

**CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH**

# **BOARDS & COMMISSIONS HANDBOOK**

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**CITY OF  
HERMOSA  
BEACH**



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# **SECTION 1 | OVERVIEW OF HERMOSA BEACH**



## WELCOME MESSAGE

The Hermosa Beach City Council extends its formal appreciation for your interest in serving as a member of a City board or commission. Your willingness to devote your time, knowledge, and perspective in service to the community is greatly valued.

City boards and commissions serve a vital advisory function and contribute meaningfully to the City Council's deliberative and decision-making processes. These bodies were established to address specific issues and subject matters impacting the City of Hermosa Beach. While each board or commission has a distinct charge, all operate within a shared framework of policies, procedures, and standards.

This handbook has been prepared to provide an overview of the general procedures and protocols governing City business, as well as to offer guidance regarding the roles and responsibilities of board and commission members. You are encouraged to review this handbook thoroughly and to utilize it as a reference throughout your term of service.

The City Council greatly values your commitment to the civic life and overall well-being of the City of Hermosa Beach and its residents. On behalf of the City Council, we thank you for your interest in and dedication to public service.



# HERMOSA BEACH HISTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS

## Incorporation

In January of 1907, the small beach community became the 19<sup>th</sup> incorporated city in Los Angeles County. To attract new residents and investors, the City spent thousands of dollars on improvements to its streets and lighting, participating in a “Good Roads Campaign,” providing well-paved boulevards connecting the City to the region.

In 1913, plans were approved to develop a permanent concrete boardwalk, known today as The Strand, with matching ornamental lighting. By the mid-1920s most of the coastal tracts had been subdivided for commercial or residential use. The dominant residential building type throughout Hermosa Beach during this era was the vernacular beach cottage, popular among most Southern California beach communities. In many cases these beach cottages contained elements of the popular Craftsman style. The Spanish Colonial Revival, Shingle, Arts and Crafts, and Period Revival styles were also prevalent among residences constructed during this time.

In 1923, the Surf and Sand Club announced plans for a clubhouse located on The Strand between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> streets. The elaborate clubhouse attracted many new members to the club, with an artificially-heated swimming pool, dressing rooms and lockers, ballroom, and 124 sleeping rooms with their own bathrooms. In the 1930s the building was taken over by hotel interests, becoming the Hermosa Biltmore Hotel. The iconic structure changed hands and roles a number of times before being torn down in 1969.

## Basic City Information

A sunny small beach city of 1.4 square miles and home to nearly 20,000 residents, Hermosa Beach sits at the center of Los Angeles County’s South Bay coastline along the Santa Monica Bay. The town is the very essence of the Southern California lifestyle, with an average of 283 sunny days per year and nighttime temperatures that rarely dip below 50 degrees. With two miles of sandy beach shoreline, Hermosa attracts more than a million visitors to the beach each year.

The small town charm of Hermosa Beach is highlighted in commercial areas like Downtown and Pier Avenue, well known for their many diverse restaurants and local retailers. There are architecturally diverse residences on the Strand, bungalows scattered throughout the town, and multi-level homes with ocean views. Hermosa Beach is within a short commute of many of the largest and best-known names in corporate America in the aerospace, tech, industrial, service and financial fields.



## City Hall Office Hours

Monday—Thursday: 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM | Friday: Closed

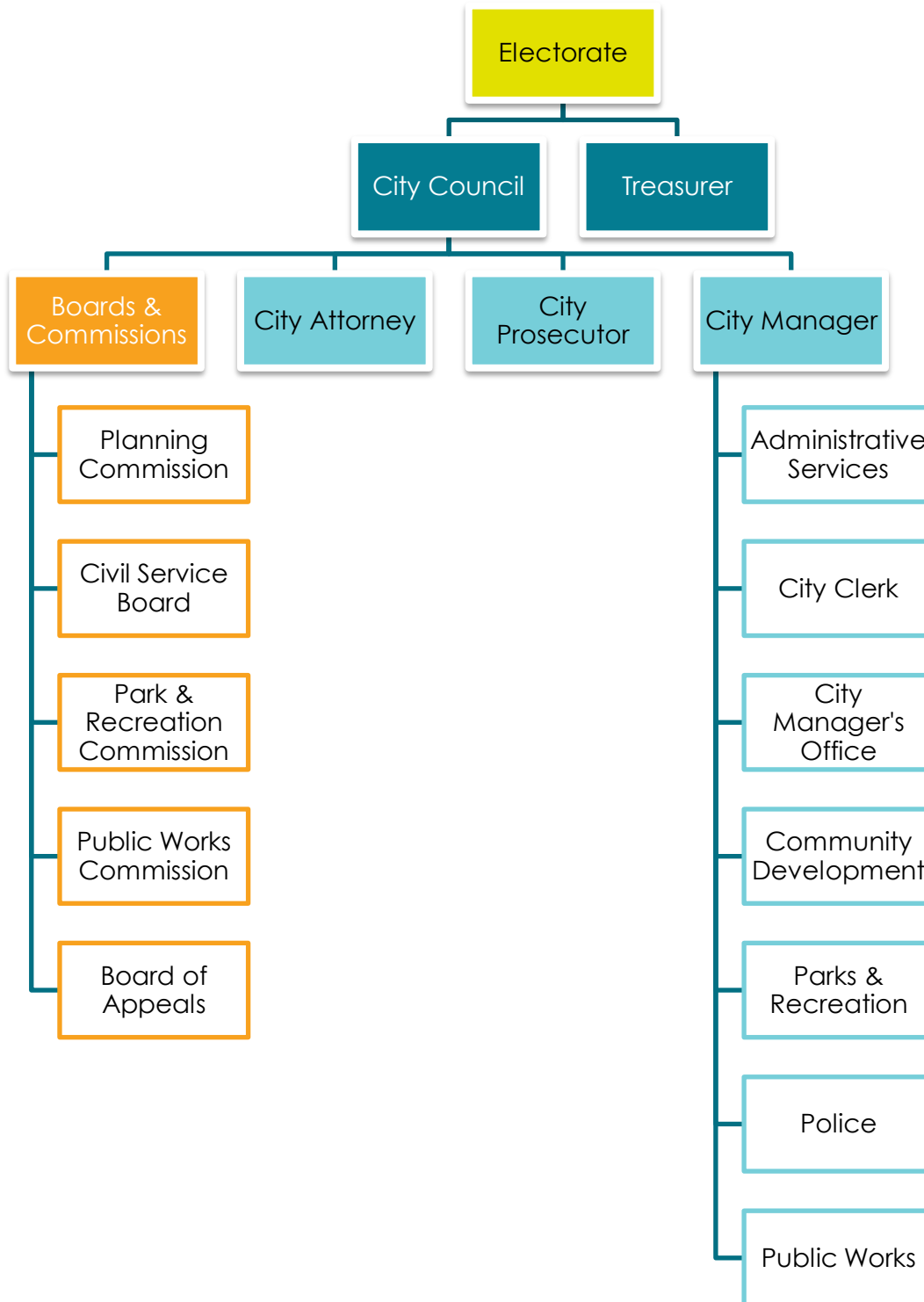
## City Mission

- To **govern** with **community engagement and collaborative sentiment**
- To **be financially, environmentally responsible**, and to **provide 1st class municipal services**
- In a **customer friendly manner**
- Through **valued employees and volunteers**



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

## City-Wide Organizational Chart



## EXECUTIVE STAFF DIRECTORY

POSITION	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
City Manager Steve Napolitano	(310) 318-0216	snapolitano@hermosabeach.gov
Executive Assistant, Office of the City Manager Ann Yang	(310) 318-0216	anny@hermosabeach.gov
Interim City Attorney Jason Baltimore	(951) 826-8359	jason.baltimore@bbklaw.com
City Clerk	(310) 318-0204	cityclerk@hermosabeach.gov
Administrative Services Director Brandon Walker	(310) 318-0226	bwalker@hermosabeach.gov
Community Development Director Alison Becker	(310) 318-0231	abecker@hermosabeach.gov
Parks & Recreation Director Lisa Nichols	(310) 318-0157	lnichols@hermosabeach.gov
Chief of Police Landon Phillips	(310) 318-0300	lphillips@hermosabeach.gov
Public Works Director Joe SanClemente	(310) 318-0238	jsanclemente@hermosabeach.gov



# STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## Responsibilities of Local Government

The City of Hermosa Beach is a “general law” city whose powers are limited to the authority granted to it by the California Constitution and the State Legislature. The government of Hermosa Beach governs the community by establishing and enforcing local laws and provides services to the community such as public safety, parks and recreation and construction of public facilities. Policy-making and legislative authority are vested in a governing body consisting of five City Councilmembers elected at large on a non-partisan basis.

## Role of the City Council

City Councilmembers serve staggered four-year terms and are elected at a municipal election conducted every two years in November of even-numbered years. One member is chosen by fellow members to serve as Mayor for a period of about nine and a half months; another is chosen to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore for the same period.

The City Council is responsible for, among other things, establishing policy, enacting ordinances, adopting an annual budget; appointing members to various City Commissions and Boards, and hiring the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Prosecutor.

The City Council determines and administers the community's vision for the future and maintains its desired character through a variety of local laws (called “ordinances”) which are generally codified in the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code.

As community leaders, members of the City Council also serve as ambassadors for the community and “eyes and ears” for matters of public interest.

In a disaster, the City Council serves in the role of policy advisers to the Emergency Management Director. And through its connection to local, regional and State organizations, the Council protects and promotes municipal interests.

The position of Mayor is elected among members of the City Council roughly every nine and a half months. The mayoral appointment is at the discretion of the City Council as a whole and the selection process and possibly relevant criteria are memorialized in Resolution No. RES-20-7265.

The Mayor is the ceremonial head of the City and Council, represents the City as the spokesperson of the City Council, and presides over City Council meetings as the meeting chair. In the absence of the Mayor, these responsibilities are fulfilled by the Mayor Pro Tem.

## Role of the City Manager

The City Manager is an at-will employee appointed by the City Council who is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the City Council, overseeing the day-to-day operations of personnel and the City, and for appointing the directors of the various departments. The City Manager keeps all members of the City Council apprised of



important matters that arise in the City and matters to come before the City Council. In addition:

- Prepares a budget for the City Council consideration and adoption;
- Recruits, hires, supervises, disciplines, and discharges City staff;
- Serves as the governing body's chief advisor by providing complete and objective information about local operations, assessing the long-term consequences of decisions, and making policy recommendations; and
- Carries out the policies established by the City Council and determines the methods and means by which those policies are carried out.

### **Communications with your Commission Liaison**

Your commission liaison is readily available to support you in your role as a Board or Commission member. Whether you have questions, need information, or would like to discuss matters of interest, you are encouraged to reach out.

#### **Building Board of Appeals Liaison:**

Guillermo Hobelman, Building & Code Enforcement Official

**Phone:** (310) 318-0235

**Email:** [ghobelman@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:ghobelman@hermosabeach.gov)

**In-Person Meeting:** Meetings can be scheduled at your convenience.

#### **Civil Service Liaison:**

Tyler Cashman, Interim Human Resources Manager

**Phone:** (310) 318-0216

**Email:** [tcashman@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:tcashman@hermosabeach.gov)

**In-Person Meeting:** Meetings can be scheduled at your convenience.

#### **Parks & Recreation Commission Liaison:**

Lisa Nichols, Parks & Recreation Director

**Phone:** (310) 750-3157

**Email:** [lnichols@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:lnichols@hermosabeach.gov)

**In-Person Meeting:** Meetings can be scheduled at your convenience.

#### **Planning Commission Liaison:**

Alison Becker, Community Development Director

**Phone:** (310) 318-0242

**Email:** [abecker@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:abecker@hermosabeach.gov)

**In-Person Meeting:** Meetings can be scheduled at your convenience.

#### **Public Works Commission Liaison:**

Joseph SanClemente, Public Works Director

**Phone:** (310) 318-0214

**Email:** [jsanclemente@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:jsanclemente@hermosabeach.gov)

**In-Person Meeting:** Meetings can be scheduled at your convenience.



Open communication is a priority, and the City Manager welcomes the opportunity to assist you with any concerns or topics you wish to address. Please do not hesitate to connect at any time.

### **City Attorney**

The City Attorney's office provides advice to all City Officials in all legal matters pertaining to City business. Further, the City Attorney frames all ordinances and resolutions and consults on all other legal matters as requested (e.g., contract preparation/review, bringing and defending lawsuits, updating and revising City policy or practice in response to new developments in the law, and covering public meetings to ensure Brown Act compliance). The City Attorney is appointed by, and reports to, the City Council. While outside of the City Manager's chain of command, the City Attorney does not serve any one individual councilmember or staff. Thus, the City Attorney takes direction from the City Council as a whole and effectuates orders and instructions received from the Council. Commission should connect with their liaison regarding concerns about legal matters.

### **Elected City Treasurer**

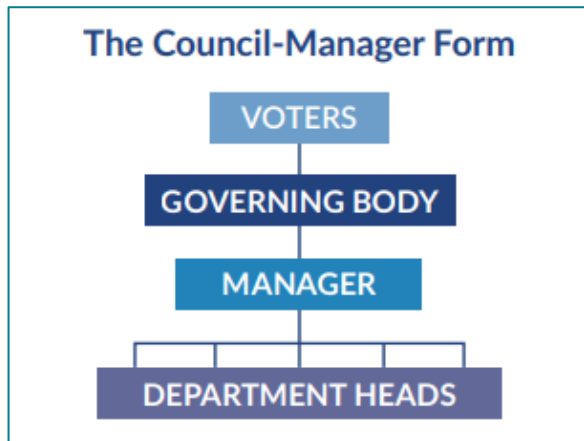
The City Treasurer is elected to a four-year term in the City's General Municipal Election. In compliance with California State Government Code and Investment Policy (on the City's website) adopted by the City Council, the City Treasurer is responsible for the investment and safekeeping of City funds, with oversight by the City Manager and Administrative Director. The Treasurer coordinates closely with the assistance of City staff to ensure that funds are available for the City's daily cash flow. The list of City investments can be found in the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and are reported (via investment report) to City Council on a monthly basis in both summary and detail.

### **Role of Residents**

The City actively engages and involves its residents in community decision making. Residents can help guide the community by serving on boards and commissions, participating in visioning and strategic planning sessions, and engaging the City Council during its meetings.



# FORM OF GOVERNMENT



The City is organized as a “council-manager” form of government. This is the most popular structure of government in the United States among small and medium size municipalities with populations of 2,500 or more. Under this form, residents elect a governing body to adopt legislation and set policy. The government body also adopts a budget, acts as a body at meetings, and represents the governing body on appointed regional boards and agencies.

The governing body then hires a manager with broad executive authority to carry out those policies and oversee the local government’s day-to-day operations. The City Manager is the City Council’s “Chief Executive Officer” to whom all City staff report. In its capacity as a “Board of Directors,” the City Council directs the City Manager and the City Manager implements that direction via the appropriate City staff as the City Manager deems. The City Council does not direct individual City staff members. Additionally, this form of government protects elected officials from liability and develops a clear direction for the Chief Executive to implement.

The Mayor and the four Councilmembers have equal authority and an equal vote on the City Council. It ordinarily takes a majority of the Council to make decisions and direct the City Manager.

The Council appoints the City Manager and City Attorney. City personnel report to the City Manager. This separation precludes an individual’s political or personal interests from influencing the administration and delivery of services to the public. As such, the City Council should work together in a collaborative and collegial manner to build a consensus at providing policy and legislative direction to the City Manager. It is not necessary that individual councilmembers agree on everything before them, however, it is important and valuable to be thoughtful and respectful of different perspectives and respect the decision of the majority.

# SECTION 2 | BOARDS & COMMISSIONS



# ROLES, DUTIES AND LIMITATIONS

## Roles

In general, the role of boards and commissions is to advise and provide recommendations to the City Council regarding issues that are presented to the commission from either the City Council, City staff, or initiated by the commission itself and approved by the City Council for study. Staff will generally recommend solutions to the issue at hand. Commissioners are welcome to suggest additional solutions, as well. Both staff and commission solutions will be presented to City Council in a staff report.

Boards and commissions are officially appointed bodies by the City Council. Commissions may form ad hoc committees of less than a majority of its membership to conduct studies and to develop recommendations to be considered by the commission. Ad hoc committees are established for specific purposes and for limited time periods.

## Duties

Boardmembers' and commissioners' general duties are to attend their board and commission meetings, review the agenda packet in advance, take public testimony, evaluate and deliberate with their colleagues and staff, attend City events and activities relevant to the commission, and make commission recommendations to City Council that are in the best interest of the community.

Depending on the issue before the board or commission, it is permissible and may be helpful for boardmembers and commissioners to make site visits. Ask your Staff Liaison to advise you.

Boards and commissions may on occasion be asked to reach out to the community to inform the general public about various issues and events that are relevant to their commission work. In these cases, City staff and City Council will create an outreach plan with the board or commission as identified in the City Council approved Work Plan.

## City Issued E-Mail Account

Each board and commission member will be provided with a City issued e-mail account in order to communicate with staff and the public. All correspondence regarding board or commission matters will be sent to that account and it is the responsibility of the member to monitor and check it regularly. E-mails will not be forwarded to personal e-mail accounts and all city emails are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

## Commission Limitations

Commissions are limited in their authority and are prohibited from making law or policy, directing staff or the City Council, authorizing City expenditures, or engaging in any actions not authorized by law or outlined in these guidelines.



# RULES, REGULATIONS AND DECORUM

## Running The Meeting

The chairperson presides and conducts the meetings in accordance with the Brown Act commission by-laws (if any) and Roberts Rules of Order. Each commission shall also appoint a vice-chairperson who shall serve as chair should the chair be unable to conduct a meeting.

The commission chair and vice-chairperson serve one-year terms (June 1 to May 31) and are rotated amongst the commissioners in order of their seniority on the commission. A commissioner may elect not to serve as chair, by doing so, the commissioner will forego their opportunity as chair at that time, and may serve at a later rotation based upon seniority.

If the chairperson seat becomes vacant during a term, the vice-chairperson shall assume the duties of chairperson. The new chair will fulfill the remaining term of the previous chairperson and will complete their own one-year term thereafter. A new vice chairperson will be appointed by the commission in accordance with seniority on the commission.

## Relationship Between The Commission And City Staff

The City Manager appoints a Staff Liaison for each board and commission. They become the primary contact between the commission and the City Council and other City staff. If a commissioner sends a letter or e-mail message to the City Council, City Manager, or other City staff concerning commission related issues, a copy should be sent to the Staff Liaison as well.

The role of the Staff Liaison is to provide information to the boardmembers and commissioners to assist them in making a recommendation to the City Council. The Staff Liaison prepares the agenda packet and ensures that all public notices are made. They also attend each meeting, and prepare the staff report and minutes that go to City Council with the Commissions' recommendations. Commissioners may request any changes to the meeting minutes during the meeting at which the minutes are being presented for approval. Staff Liaisons are responsible for the legislative history of the board or commission which includes agenda packets, minutes, and resolutions (for Planning Commission). Board and commission members are expected to respond to their staff liaisons in a timely manner and to follow deadlines as provided by staff or the City Council.

## Communication With The Public & Stakeholders

Commissioners are often contacted by the public or other stakeholders with regard to matters before them. It is appropriate to receive this information in order to learn more about the issue. However, it is important that commissioners refrain from making decisions or expressing their views on the pending issue prior to the meeting. Keeping an open mind will make it easier for commissioners to understand all sides of an issue once it is presented at the public meeting.



Commissioners may encourage those who take an interest to attend and participate in commission meetings. Commissioners should keep in mind, however, that many people who may be impacted will not be in attendance. Commissioners should endeavor to represent the interests of all Hermosa Beach residents and business owners, not just the individuals present at a meeting. Commissioners should use their best judgment to make the decision that is best for the entire community.

As mentioned earlier, the disclosure during a public meeting of site visits, as well as prior contact with applicants, opponents or other stakeholders (known as "ex parte communications") is required prior to discussing and acting on a matter.

### **Communication With Council**

It is the Staff Liaison's role to communicate to City Council the findings of the board and commissions. Where the commission recommendations are different from those of the staff, staff will present both positions to City Council in the staff report and presentation.

Commissioners are not permitted to speak during City Council meetings on topics that have come before their commission. They may, however, make phone calls or send emails to the City Council, with copies to their Staff Liaison.

## **BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**

The City of Hermosa Beach appreciates your interest in serving on one of the City's boards and commissions. Members provide a valuable service and serve in a voluntary capacity, without compensation.

The City of Hermosa Beach has two boards and three commissions, each comprised of five volunteer members appointed by the City Council, to provide expertise, advice and approvals on various matters.

### **Civil Service Board**

**Key Duties**—The Civil Service Board functions as the City's Review Board pertaining to personnel functions in conjunction with the City of Hermosa Beach Personnel Rules and Regulations Civil Service Employees adopted by the City Council on May 23, 2023.

**Board Member Requirements**—Members must be qualified electors of the City. No person who holds any salaried public office or employment with the City is eligible for appointment; no member of this board is eligible for appointment to any office or employment with the City.

**Appointment Term**—Members are appointed to staggered four-year terms.

**Meetings**—The Civil Service Board meets as needed in City Council Chambers at 5 p.m.



### **Staff Liaison**

Tyler Cashman, Interim Human Resources Manager

**Phone:** (310) 318-0216

**Email:** [tcashman@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:tcashman@hermosabeach.gov)

## **Parks & Recreation Commission**

**Key Duties**—This five-member commission serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to the Community Resources Department; cooperates with other governmental agencies and civic groups on the advancement of sound leisure, cultural, social services and educational programming; provides guidance and approvals for City special events; and formulates policies on the services, programs and lease agreements of the Department, subject to approval of the City Council [[HBMC 2.28](#)].

**Commissioner Requirements**—Commissioners must be bona fide residents of the City.

**Appointment Term**—Commissioners are appointed to staggered four-year terms.

**Meetings**—The Commission meets regularly in City Council Chambers at 6 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, or as scheduled by the Commission.

### **Staff Liaison**

Lisa Nichols, Parks & Recreation Director

**Phone:** (310) 750-3157

**Email:** [lnichols@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:lnichols@hermosabeach.gov)

## **Planning Commission**

**Key Duties**—This five-member commission is governed in all respects and performs duties as prescribed by applicable state and local laws. The primary purpose of the Commission is to maintain and enhance the environment of the community, which entails advance or long-range planning (updating of the General Plan and specific elements), current planning (short-range projects), and land use controls (administering to the code and review of all subdivisions and zoning petitions). The Commission serves as an advisory board to the City Council on all matters pertaining to zoning, conditional use permit process, etc. [[HBMC 2.32](#)].

**Commissioner Requirements**—Commissioners must be qualified electors of the City.

**Appointment Term**—Commissioners are appointed to staggered four-year terms.

**Meetings**—The Commission meets regularly in City Council Chambers at 5 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month, or as scheduled by the Commission.

### **Staff Liaison**

Alison Becker, Community Development Director

**Phone:** (310) 318-0242

**Email:** [abecker@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:abecker@hermosabeach.gov)



## Public Works Commission

**Key Duties**—The duties of this five-member commission are to review and make recommendations to the City Council on all capital improvement program projects, assist with developing and updating design guidelines for public improvements and other matters referred to the Commission by the City Council [[HBMC 2.80](#)].

**Commissioner Requirements**—Commissioners must be qualified electors of the City.

**Appointment Term**—Commissioners are appointed to staggered four-year terms.

**Meetings**—The Commission meets regularly in City Council Chambers at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of odd-numbered months (January, March, May, July, September and November).

### **Staff Liaison**

Joseph SanClemente, Public Works Director

**Phone:** (310) 318-0214

**Email:** [jsanclemente@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:jsanclemente@hermosabeach.gov)

## Building Board of Appeals

**Key Duties**—This five-member board provides reasonable interpretations of the Building Code [[HBMC 15.04.020](#)].

**Board Member Requirements**—Members must be qualified by training and experience to provide guidance and expertise upon matters pertaining to building construction. Members are not required to be residents or qualified electors of the City.

**Appointment Term**—There are no specified terms; members serve at the pleasure of the City Council.

**Meetings**—The Board of Appeals meets in City Council Chambers as scheduled.

### **Staff Liaison**

Guillermo Hobelman, Building & Code Enforcement Official

**Phone:** (310) 318-0235

**Email:** [ghobelman@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:ghobelman@hermosabeach.gov)

### **Community Advisory Groups**

The City Manager may also create informal community advisory groups to assist staff with specific topics or projects. Information on the active advisory groups may be found on the [Community Advisory Groups](#) page.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Office of the City Clerk

1315 Valley Drive, Room 203

Hermosa Beach, CA 90254



**Phone:** (310) 318-0204

**E-mail:** [cityclerk@hermosabeach.gov](mailto:cityclerk@hermosabeach.gov)

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Qualifications**

Boardmembers and commissioners are appointed by the City Council. Each year, the City accepts applications for open board and commission seats. Notice is published in the City's adjudicated newspaper (the Easy Reader), on the City's website, social media, and on the City's posting boards. Applications are available on the City's website. Specific requirements vary by board or commission.

Current elected officials of the City or if they are employees of the City of Hermosa Beach cannot be appointed to a board or commission.

### **Terms**

The term of office for each commission is four (4) years.

Commissioners should not expect to be automatically re-appointed to their commission seat. At the end of their first term, those commissioners seeking reappointment must reapply and submit an updated application. An interview with the City Council is required.

Term expirations on each board and commission shall stagger so all seats do not expire within the same year.

### **Annual Interview And Appointment Process**

The City Clerk is responsible for advertising expected vacancies, accepting applications, and scheduling interviews. If there are no changes made to the process by the City Council, the City Clerk's Office will adhere to the standard timeframes as detailed below.

<b>Annual Process</b>	<b>Annual Timeframe</b>
Advertise Expected Vacancies	March
Application Submission Period	April
City Council Conducts Interviews and Appointments	May
Term Begins	July

The City Council has the discretionary authority to amend the interview and appointment process if needed.

### **Filling Unscheduled Vacancies**

From time to time, board and commission vacancies occur prior to the expiration of the term for various reasons such as voluntary resignations or removal. When such a vacancy occurs, the City Clerk shall notify the City Council and will receive direction regarding filling the vacancy. The City Council will appoint a new member at a public meeting for the unexpired portion of the term.



## Compensation

Boardmembers and commissioners are volunteer positions and will serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for their reasonable and necessary costs and expenses incurred in connection with the performance of their duties. Expenses must be pre-approved by the Department Head and Staff Liaison.

## Attendance

Two absences from a regular scheduled meeting of any member within one calendar quarter, and/or four absences from regular meetings within one calendar year creates an automatic vacancy. There shall be no distinction between excused or unexcused absences. When an automatic vacancy occurs, the staff liaison shall promptly notify the city council, the commission, and the members. The automatic vacancy shall not be effective until council receives notice and fails to waive application of this section. The city council may waive application of the automatic vacancy upon its own motion; otherwise, the vacancy so created shall be filled pursuant to this Chapter.

## Causes For Removal And Resignations

### Absences

Two absences within one calendar quarter and/or four absences within one calendar year create an automatic vacancy. Upon the fourth absence, the commissioner will automatically forfeit their seat, and a letter of resignation will be requested. If no letter is submitted to the City Clerk's Office within 14 days, the seat will be deemed vacant. This includes all meetings, i.e., Regular, Joint and Special. The subject commissioner may appeal the forfeiture of the vacated seat to the City Council in writing.

### Removal And Resignations

A member of a board or commission may be removed from office, without cause, by a majority vote of the City Council. A commissioner may also resign by submitting a formal letter of resignation to the City Clerk and agendizing it for City Council acceptance.

## BOARD & COMMISSION MEETINGS & PROCESS

### Quorum

A quorum (a majority of the members of the body) is required to conduct an official meeting.

### Meetings

#### Agenda Posting Requirement

The Brown Act requires that an agenda for all meetings of the Boards & Commissions be prepared to include all matters to be discussed, and the agenda be published and posted on the City's website at least 72 hours before the start of the regular meetings and 24 hours before a special meeting. The agenda is also posted on the City's website and the physical bulletin located outside of City Hall.



## Regular Meetings

The California Government Code requires that legislative bodies hold regular meetings on a specific day of the week each month. Each Board and Commission adopts a master list of all regularly scheduled meetings for the calendar year.

## Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chairperson or by a majority of the members of the Board or Commission if a matter of business cannot wait until the next regular meeting. No business may be transacted in a special meeting except as set forth in the posted agenda.

## Joint Meetings

Occasionally, joint meetings will be scheduled between different commissions or with the City Council. Staff shall post a notice in advance of a joint meeting.

## Serial Meeting

Serial meetings which are a series of discussions or communications of any sort, including e-mail or telephonic communications, by which three or more members of the Boards & Commissions eventually become involved, either directly or through a third-party intermediary, on the subject of City business are also a violation of the Brown Act.

Any questions or advice concerning requirements of the Brown Act should be referred to the City Attorney.

# AGENDA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

## eScribe

eScribe is a web-based agenda management system staff utilizes to launch staff reports, publish agendas, conduct meetings, and publish minutes and meeting videos. Members of the City Council and other meeting bodies use the eScribe Meetings Professional application on their designates devices to vote, annotate agendas, and view public comments.

Each published agenda is made available on the City's [Agendas / Minutes / Videos](#) page and an agenda legend can also be found to assist community members with navigating various published agendas.

## Agenda Definitions

- **HTML**—Hyperlinked agenda items that contain staff reports and attachments. Public Comment is available on HTML agendas, and all ecomments can be read for each corresponding item.
- **PDF**—A Type of document that can be opened on any device or operating system. This type of document allows the information to be printed or downloaded. Public comment is not available on PDF agenda.





<b>Agenda Cover Page</b> <a href="#">PDF</a>	The agenda with a list of all items.
<b>Agenda</b> <a href="#">HTML</a>   <a href="#">PDF</a>	Full agenda packet with supporting documents such as staff reports, attachments, or eComments.
<b>Addendum</b> <a href="#">HTML</a>   <a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>Added items will be marked with an asterisk.</b> An agenda listing <u>only</u> the items added <u>after</u> the agenda was published but before the posting deadline.
<b>Revised Agenda Cover Page</b> <a href="#">PDF</a>	An updated agenda to include items on the Addendum agenda.
<b>Revised Agenda</b> <a href="#">HTML</a>   <a href="#">PDF</a>	An updated full agenda packet with amendments.
<b>Post Agenda</b> <a href="#">HTML</a>   <a href="#">PDF</a>	The final agenda <u>after</u> a meeting has been concluded and all supplemental items, attachments, and emailed comments have been added.

## Minutes

Minutes are taken by City staff at each meeting. Minutes contain a record of the proceedings, motions and actions taken by the legislative body. Minutes are not taken verbatim, but rather summarize the position, reasoning and vote of each boardmember or commissioner. While minutes may reflect statements, positions and the vote of each member, the recommendation to the City Council will be by the collective body as opposed to individual members. Where the commission's recommendation is different from staff's recommendation, staff will present both positions. The minutes will also identify all public individuals who comment on issues. Minutes become an official record once they are approved by the majority of the commissioners. Corrections to the minutes may be made during a public meeting with the approval of the majority of Commissioners.

## Public Comments

Members of the public can submit ecomments on an HTML agenda no later than three (3) hours before the start of a meeting. When leaving an eComment, a verification link will be sent to the email provided by the submitter, and the link must be verified before the ecomment appears on any HTML agenda. This is a security measure to assist in preventing the impersonation of others.

Additionally, members of the Boards & Commissions who use the eScribe Meetings Professional application can view each public comment for the item they select.



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## **SECTION 3 | LEGAL PROCEDURES**



## **Municipal Code**

The Municipal Code is a compilation of most ordinances, while any other code adopted by reference is considered secondary (i.e., building, fire safety, electrical codes, etc.). Adopting by reference means adopting a code previously written and adopted by another agency, such as the county or state.

Ordinances are codified into the municipal code following their adoption by the City Council upon reaching the required 30-day period for them to take effect. The codification is generally done under the supervision of the City Clerk.

## **Ralph M. Brown Act**

The City's business is conducted in public under the rules established by the Ralph M. Brown Act (referred to as the "Brown Act") and following both the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code and Council-adopted policies and procedures.

The Brown Act is found in the California Government Code beginning at Section 54950. The Brown Act was first enacted in the early 1950's following a hard-hitting series of newspaper articles revealing widespread abuses involving secret meetings being made by some local governments. The Brown Act has been amended and strengthened many times since its original enactment, and the process continues. Every year, new bills are proposed in the State Legislature to amend the Act with further provisions and clarifications.

In addition to requiring that all meetings of the legislative body be open and public, the Brown Act carves out certain exceptions to this general requirement, allowing legislative bodies to meet in closed session for certain purposes. These exceptions include conferring with legal counsel on existing or pending litigation, labor negotiations, real property transactions, personnel matters involving the hiring, firing, disciplining or evaluating employees, and for other specified reasons. However, these exceptions are subject to certain conditions regarding the disclosure of the nature of the matters being discussed, the parties involved, and other pertinent information.

## **Public Records Act**

The Public Records Act is a key part of transparency between the public and government officials and staff and grants every person the right to inspect and to obtain a copy of any identifiable public record.

The PRA defines "public record" as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics. For example, "any handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, photocopying, transmitting by electronic mail or facsimile, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combinations thereof, and any record thereby created, regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored." (Government Code section [7920.545.](#))



## Electronic Records

The City Council adopted a retention schedule that specifically references electronic records.

*“Electronic and paper records are categorized, filed and retained based upon the **CONTENT** of the record. Records where either the Content relates in a substantive way to the conduct of the public’s business, or ARE made or retained for the purpose of preserving the informational content for future reference are saved by placing them in an electronic or paper (project) file folder and retained for the applicable retention period. GC §§34090, 7927.500; 64 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 317 (1981)); City of San Jose v. Superior Court (2017) 2 Cal.5th 608*

### Types of Electronic Records

Including but not limited to: Calendars, checklists, e-mail, social media posting, employee directories, flyers, invitations, instant messaging, inventories, logs, mailing lists, meeting room registrations, speaker cards, staff videoconference chats, notes and recordings, supply inventories, staff videoconferences, chats, notes, recordings, telephone messages, text messages, transmittal letters, thank yous, requests from other cities, preliminary notices for construction projects, undeliverable envelopes / returned mail, visitors logs, voice mails, and webpages.

### Records on Personal Devices

All records relating to local City business on City and/or personal accounts and devices are public records. This can also include social media accounts. (City of San Jose v. Superior Court (2017) 2 Cal.5th 608)

## Conflict of Interest Code

All board and commission members are required by law to file statements of economic interest (assuming office statement, annual statements, and leaving office statement) for the purpose of disclosing potential conflicts of interest. The completed statements are filed with the City Clerk, who will provide all forms and instructions at the appropriate time, with one exception: Planning Commissioners now file electronically on the [Fair Political Practices Commission \(FPPC\) website](#). There are two essential obligations under the Code:

Financial Disclosure Obligation—all employees, commissions, and consultants designated as “local officials” under the City’s Conflict of Interest Code must file financial disclosure statements once each year and additionally upon assuming office or leaving office.

The FPPC aggressively enforces the Conflicts of Interest provisions. State and local officials who are found to have violated these provisions are subject to substantial civil fines for unintended violations. Intentional violators may be subject to criminal prosecutions. All City officials should have at least a general working knowledge or familiarity with the Conflicts of Interest provisions. Moreover, because of the complexity and difficulty in interpreting these laws and regulations, and the severity of penalties for violations,



whenever a question or concern regarding a possible conflict of interest arises under the Political Reform Act, City officials are urged to seek advice either from the FPPC directly or from the City Attorney. The City Clerk is the designated filing official for all economic interest and campaign statements.

### **AB 1234 Ethics Training**

Councilmembers and any elected or appointed public official who receive compensation for their services or who are reimbursed for their expenses are required to take part in AB 1234 ethics training every two years. All new elected or appointed officials must take the AB 1234 training within one year after being elected or appointed and then every two years thereafter, as long as they are in office.

The ethics training covers several topics such as laws relating to personal financial gain by public servants; laws prohibiting bribery; conflicts of interest under the PRA; conflicts of interest when leaving office; laws relating to claiming perquisites of office, including but not limited to, limitation on the receipt of gifts, honoraria ban, misuse of public funds; prohibitions against gifts of public funds, mass mailing restrictions, etc.

The training will be provided online through the NetFile Portal.

### **AB 1661 Sexual Harassment Prevention Training and Education**

City Councilmembers and any elected or appointed public official who receive compensation for their services or who are reimbursed for their expenses are required to take part in AB 1661 sexual harassment prevention training and education every two years in the odd-numbered years. All new elected or appointed officials must take the AB 1661 training within six months after being elected or appointed and then every two years thereafter, as long as they are in office.

The training and education shall include information and practical guidance regarding the federal and state statutory provisions concerning the prohibition against, and the prevention and correction of, sexual harassment and the remedies available to victims of sexual harassment in employment. The training and education shall also include practical examples aimed at instructing the local agency official in the prevention of sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, and shall be presented by trainers or educators with knowledge and expertise in the prevention of sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

The training will be provided online through the NetFile portal. Should this training be completed outside of NetFile, please submit proof of the training certification to the Clerk's office.



## KEEP IN MIND

### Teamwork

We are honored to welcome you as a member of our team. Your appointment places you among individuals who share a strong commitment to the community and to the residents of the City of Hermosa Beach. The effective functioning of a local governmental agency requires cooperation and collaboration at every level, including the City Council, board and commission members, and City staff, to ensure the needs of the City's residents and businesses are served efficiently and responsibly.

### Different Opinions Are Welcome

Each individual brings a unique perspective, and the members serving on a board or commission are no exception. You will develop your own opinions and views on various matters, as will your fellow members. It is important to respect differing viewpoints, whether expressed by City staff, other board or commission members, or members of the public appearing before your board or commission.

As a board or commission member, you will devote significant time and effort toward developing thoughtful and meaningful recommendations for consideration by the City Council. You should not be discouraged if City staff members hold differing views or present recommendations that differ from those of the board or commission. City staff share the same fundamental objective as board and commission members—to act in the best interests of the City. Staff also have a professional responsibility to provide the City Council with their best analysis and recommendations. The final decision rests with the City Council, and it is the responsibility of City staff to ensure the Council is provided with all relevant information necessary to make an informed decision, which may at times include perspectives that differ from those of individual commissioners or the commission as a whole.

### We Value Your Service

As a member of a City board or commission, you play a vital role in helping to ensure that Hermosa Beach remains an exceptional place to live and work. You will be asked to provide recommendations on a wide range of issues, many of which may generate strong and opposing viewpoints. As a result, the responsibility of making these recommendations may at times be challenging.

You will also gain an understanding of the City's services, many of which require careful planning and thoughtful consideration to deliver high-quality outcomes in a cost-effective manner. In addition, you will become familiar with the distinct rules, procedures, and regulatory requirements that govern public agencies. These processes often differ significantly from those of private organizations and may be unfamiliar to the general public.



## **Enjoy The Experience**

It should give you great comfort to know that your efforts are making a meaningful and positive impact on the community. The City of Hermosa Beach would not be the great place that it is today without your help and the recommendations of your fellow board and commission members.

## **Handbook Review And Updates**

The City Clerk, with approval from the City Manager and City Attorney, is authorized to update the Boards and Commissions Handbook without further action by the City Council. Any formal changes to the membership or role of a board or commission will be brought to the City Council for consideration.

