

# CLG Training

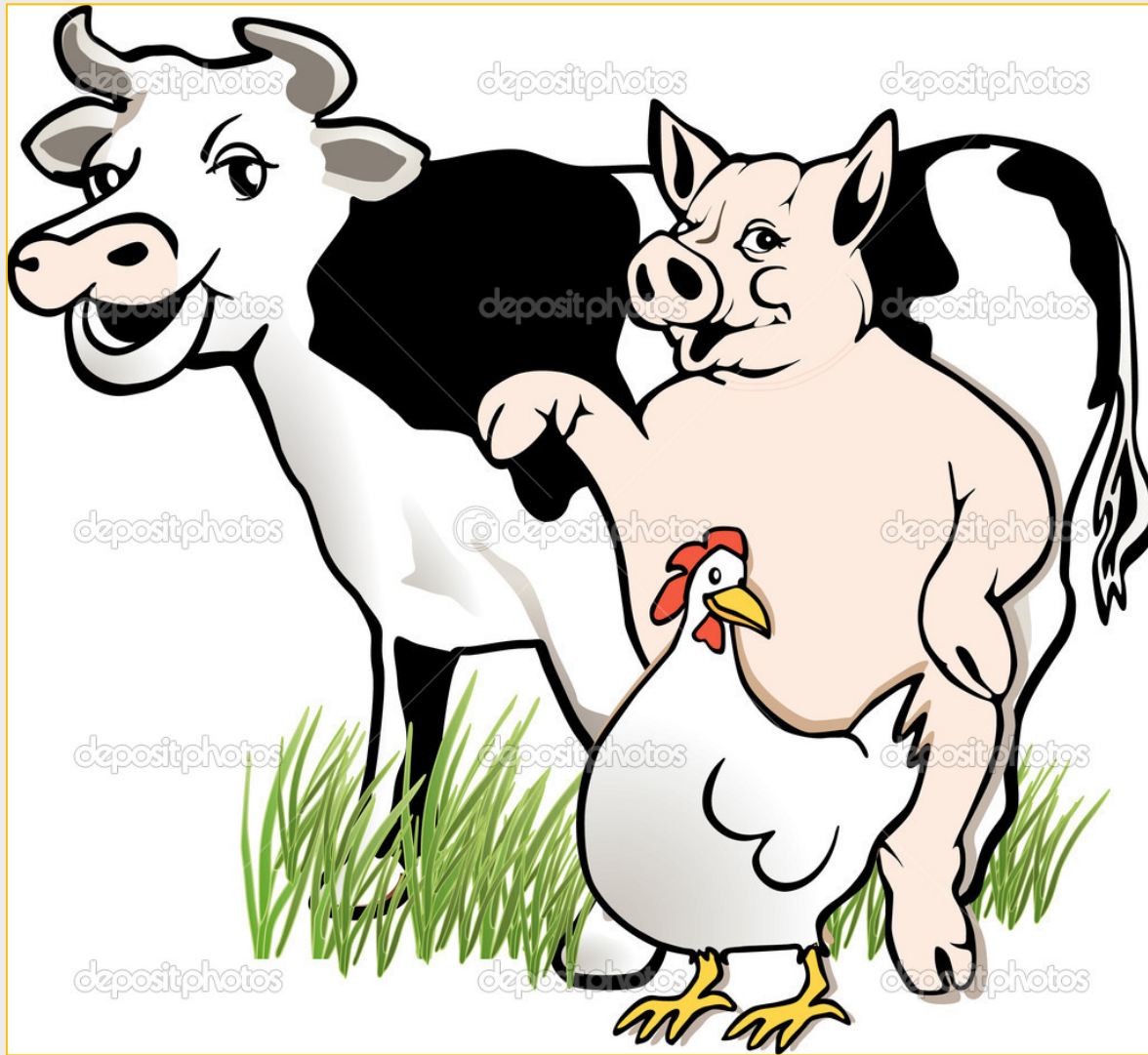
## Meeting Procedures and Making a Defensible Decision

Spokane, WA  
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# Preparing for and Conducting the Meeting





# Distracted Decision-making



# Rights and Responsibilities Staff

- ▶ Regular training of Commission members
- ▶ Explain the process to applicants
- ▶ Work with the applicant to produce a complete application
- ▶ Staff support for Commission at meetings
- ▶ Brief Commission members on agenda items prior to meeting
- ▶ Issues minutes, Certificates of Approval and public notices
- ▶ Regularly review guidelines with Commission and revise, if necessary
- ▶ Represent the Commission in other City proceedings
- ▶ Confer with Ethics officer/City Attorney when needed
- ▶ Public outreach and education
- ▶ Develop relationships within City government





# Role of the Chair

- ▶ Confer with staff prior to the meeting to review agenda
- ▶ Manage the meeting - ensure that there is a quorum and that there are no conflicts of interest before each application
- ▶ Ask each member to explain his/her vote, based on the Commission's ordinance and guidelines
- ▶ Call for and tally the vote - vary the order so that no one dominates the decision-making discussion
- ▶ Explain the decision to the applicant - approval, approval with conditions, denial - and any appeal process(es)
- ▶ Thank the applicant for making the application
- ▶ Speak on behalf of the Commission with media and others

# Before the Meeting

## Staff

- ▶ Work with applicant to prepare application - explain ordinance, design guidelines.
- ▶ Review application for completeness.
- ▶ Issue agenda and staff report
- ▶ Provide necessary public notice
- ▶ Ensure there is a quorum
- ▶ Set up room - ensure that there are name plates for each member
- ▶ Make sure that there are copies of the agenda for public and a sign-up sheet for speakers

## Commission Members

- ▶ Make sure that meetings are on your calendar for the year
- ▶ If you know that you will be absent, give staff /Chair ample notice
- ▶ If you think you have a conflict, check with staff before the meeting
- ▶ Review the agenda and familiarize yourself with the site
- ▶ Read staff report prior to meeting
- ▶ Be on time!



# At the meeting, what not to do. . .



# At the Meeting

## Staff

- ▶ Present information in a neutral manner
- ▶ Refer to information presented in application, ordinance and guidelines, staff report
- ▶ Take minutes of meeting

## Commission Members

- ▶ Listen to presentation by staff and applicant
- ▶ No extraneous conversations with fellow Commission members
- ▶ Ask questions when it is your turn to ask questions - don't interrupt the presenter or each other!
- ▶ Make your decisions based on your ordinance and guidelines, not personal preferences
- ▶ Agree to disagree but respect your fellow member's rationale

# After the Meeting

## Staff

- ▶ Talk with applicants if they have any questions about Commission action
- ▶ Collect all of the application materials for the record
- ▶ Respond to the media
- ▶ Issue Certificates of Approval or denial
- ▶ Prepare the minutes and distribute to the Commission for review
- ▶ Post approved minutes on website

## Commission Members

- ▶ Don't discuss the application after the Commission meeting either privately or publicly with anyone - your family, an applicant, a neighbor, even another Commissioner!
- ▶ Educate the public about the role of the Commission and the value of historic preservation



# Navigating the Media

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Know the media policy of your jurisdiction

Be careful that anything you say does not jeopardize the decision you have made (or may be making)

Remember, you don't control what is reported

# Making your decisions easier to defend

- Discuss only the relevant factors and avoid irrelevant issues
- If you have to recuse yourself, state your reasons for doing so
- Be familiar with the adopted meeting and/or hearing procedures

# Checkers or Chess?

