bylaws of that Council. The one voting member is the elected Community Forum Representative, or if absent the elected Community Forum Alternate. If the Representative and the Alternate for any Neighborhood are in attendance at a Forum meeting, the Neighborhood's vote shall rest with the Representative.

DUTIES OF THE COMMUNITY FORUM:

The Community Forum will provide a monthly report back to City Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting. This report will foster communications between City Council and the Community Forum, while keeping City Council members current on issues before the Community Forum.

The Community Forum may submit budget requests for review by the Mayor and the City Council as part of the annual budget review process.

The Community Forum will review and approve recommendations to change geographic boundaries by Neighborhood Councils.

The Community Forum may call Neighborhood Council meetings if requested by at least 20 members of the Neighborhood Council, who have made a written request to the affected Neighborhood Council Leadership Team and if the Leadership Team has not responded within 15 calendar days.

LEADERSHIP TEAM:

The Community Forum Leadership Team shall consist of 3 to 7 members. Members of the Leadership Team shall be elected members of the Community Forum and shall serve a two-year term with no limit on the number of terms served.

Candidates for the Leadership Team may nominate themselves or be nominated by a Community Forum member. Votes shall be cast at the next monthly meeting following nominations.

The duties of the Leadership Team shall be to meet one or two weeks prior to the next regular Community Forum meeting to set the agenda for the next meeting. Agendas will be emailed, or otherwise provided, to the Neighborhood Council Leadership Teams.

Approve all expenditures of Community Forum funds by at least two members of the Leadership Team in compliance with the City Purchasing policy.

Responsible for drafting language for recommendations to City Council. The final draft of recommendations shall be approved by the Leadership Team prior to submission to the Community Forum for Community Forum discussion and vote. The Community Forum must allow a reasonable amount of time for a minority report to be prepared prior to the Community Forum submitting the approved Community Forum recommendation to City Council or City Clerk. If a minority report is prepared it shall be submitted with the Community Forum recommendations.

Establish a strategic plan with goals and tactics for the Leadership Team and present them to Community Forum for adoption. The strategic plan serves as a guide for the Leadership Team to engage in new activities and roles on an annual basis.

MEETINGS:

The Community Forum generally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month in City Council Chambers except in November and December. If the time or place changes from that regularly scheduled, Neighborhood Council Leadership Teams shall be notified at least one week in advance of the meeting.

Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of those designated Community Forum Representatives present and voting.

The Community Forum encourages Alternates to attend meetings as observers in the audience, unless the Community Forum Representative is absent, in which case the elected Alternate would be a voting member.

COMMITTEES:

Committees of the Community Forum shall be formed at a regular meeting or by the Leadership Team as needed. These may take the form of permanent standing committees or ad hoc committees focused on specific issues.

Interested persons who are not members of the Community Forum may attend committee meetings and participate in committee discussions but may not vote.

Committee recommendations must be submitted to the Community Forum for approval.

The following committees consists of the Community Forum Leadership Team, Improvement Grant Committee, Bus Tour Committee and the Outstanding neighborhood Volunteer of the Year (ONVYA)

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:

The rules contained in the Modern Edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Forum in event of a deliberative impasse. When necessary, a three-minute per speaker rule limiting debate may be initiated to expedite Forum proceedings.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE:

Neighborhood Councils shall always conduct themselves in a nondiscriminatory manner during their communications, meetings, and committee meetings, functions, etc., in addition to their internal elections. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental disability or national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, culture, social origin or condition.

RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

Recruiting Community Forum representatives begins at neighborhood council general meetings. The neighborhood coordinator asks for nominations or volunteers to serve a three year commitment.

Recruiting Leadership Team Members begins at the Community Forum meetings. The neighborhood coordinator asks for nominations or volunteers. There can be 3 to 7 volunteers for two year terms.

Recruiting for the Improvement Grants Committee begins at the Community Forum meeting asking for volunteers. No term dates.

Recruiting for ONVYA begins at Community Forum meeting asking for volunteers. No terms Dates.

Recruiting for the Bus Tour begins at the Community Forum meeting asking for volunteers. No term dates.