

Boards, Commissions, and Committees Code of Conduct

Over 150 volunteer citizens serve the City on Boards, Commissions, and Committees. These groups of volunteers advise the City Council in many important areas. Participation is greatly appreciated by Council members, City staff, and the community at large.

The City of Eau Claire Committee Code of Conduct is outlined below. Committee members shall serve in accordance with these standards:

A. Commitment to Service

- Support the Vision, Mission, and Value Statements of the City of Eau Claire.
- Act in a manner that supports the orderly, efficient operation of Committee meetings.
- Commit to attending all meetings to the best of their ability. While occasionally schedules and other priorities will prevent attendance, it is expected that regular attendance will occur. In the event that three consecutive meetings are missed without notifying staff, the Committee Chair will contact the member to discuss attendance. If necessary, the Chair or staff will contact the Advisory Committee on Appointments, who may review the reasons for the absences and decide whether or not to remove the member from the Committee.
- When communicating with the media or other stakeholders, Committee members should clearly differentiate between personal opinions and the official position of the City or the Committee.

B. Standards of Conduct While in Attendance

- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects credit upon themselves and the City of Eau Claire.
- Comply with all applicable Federal and State laws, as well as City ordinances, including open meeting law.
- Not participate in committee business while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or any other substance.

- Respect the lawful authority vested in them by virtue of their position as a Committee member.
- Not use their membership to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for personal benefit, for the benefit of their immediate family, or for any organization with which they are associated.
- Not use confidential information for actual or anticipated personal gain, or for the actual or anticipated personal gain of others.
- Conduct the business of the City in a respectful and professional manner.
- Show respect for fellow members, City officials, staff, and the public.

C. Civility and Decorum in Discussion and Debate

- Members are expected to engage in open, honest debate, recognizing that difficult questions, opposing viewpoints, and constructive criticism are part of democratic governance.
- Each member has the right to an individual opinion, which should be respected by others.
- Members shall not engage in hostile, defamatory, or degrading remarks. Differences of opinion should not be attributed to a lack of judgment or improper motives.
- Members must avoid belligerent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or personally disparaging comments at all times, including during meetings, individual encounters, or other official activities. Shouting or physical actions that may be construed as threatening or demeaning are strictly prohibited.
- If a member feels personally attacked or offended, they may call a “point of personal privilege.” The Chair shall then ask the offending member to either clarify their remarks or issue an apology and remind members to focus on the substantive issue rather than personal attacks.

D. Points of Order and Privilege

- Violations of this Code of Conduct, when made during a chaired public meeting, should be noted promptly after their occurrence by rising to a *point of order* (applicable when a member believes these or other rules applicable to the board are not being followed) and stating the violation or concern.
- The Board Chair shall rule on the point of order, which does not need a second and is not debatable. The Chair's decision shall stand unless challenged and reversed by a majority vote of the members present.
- The closely related *point of privilege* or *point of personal privilege* (applicable when some matter concerning the rights or privileges of the board or board member requires immediate attention) may also be utilized in the same manner as above.

E. Complaint Process and Addressing Violations

- If a BCC member feels that a violation has occurred, they may report it to the Committee Chair, City staff liaison, or City Manager. If the violation relates to the Chair, then the BCC member may report the incident to the BCC staff liaison.
- The BCC Chair should speak with all parties to seek resolution, with the City staff liaison present.
- If resolution is not achieved, then the Committee Chair or staff member may submit a report to the Advisory Committee on Appointments. The Advisory Committee may review the matter and, if warranted, recommend to the City Council that the BCC member be asked to resign. If the BCC member does not wish to resign, the Advisory Committee of Appointments will bring to the full Council in public session a request to replace the member.

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