

City of Redmond Overview

City Classification. The City of Redmond is a non-charter code City governed by the Optional Municipal Code, [Title 35A RCW](#), and the [Redmond Municipal Code](#).

- **Revised Code of Washington (RCW).** The compilation of the laws passed by the State Legislature.
- **Redmond Municipal Code (RMC).** The City's adopted ordinances that must be followed until the Council takes action to amend them.

Role of the Mayor and Council. Redmond has a strong Mayor/Council, non-partisan form of government. Seven Councilmembers and the Mayor, all representing the community at large, are each elected directly by the people for staggered four-year terms. The Council has the authority to formulate and adopt City policies. It is the Council's responsibility to consider the merits of items before it and approve, modify, or reject them. In doing so, the Council analyzes community needs, program alternatives, and available resources. The Mayor oversees all employees in nine departments, is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the City, and works with staff to implement Council-adopted policies.

Role of Board and Commission Members. Boards and Commissions exist for the primary purpose of gathering information and presenting options and recommendations. Individual boards and commissions typically retain no official independent responsibility or authority and serve only in an advisory capacity unless otherwise directed by law. Board and Commission members respect the limitations of their individual and collective authority and are not empowered to make final decisions, unless authorized by State law or by their enabling ordinance. Each board and commission is unique in its purpose, mission, and role. It is especially important that members be familiar with their governing statutes or other authorizing documents so they understand the framework within which the board or commission must operate.

Please note: This guide is informational in nature and does not supersede City or State Code or the individual boards or commissions rules of procedure.

Meeting Basics

Election of officers. Officers consist of a chair and vice chair selected by the membership. The officers serve a one-year term unless otherwise stated in their rules.

- **Chair.** The chair presides over the meetings. The chair retains full rights and responsibilities to participate in deliberations and to vote. The chair ensures that all members have a fair, balanced, and respectful opportunity to share their knowledge and perspectives.
- **Vice-Chair.** In the absence of the chair, the vice chair performs all duties of the chair at the meeting. In the absence of the chair and vice chair, the members present may select a temporary chair to preside at the meeting.

Members. The number of members on a board or commission is contained in the City Code. Members are in a unique position of serving as a liaison between the City and its residents and who work to build consensus around common goals and objectives. A member has an individual vote and after a decision is made represents the majority view. The authority to act is granted to the board or commission as a whole, not to individual members.

Quorum. Unless otherwise specified in a board or commission rules, a majority of members is required to be present at a meeting in order to conduct business. In the absence of a quorum the meeting cannot be held and must adjourn.

Voting. All voting must take place at a public meeting with a quorum present. No secret ballots are allowed. The chair may vote just as any other member unless prohibited by the enabling legislation or governing documents. Voting will generally be a show of hands or verbal 'yea' and 'nay'. Votes will be recorded in the minutes. Members should recuse themselves from participation in a decision or discussion where they have a conflict of interest. No member should vote on a question in which they have a direct personal interest not common to other members of the body.

Agendas. Meeting agendas are usually prepared with the assistance of the staff liaison and are posted on the City's website at least 24 hours in advance. Agendas list the topics of business to be discussed at the meeting. Posting the agenda does not prevent additional items from being added to a regular meeting agenda at the time of the meeting if necessary.

Minutes. It is the responsibility of the individual board/commission, or staff if assigned, to record and maintain minutes for all meetings. For most boards/commissions, minutes are taken as action or summary minutes and not verbatim. The minutes briefly describe the issues and actions taken. Certain issues may require more detailed minutes as considered necessary by the members. Members recusing themselves for a conflict of interest are required to state their reason and for it to be recorded in the minutes. Minutes are approved by the board/commission and posted on the City's website. Minutes are an official record of the City.

Parliamentary Procedure. Meetings are led by the Chair or Presiding Officer and adhere to Parliamentary Procedure. Parliamentary procedure outlines the process for proposing, amending, approving and defeating motions. Rules of order not specified by statute, ordinance or in the board/commission rules of procedure are governed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. The Advisory Board may adopt supplemental rules of procedure. Parliamentary Procedure Basics can be found at: [MRSC - Parliamentary Procedure: A Brief Guide to Robert's Rules of Order.](#)

Staff Liaison. Liaisons provide a variety of professional assistance and administrative functions. These include preparing and distributing meeting notices and agendas, record keeping, providing professional guidance and serving as the communication link between boards and commissions and other groups, departments and officials.

Being an Effective Member

Attendance. Regular attendance at meetings is expected. An excess of three consecutive unexcused absences may result in the member forfeiting their office. A member's absence may be considered unexcused if the member fails to notify the designated staff in advance of the meeting.

Participation. The purpose of a meeting is to get the work of the board or commission done. Full participation is essential to accomplish the items of business. Members are expected to:

- Be punctual and prepared to participate so that the meetings start and end on time.
- Reviewing agenda items under consideration prior to the meeting to be fully prepared to discuss, evaluate, and act on all matters scheduled for consideration.
- Be able and willing to constructively communicate, actively participate and respect other's viewpoints.

Decorum in meetings. Individual committee members and the collective group will be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, staff, and each other.

- Let the chair or presiding officer run the meeting and seek recognition before speaking.
- Be respectful to the public, staff and each other by giving your full attention when others speak.
- Each member will participate in the group's discussions and work assignments without dominating the discussion or activity.
- Members will strive to appreciate differences in approach and point of view, whether from each other, the community, or staff.

Ethics and Appearance of Fairness: Ethics laws prohibit public officials from gaining financially as a result of their position and must declare any conflicts of interest that arise during a public meeting. A conflict of interest occurs when a member is in a position to derive personal/professional benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity on a board or commission. No member may vote on an item in which they, or their family, have a direct personal or financial interest. In such instances, the member must voluntarily recuse themselves by announcing the conflict and leaving the meeting so the remaining members can freely discuss and vote on the issue.

Reappointment. Incumbents who wish to be reappointed, and who are eligible for reappointment need to provide a letter to the staff liaison and the Mayor stating their interest in reappointment. It is preferred that this letter is provided at least 60 days prior to their term expiration date.

Resignation. If a member is unable to fill the duration of their term, a letter of resignation should be sent to the staff liaison and the Mayor indicating the date the resignation is effective. A member may need to resign when their personal circumstances change that prevents effective service or if they no longer meet the qualifications of appointment. Members may be removed for cause, prior to the expiration of their term of office, by a majority vote of the City Council.

Legal Requirements

Required Training. The Open Government Trainings Act, [RCW 42.30.205](#), requires that members take Open Government training no later than 90 days after taking the oath of office. They must also receive “refresher” training at intervals of no more than four years, so long as they remain on a board/commission. Online training can be done through the Washington State Attorney General’s Office on the Open Government Training Web Page: <https://www.atg.wa.gov/open-government-training>.

Open Public Meetings. All boards and commission meetings must be conducted in public and noticed in accordance with state law and the [Open Public Meetings Act](#) (OPMA). A “meeting” is any occasion where a “quorum” of members come together and discuss board/commission business. Electronic or telephonic communications may constitute a meeting which is subject to the OPMA.

- **Serial Meeting.** A serial meeting occurs when a majority of members of a governing body have a series of smaller gatherings or communications that results in a majority of the body collectively taking action even if a majority is never part of any one communication. It is prohibited for a majority of members discuss board/commission business, give input or take action via e-mail or telephone, if it is not part of a noticed meeting. This type of meeting is a serial meeting which violates OPMA requirements. Additional information about what constitutes a serial meeting can be found [here](#).

Public Records. The [Public Records Act](#) (PRA), RCW 42.56, requires that the City maintain all public records and that these records are made available members of the public upon request. This includes all email communications, documents and any other records used or created by members in the course of their work as board/commission members. These records are subject to Washington State records retention laws and disclosure under the Public Records Act. Members should promptly turn over any records to their staff liaison for retention, and when requested by the City pursuant to a public records request.

Additional information about the Public Records Act can be found at: [MRSC - Public Records Act Basics](#).

Volunteer Email Account. The City issued volunteer email account must be used for all board/commission related business. The emails will be archived and retained per the city’s records management practices. City issued email accounts may not be used for personal or political communication. Do not use a personal email account to conduct board or commission matters, or any other City business.

Influencing Ballot Measures. RCW 42.17.130 strictly forbids the use of public facilities for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion or opposition to any ballot proposition.