

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION PROCEDURES

Approved May 8, 1985
Modifications Approved March 1, 1989
Modifications Approved January 23, 1991
Modifications Approved May 22, 1996
Modifications Approved. November 14, 2001

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. **New Commissioners Seated:**

1. New commissioners will be sworn in by the City Clerk after the appointment.
2. The commission will conduct an election of Chairperson and Chairperson pro tem at its first regular meeting after December 31.
3. No commissioner shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as chairperson. A majority vote of not less than 4 by ballot of the members elects these officers of the commission for one year.

B. **General Meeting Procedure:**

1. Rules of Order: ~~Basic Procedure~~ - Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the source of meeting procedure, except where a different procedure is proper by law or commission custom.
2. Meetings to be Public: All meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission except those qualified as Executive Session shall be open to the public. The journal of proceedings (minutes) shall be open to public inspection.
3. Meeting Times: Call to order for regular meetings of the commission shall be 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.
3. ~~An issue discussed in a public hearing may not appear as an agenda item for decision at the same meeting, except with consent by the majority of the commission.~~
4. Quorum: A majority (4) of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum and be necessary for the transaction of business. A quorum must be present for the duration of the meeting. If a quorum is not present, those in attendance will be named and they shall adjourn to a later time.
5. Public hearings: Public hearings are for the purpose of taking testimony from the public. Commissioners should not debate the issues. Questions of clarification are acceptable.
6. Special meetings: Special meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be held at the regular meeting place of the commission.

Special meetings shall be called on the written request of the Chairperson or by two (2) commissioners. At least 24 hour written notice shall be given designating the time and purpose of the special meeting.

7. Work sessions. The commission may meet in informal work sessions which shall be open to the public at the call of the Chair or any two members of the commission. A quorum must be present for the duration of the meeting. If a quorum is not present, those in attendance will be named and the commission shall adjourn to a later time.

Only such business which was listed in the call for the work session shall be discussed. No action may be taken in a work session.

C. Agenda:

1. All items to be considered at a regular meeting shall be submitted to the Planning Department Office no later than noon of the Wednesday preceding the meeting (**7 days prior to the meeting**). No items will be accepted after that time.

Agenda Format -The usual order of business shall be:

- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Approval of Minutes
- d. Public Business From the Floor
- e. Public Hearings
- r. Unfinished Business
- g. New Business
- h. Reports
- i. Commission Business From the Floor
- j. Adjournment

2. Motion Required. Action items on the agenda require a motion and second prior to discussion. Discussion of any subject is permitted only with reference to a pending motion. When necessary, a motion can be prefaced by a few words of explanation or a member can first request information which may assist him in wording an appropriate motion. After a motion has been made and seconded, but prior to commission vote, members of the public may speak to the subject.

3. Debate. In debating a motion on the floor, commission members must confine themselves to the matter before the commission. Commission members should not question the motives of another commission member, city staff or members of the public. However, the nature or consequences of a measure may be condemned in strong terms. It should not be an individual commission member, but the measure that is the subject of debate.

4. Discussion Items: No action shall be taken on any item described on the agenda as a "discussion item", until the next regular or special meeting. If prompt action is required on a matter due to timing of the issue involved, it shall be listed in the usual manner on the agenda.

5. Decorum: If a particular commission member's remarks are objected to by another commission member as being improper, that commission member cannot proceed with the alleged improper comments without the permission of the commission expressed by a vote of a majority of commission members at that meeting, upon which question there shall be no debate.

6. Public Comment: Any person desiring to address the commission shall first secure permission from the Chair. Each person addressing the commission shall step to the microphone and provide their name and address for the record. All remarks shall be addressed to the commission as body and not to any individual member thereof. Any person making personal or slanderous remarks or who shall become boisterous while addressing the commission may be requested to leave the meeting. Interested parties or their authorized representatives may address the commission by written communication which shall be distributed to all members of the commission.

7. Reconsideration: Any action may be brought up for reconsideration one time by any commission member if action which was approved has not begun (i.e., a contract has been signed, a notice to proceed has been issued).

8. Requests of Administrative Staff: Requests for information that is readily available or for tasks of an incidental nature, may be made by any individual commission member, any time, without concurrence of a quorum.

Requests that will result in the use of staff time for the development of new documents, or to conduct activities that would not occur in the normal course of business, as determined by the Planning Director, shall require verbal consent by at least four (4) members of the commission.

D. Attendance

1. Any member(s) not able to attend a particular meeting must notify the Planning Department Director or his/her designee as far in advance as possible.

2. The seat of any commissioner, including the Chairperson, shall become vacant when the commissioner is absent from three consecutive regular or special meetings of the commission except where requests for extended absences are approved and passed on a motion by a majority of the commission.

3. When a seat becomes vacant the Planning and Zoning Director shall notify the City Clerk to request reappointment of the vacancy by the City Council.

4. Attendance by means of telephone or other electronic media is permitted where:

- a. Physical attendance poses a risk to health and human safety as determined by the mayor;
- (b) During work sessions.

5. A commission member who is participating telephonically under this section may participate in and vote at the meeting by telephone or other electronic means under the following circumstances:

- a. When a quorum of commission members are present and remain present for the duration of the meeting;
- b. Reasonable technical capabilities are available at the meeting location to allow the member to participate, to include being able to hear and engage in discussion and being audible to all persons participating in the meeting;
- c. The member participating telephonically has the ability to obtain the meeting agenda and other pertinent documents to be discussed and/or acted upon;
- d. A member who is voting will have a voice vote;
- e. The public must be able to participate by telephone or other electronic means and must be provided the information required to engage in such participation when notice of the meeting is provided.

6. Telephonic or electronic participation under this section shall include any means through which a member may participate remotely, to include being able to hear and engage in discussion, and being audible to all persons participating in the meeting. Online platforms for web-based connection approved by the IT Director or his/her designee are permissible means of participation so long as the criteria for participation set forth in Section 3 are met.

7. Administrative staff as required should be present at all Commission meetings.

E. Chairperson and Duties

1. Presiding Officer: The Chairperson shall serve as presiding officer of the commission. In the absence of the Chair, the Chair Pro Tem shall preside. In the absence of the Chair and Chair Pro Tem, the commission member with the greatest cumulative length of service on the commission shall preside.

Should the office of Chairperson become vacant, the Chair Pro Tem shall assume the office until a new Chairperson is elected.

2. Duty: Control of the meeting requires that the Chair assure that the discussion by members be closely related to the subject at hand and that time by each participant in the discussion not be excessive.

3. Voting: The Chair shall report the vote by clearly stating the Ayes, Nays, Absent, and Abstaining, and the result of the action "motion passes" or "motion fails".

4. **Limitation on Chair:** Prior to making a motion, the Chair must relinquish the gavel to Chair pro tem who will preside over the discussion and determination of the motion.

E. Referrals to Council and Correspondence

1. It shall be the duty of the Chairperson or designee, to be present at all Council meetings when a referral or appeal from the Commission is to be considered in order to present the view of the Commission as positively and forcefully as necessary to assure that these views are clearly understood.

Any correspondence from the Commission requiring the signature of the Chairperson (or Chairperson pro tem) shall be an action approved by a majority of the commissioners before delivery. A copy of all such correspondence shall be included in the commissioner's workfolder.

G. Amendments to Policies and Procedures

Modifications and changes to commission policies and procedures shall be made by a majority of the Planning and Zoning Commission members.