



City of Princeton

Code of Conduct

City Boards and Commissions

Application of the City Board and Commission Code of Conduct

City of Princeton City Boards and Commissions provide input and advice to assist the City Council and staff deliberations in the conduct of City business. Since these Boards are advisory, with the exception of some actions of the Planning Commission, the actions and statements of the City Board and Commission members do not necessarily reflect the official positions or policies of the City of Princeton City Council. This Code of Conduct applies to all members of the City's Boards and Commissions.

Currently, the City's Boards and Commissions include:

- Airport Advisory Board
- Economic Development Authority
- Fire Advisory Board
- Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- Park and Recreation Board
- Planning Commission

This Code applies to these Boards and Commissions as well as any Boards or Commissions that the Princeton City Council may establish in the future.

Public Utilities Commission

The Princeton City Council appoints members to the Princeton Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which is a municipal corporation separate from the City Council that works closely with the City to provide electric and water services to residents. As an independent entity, the PUC has adopted its own Code of Conduct to which it holds its members accountable. Removal of a PUC member would first be requested by the PUC to the City Council.

Professional Conduct

Board and Commission Members should obey all laws applicable to their official actions. Board Members should be guided by the spirit as well as the letter of the law in their deliberations and recommendations.

Board and Commission Members should conduct the affairs of the Board in an open and public manner. They should comply with all applicable laws governing open meetings and public records, recognizing that doing so is important to be worthy of the public's trust. Board members meet to conduct the public's business; records of the meeting belong to the public.

Board and Commission Members should meet attendance expectations and be prepared for all meetings.

Board and Commission Members should feel free to assert policy positions and opinions without fear of reprisal from fellow Board and Commission Members or citizens. However, in doing so, Board and Commission Members:

- a. Shall be mindful that they were appointed by the City Council to a Board or Commission, and therefore, if they are advising or advocating a position that is contrary to a Council policy that they notify the City Administrator, Mayor and City Council of such as soon as practicable;
- b. Shall be mindful that their chief responsibility is to advise the City Council rather than to advocate to the public at large, particularly when the position of advocacy is contrary to a Council policy;
- c. Shall understand that they hold a position of trust on behalf of the City and its residents; and
- d. Shall assert policy positions and opinions on matters within or related to the subject matter of the body on which they serve only through the transparency of official proceedings of the body or in a capacity and manner appropriate for a member of such body. Board and Commission Members shall not represent their individual views as being representative of the full body unless they have been formally authorized by the body to do so.

Chairpersons of a Board or Commission are authorized to speak for the body only to the City Administrator or City Council.

Board and Commission Members should act with integrity and independence from improper influence as they exercise the duties of their offices. Board and Commission members shall:

- a. Adhere firmly to a code of sound values;
- b. Exhibit trustworthiness;
- c. Act professionally and respectfully to each other and to members of the public while conducting business;
- d. Use their best independent judgment to pursue the common good as they see it, presenting their opinions to all in a reasonable, forthright and consistent manner;
- e. Remain incorruptible, self-governing, and unaffected by improper influence while at the same time considering the opinions and ideas of others;
- f. Treat other Board and Commission members and members of the public with respect and honoring the opinions of others even when disagreeing with those opinions;
- g. Show respect for the Board or Commission they have been appointed to and behave in a way as to not reflect badly on the Board, Commission or City;
- h. Refrain from private conversations that interrupts the proceedings of the Board or Commission;
- i. Refrain from the use of offensive words, threats of violence, or other objectionable language in or against any member;
- j. Limit speech to the current topic;
- k. Abide by time limits for speaking;
- l. Not engage in disorderly conduct that disturbs or disrupts the orderly conduct of any meeting; and
- m. Recognize that the Board or Commission to which they are appointed is part of the workings of the City and act accordingly.

Conflicts of Interest

Board or Commission Members shall not participate in providing advice or comments to other Board or Commission Members, the City Administrator or City Council on any matter in which they know or have reason to know they have a financial interest. Board or Commission Members shall not participate in the making of any City contract in which they have a financial interest. If a Board or Commission Member has a conflict of interest, they shall disclose such conflict to other Board or Commission Members and file a written statement disclosing the conflict with the City Administrator.

Board and Commission Members should avoid impropriety in the exercise of their official duties. Their official actions should be above reproach and they should not use their official positions for personal gain. While opinions may vary about what behavior is inappropriate, the City Council will consider impropriety in terms whether a reasonable person who is aware of all of the relevant facts and circumstances surrounding the Board or Commission Member's action would conclude that the action was inappropriate.

Confidential Information

Board and Commission Members shall not use or disclose, other than in the performance of their official duties and responsibilities (or as may be required by law), confidential information gained in the course of or by reason of their position.

Non-Discrimination/Sexual Harassment

Board and Commission Members shall not, in the performance of their responsibilities as a Board or Commission member, engage in unlawful discrimination of any sort, including discrimination against any person on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, handicap, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Board and Commission Members shall not engage in sexual harassment.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

In addition to any other penalty as provided by law, a Board or Commission Member who violates this Code are subject to removal from the Board or Commission, with the exception of those members appointed by outside jurisdictions to serve on the Fire Advisory Board. **If there is a violation of this Code by a Fire Advisory Board member, the City Council shall document the violation in writing and submit a written request to the appointing jurisdiction requesting the member's removal.**

Interpretation

The City Administrator, in consultation with the City Attorney and Mayor, is charged with advising the City Council regarding ethical issues and questions involving the interpretation and application of this Code of Conduct. Board or Commission Members may contact the City Administrator with questions regarding this Code of Conduct.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

Code of Conduct for Advisory Boards and Commissions of the City of Princeton

On the date written below, I received the "City of Princeton Code of Conduct City Boards and Commissions". I acknowledge this policy contains basic information related to serving as a volunteer on a City Board or Commission.

I understand that I am responsible for reviewing the contents of this policy and asking questions if I do not understand any part of it.

By signing below, I agree to abide by the policy listed above and hereby acknowledge my responsibilities as a City Board or Commission Member.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD: _____

SIGNATURE: _____