

**LAWNDALE**

**PLANNING  
COMMISSION**

**POLICY**

**AND**

**PROCEDURES**

June 2006

## **RESOLUTION 02-09**

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF  
THE CITY OF LAWNSDALE, CALIFORNIA  
ADOPTING PROCEDURAL RULES AND  
GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE  
PLANNING COMMISSION.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAWNSDALE HEREBY  
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

The following procedural rules and guidelines for the conduct of Planning  
Commission Meetings are adopted:

1. Regular Meetings
2. Special Meetings
3. Adjourned Meetings
4. Study Sessions
5. Public Meeting
6. Organizational Meeting
7. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson
8. Quorum
9. Agenda
10. Order of Business
11. Call to Order – Presiding Officer
12. Roll Call
13. Reading of Minutes
14. Minutes
15. Secretary
16. Presiding Officer – Powers and Duties
17. Points of Order
18. Action by the Commission
19. Adoption by Majority Vote
20. Public Hearings
21. Public Hearings-Evidence
22. Public Hearings-Continuation
23. Public Hearings-Termination of Public Testimony
24. Public Hearings-Closing
25. Public Hearings-Reopening
26. Public Hearings-Decision
27. Findings
28. Robert's Rules of Order
29. Amendments to By-Law

1. Regular Meetings. The Planning Commission shall hold regular meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, except that if a regular meeting day is a legal holiday, the meeting shall be rescheduled to the next day. The meeting shall be held in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 14717 Burin Avenue, Lawndale, and shall begin at 6:30 p.m.
2. Special Meeting. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chair or by the majority of the Planning Commission, by delivering written notice to each Commissioner and to each local newspaper of general circulation. Such notice must be delivered personally or by mail at least twenty-four hours before the time of such meeting as specified in the notice. The notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting other than that contained in the notice.
3. Adjourned Meetings. All meetings may be adjourned or suspended to another specific time, place and date, but not beyond the next regular meeting. If all members are absent from any regular or adjourned regular meeting the Secretary may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place and shall cause a written notice of the adjournment to be given in the same manner as provide in “2” above for special meeting. A copy of the notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously posted on or near the door of the place where the meeting was held within 24 hours after the time of the adjournment.
4. Study Sessions. The Planning Commission may from time to time adjourn from a meeting to meet in study sessions with staff or others to review, discuss and debate matters of interest to the City no official action shall be taken at a study sessions. All study sessions shall be open to the public.
5. Public Meetings. All meetings of the Planning Commission shall be open to the public. Closed sessions may be held only when specifically authorized by law.
6. Organizational Meeting. On the second Wednesday in May the following the appointment by the City Council of any new Planning Commissioners, the Commission shall meet at the regular meeting time and place. The newly appointed members of the Commission shall take and subscribe to the oath of office as the first order of business. As the last order of business of that meeting the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among its members. In the event of the untimely vacancy of any Commissioner’s seat, the newly appointed member shall take and subscribe to the oath of office at the next regular Planning Commission. Any vacancy of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson shall also be elected at this time from among the Commission members.

**The newly elected Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson shall not take office until the next subsequent meeting of the Planning Commission.**

7. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Planning Commission shall be elected annually and shall not be removed from their office unless they become disqualified to serve as a member of the Commission. No member may serve more than two (2) full consecutive terms as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson. (For purposes of this section, “term” shall mean one year, and “Disqualified” shall mean to be ineligible to hold office due to removal by the City Council, moving to another City, for impropriety or an indecorous act while performing in a capacity of Commissioner, elected to the City Council, or appointed to another Commission).
8. Quorum. Three members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Where there is no quorum, the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or any member of the Commission shall announce that no meeting will be held due to the lack of a quorum and announce the date of the next regular meeting, or if no member of the Commission shall make the announcement. When a member of the Commission is disqualified due to a conflict of interest, his presence shall be considered in determining the presence of a quorum although he may not participate in the decision.
9. Agenda. The Secretary of the Commission shall prepare the agenda for the meeting. Any Commission member may have an item placed on the agenda at least 48 hours before the meeting, and the Planning Commission may, by majority vote, up to the start of the meeting, add an item that is not on the agenda. The agenda shall be made available to the public as soon thereafter as possible. Whenever feasible, each item on the agenda shall contain a staff recommendation and the specific action requested by the Commission.
10. Order of Business. Items shall be placed on the agenda according to the “Order of Business”. The Order of Business for each regular Planning Commission meeting shall be as follows:
  - A. Call to Order
  - B. Roll Call
  - C. Pledge of Allegiance
  - D. Consent Calendar
  - E. Items from Citizens Public Hearings
  - F. Regular Agenda
  - G. Items from the Community Development Director
  - H. Items from the Commission
  - I. Adjournment
  - J. Affidavit of Posting
11. Call to Order-Presiding Officer. The Chairperson or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson, shall take the Chair at the hour appointed for the meeting and shall call the Commission to Order.

12. Roll Call. Before proceeding with the business of the Commission, the Secretary shall call the roll of the Commission members and the names of those present shall be entered in the minutes.
13. Consent Calendar. Unless a member of the Commission requests the reading of the minutes of a meeting, the minutes may be approved without reading.
14. Minutes. The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting shall be kept by the Secretary in accordance with the following Commission policy:
  - A. Minutes shall contain a record of all proceedings, motions, and actions;
  - B. Minutes shall not be a verbatim recording. A Commissioner may request, through the Chairperson, that an abstract of his statement on any subject under consideration by the Commission be entered in the minutes.
  - C. All motions, whether passed or lost, shall be recorded with the name of the proponent and roll call vote;
  - D. Reports shall be summarized or mentioned as being presented or voted upon. A copy shall be filed for the record;
  - E. Minutes of hearing shall list the names and addresses of all persons who speak for or against the specific item, and the position they took on the matter; and
  - F. A tape recording of all Planning Commission meetings shall be made and said recording tapes shall be kept for a period not less than six months. The Secretary shall keep in good order all tape recordings and release tapes to any authorized person upon written request and Approval by the Secretary or Commission.
15. Secretary. The Administrative Assistant to the Director of the Department of Community Development shall be the Secretary at all meetings of the Planning Commission and shall have the following responsibilities:
  - A. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Commission on computer file;
  - B. Give or serve all notices required by law or by these rules;
  - C. Prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Commission;
  - D. Be custodian of Commission records;
  - E. Inform the Commission of correspondence relating to business of the Commission and attend to such correspondence;
  - F. Handle funds allocated to the Commission in accordance with its directives, the law, and City regulation; and
  - G. Sign official documents of the Commission.
16. Presiding Officer – Powers and Duties. The Chairperson shall preside at all meeting of the Commission. A member must be recognized by the Chairperson in order to address the Commission. The Chairperson shall give the following powers:

- A. To call to order the Planning Commission meeting and to conduct the order of business as per the agenda;
  - B. To adjust the agenda, if needed, at the time of the meeting;
  - C. To move, second, debate and vote;
  - D. To rule motions in or out of order;
  - E. To determine whether a speaker has gone beyond reasonable standards of courtesy in his remarks and to entertain and rule on objections from other members on this ground;
  - F. To entertain and answer questions of parliamentary law or procedure based on Robert's Rules of Order;
  - G. To sign all resolutions, and other documents necessitating his signature;
  - H. To call a brief recess at any time;
  - I. To adjourn in an emergency; and
  - J. Such other powers as given by Robert's Rules of Order.
17. Points of Order. The Presiding Officer shall determine all points of order subject to the right of any Commissioner to request a full Commission ruling on the Presiding Officer's determination.
18. Action by the Commission. The Commission shall proceed by motion. Any member, including the Chairperson, may make a motion and any member may second the motion except that the same person who made the motion cannot second it. A member may make only one motion at a time and the introducer may withdraw a motion at any time before a vote.
19. Adoption by Majority Vote. A motion shall be adopted by a majority of the vote's case, a quorum being present. Every member should vote affirmatively or negatively unless excused because of a conflict of interest. A member who wishes to be excused from voting for reasons other than a conflict of interest shall so inform the Chairperson, who shall take a vote of the remaining members.
20. Public Hearings. Whenever the law requires the Commission to hold a public hearing, such hearing shall be held in accordance with the following rules and procedures:
- A. The Presiding Officer shall announce that it is the time and place for a public hearing scheduled on the agenda and shall orally summarize the procedures used by the Commission during a public hearing or shall refer the audience to the back of the agenda.
  - B. The order of the hearing shall be as follows unless otherwise required by law:
    - a. Opening of the Public Hearing
    - b. Swearing in of those wishing to testify
    - c. Presentation of Staff Report
    - d. Presentation by Applicant, if any

- e. Questions from the Commission
- f. Testimony from the Public
- g. Response of Applicant
- h. Response of Staff
- i. Closure of Public Hearing
- j. Discussion by Commission – further question of staff
- k. Action

21. Public Hearings. Evidence during the public hearing the Commission may receive both oral and written evidence relevant to the matter being considered, which evidence shall become part of the record. The Chairperson shall swear in the witness by the City Attorney or before receiving oral evidence. In addition, the staff report, all exhibits, maps, papers and other physical evidence placed before the Commission shall be retained and become part of the public record. Any Commission member who has visited the site shall state that and disclose any testimony received at the site.
22. Public Hearings – Continuation. At any time that it appears to the Presiding Officer or a majority of the Commission through the Presiding Officer, that inadequate evidence has been presented to afford judicious consideration of any matter before the Commission at the time of a public hearing, or for other just cause, a continuation of said hearing may be ordered to afford the applicant, the public, or the City staff adequate time to assemble additional evidence for the Commission's consideration.
23. Public Hearings – Termination of Public Testimony. When the public has no further evidence to present, when in the opinion of the Presiding Officer no new public evidence is being presented or when in the opinion of the Presiding Officer no new public evidence is being presented or when in the opinion of the Presiding Officer the evidence is sufficient, the Presiding Officer may terminate the public testimony. Termination of public testimony does not close the Public Hearing.
24. Public Hearing – Closing. When neither the applicant, the public, the City staff, nor the Commission have further evidence to produce or when in the opinion of the Presiding Officer sufficient evidence has been presented the Presiding Officer shall order the public hearing closed. No Commissioner shall express his or her position on the matter until the public hearing has been closed.
25. Public Hearing – Reopening. A Public Hearing on any matter once closed cannot be reopened on the date set for hearing unless the Presiding Officer determines that all persons who were present when the hearing closed are still present. Nothing herein, however, is intended to prevent or prohibit the reopening of a public hearing at any subsequent regular or special meeting of the Commission. No public hearing may be reopened without due and proper notice being given to the applicant, the public and all those testifying at the prior hearing(s), designating the time and place of said opening.

26. Public Hearing – Decision. The Commission shall consider all evidence properly before them in accordance with these procedures and then act upon the item. A Commissioner who was absent from all or a significant part of a Public Hearing shall not participate in the decision on the matter.
27. Findings. The finding of the Commission and the supporting facts shall be written out in detail in the minutes or in the resolution regardless of whether they are based on evidence or on personal knowledge of the Commission.
28. Robert’s Rules of Order. If a matter arises which is not covered by these rules, or the latest revised edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern applicable provisions of Federal or State Law or the Lawndale Municipal Code, the procedures of the Commission.
29. Amendments to By-Laws. These by-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Planning Commission by a majority of the Commission; however, any amendment made shall not take affect until the subsequent Planning Commission meeting.