

Thank you for serving on a city board, commission, or committee (BC). Your participation is a critical part of our government's decision-making process. This document is designed to provide a framework to guide BC members in their actions. If you have questions about BCs contact the Office of the City Recorder at ocr@milwaukieoregon.gov or at 503-786-7515.

ETHICS

As a BC member you are a public official as defined in Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 244.020(14). This code of conduct is a supplement to existing statutes governing conduct of public officials including Oregon's ethics law; see the state's [Guide for Public Officials](#). Adherence to ethics rules includes rejecting gifts, services, or other special considerations that are only offered to you because of your service as a public official. Ethics rules may also require you to excuse yourself from participating in decisions when the financial interests of a member of your immediate family or household, or your own, may be affected by your BC's action.

CARRYING OUT BOARD DUTIES

It is important to remember that you represent the city and are held to a higher standard while performing your BC responsibilities. You may be faced with difficult decisions and situations. BC members are expected to be civil and diplomatic, and in general:

- All BC meetings are public meetings subject to the state's public meeting laws.
- You should always review materials provided in advance.
- You should always do your part to maintain the organization's transparency. Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest by declaring publicly if a potential or actual conflict of interest arises and take appropriate steps.
- Be aware of the public nature of written messages and e-mail. All materials created in your official capacity are subject to the state's public records laws.

Keep the following in mind when dealing with other BC members, city staff, and the public:

BC Member Conduct with One Another During Meetings

- Difficult or contentious discussions may arise. Encourage civil and constructive discourse and refrain from belligerent language, personal attacks, slanderous, threatening, abusive or disparaging comments.
- Be honest with everyone. As a BC member you are a public official and have a responsibility to conduct the BC's public business in a transparent and open manner.
- Give credit to others' contributions to the process.
- Strive to make independent, objective, fair and impartial judgments.

BC Member Conduct Outside Public Meetings

- Be respectful even in private. The same level of respect for differing points of view used in public discussions should be maintained in private conversations.
- Private conversations can become public. As public officials, BC members should be aware that they can be the focus of public attention. Even casual conversation about city business, other public officials, or staff may draw attention and be repeated.
- Understand proper political involvement. BC members, as private community members, may support political candidates or issues but such activities must be done separate from their role as a BC member.

BC Member Conduct with the Public

- Be welcoming and respectful to speakers. For many community members, speaking in front of a BC is a new experience. BC members should listen and make comments or ask questions appropriately, respectfully, and professionally.
- Make no promises on behalf of the BC in unofficial settings. BC members may be asked to explain an action or to give their opinion about an issue. It is appropriate to give a brief overview, but overt or implicit promises of specific actions are to be avoided. In the case of quasi-judicial land use matters, additional prohibitions on communications apply, on which the Planning Commission receives further guidance.
- Be mindful of what you say. Anything said in a public meeting may end up in print. In discussions about city business with the press or through social media, be careful to not represent a personal opinion as if it were the city or BC position. In general, be careful what you post online – remember the old adage: if you don't want to see it on the front page of the newspaper don't type it or say it.

BC Member Conduct with City Staff

- Respect city staff and their role in the process. BC members should not disrupt staff from carrying out administrative duties, attending meetings, or implementing policy. BC members should not make belligerent, personal, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments to or about staff.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend all BC meetings; however, the community understands that conflicts may prevent a member from attending up to 25% of the meetings a year. For these purposes, “year” refers to the twelve-month period beginning from the start date of the member’s BC term. For instance, many terms start on April 1 while others begin July 1.

MILWAUKIE MUNICIPAL CODE (MMC) AND BOARD BYLAWS

Most of the city’s BCs were established by the City Council as authorized by the MMC and some were established by Council resolution. Each BC also has its own set of bylaws for members to follow; see the city website or contact the BC’s staff liaison for a copy of the bylaws.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND REMOVAL

Pursuant to MMC Chapter 2.10, BC members may be removed at any time by the City Council for misconduct, nonperformance of duty, or failure to obey the federal, state, or local laws. If a BC member violates this code of conduct or any applicable laws the Council may choose to take the following steps:

- 1) The BC chair, or other appropriate officer if the issue involves the chair, will meet with the member in violation.
- 2) If the issue continues, the member in violation will meet with a City Council member to discuss the issue and an email about the issue will be sent to the entire Council.
- 3) If steps 1 and 2 do not resolve the issue, Council will take necessary actions to remove the member in violation from the BC as authorized by MMC Chapter 2.10.040.

IMPLEMENTATION

All BC members will review this code of conduct and affirm in writing that they understand its provisions and pledge to conduct themselves by the guidelines listed. A periodic review by Council of this document will be conducted to ensure that it is an effective and useful tool.

CODE OF CONDUCT CERTIFICATION

As a member of a city board, commission, or committee (BC), I affirm that:

- ✓ I have read and understand the Milwaukie Code of Conduct for Boards, Commissions and Committees, and its application to my role and responsibilities while serving on a city BC.
- ✓ I have read and understand the Milwaukie Public Records Overview (available online at <https://www.milwaukieoregon.gov/bc> under "Supporting Documents") for members of BCs and how my actions on behalf of the city are governed by the applicable laws of the State of Oregon.
- ✓ I pledge to conduct myself by the code of conduct.
- ✓ I understand that I may be removed from my position if my conduct falls below these standards.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

BCC:
