

Advisory Board Basics

Key Points

The purpose of Town of Chapel Hill advisory bodies is to advance the Council's Goal of Governing with Quality, Responsiveness and Efficiency by

- Providing the Town Council with information and perspective to inform the Council's decisions
- Serving as the Town Council's "eyes and ears" on issues and matters related to the board's charge
- Offering additional opportunities for discussion of public issues
- Increasing citizen engagement in issues that affect them

Members' Role

- Prepare
- Participate
- Follow through
- Show up
- Be fair, objective & polite

Effective Members:

- Recognize serving the public priority #1
- Are knowledgeable about the legislative process and issues affecting the advisory board
- Understand that authority is granted to the board not individuals
- Willing to work with the group to make decisions
- Recognize that compromise may be necessary
- Do not let personal feelings interfere with their judgment

Chair's Role

- Develop meeting agenda & packet with Staff Liaison
- Facilitate discussion
- Ensure interests of Town & Town Council are met
- Sign documents & represent board as appropriate
- Call special meetings in accordance with Open Meetings Law

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Staff Liaison's Role

- Develop meeting agenda & packet with Chair
- Facilitate not participate
- Act as a resource on Town policies, procedures and information
- Write & post Action Minutes
- Ensure that federal and North Carolina laws as well as Town policies pertaining to advisory boards are met

Council Liaison's Role

- The liaison may apprise the board or commission of general Council purposes and may convey ideas and concerns from the board or commission to the Council.
- Council liaisons are not voting members of any board or commission, inasmuch as such members might be faced with voting on an issue as a recommendation of the board or commission, and then considering the report or recommendation of the board or commission in such member's capacity as a member of the Council.
- Council liaisons may attend regular or special meetings of the advisory board or commission, but their regular attendance is not required.*

* Town Council Procedure Manual