



Port Advisory Group Protocols and Responsibilities

May 2015

The Port of San Francisco is served by several community advisory groups that are appointed by the Port Executive Director to provide input and exchange among advisory group members, Port staff, and the general public in meetings that are open to the public. These interactive discussions inform staff assessments, presentations and recommendations to the Port Commission.¹ Currently, there are five Port advisory groups that focus on localized or content areas:

- 1) Fisherman's Wharf (Hyde Street Pier through Pier 39)
- 2) Northeast Waterfront (Pier 35 through Pier 22-1/2 Fireboat Station)
- 3) Central Waterfront (which will be expanded to include the South Beach neighborhood, Rincon Park through Pier 70)
- 4) Southern Waterfront (Western Pacific/Pier 80 through Pier 98/Heron's Head Park)
- 5) Maritime Commerce

In addition, Port staff is preparing for the creation of a Waterfront Plan Working Group to support the update of the Port of San Francisco Waterfront Land Use Plan. Like the existing Port advisory groups, the Waterfront Plan Working Group is planned to be a passive meeting body under the City's Sunshine Ordinance.²

Port staff's goal is to manage and support the advisory groups in a consistent manner. This includes providing information to members about roles, responsibilities, and how Port staff will manage public meetings and procedures.

Advisory Group Membership & Meetings

- The Port seeks involvement from a cross-section of community stakeholders in each advisory group. Typically, advisory group members are selected as representatives of neighborhood, community or functional organizations relevant to the purpose and focus of the given advisory group. Advisory group meetings provide insights and knowledge expressed by members and the public to guide Port land use, development, leasing and operations. This information is very helpful to staff in developing presentations and staff recommendations to the Port Commission. Advisory group meetings also enable Port staff to share information from Port Commission meetings, to acknowledge relationships between localized and Port-wide issues.

¹ Port advisory groups are passive meeting bodies under the City's Sunshine Ordinance so they have more flexibility than policy bodies regarding the conduct of their meetings. Policy bodies such as the Port Commission, or committees created by the Charter, the Board of Supervisors, or by the initiative of a board, commission or other policy body, are subject to Brown Act and Sunshine Ordinance open meeting requirements, including specific agenda requirements and time limits on public comments. Some of these strict open meeting requirements can constrain interactive exchange among meeting participants, especially for complex public policy issues, and hamper communication and the free exchange of ideas by both City staff and public participants.

² A description of the Waterfront Plan Working Group is provided in an April 10, 2015 Port staff report available online at www.sfport.com/wlup, <http://sfport.com/index.aspx?page=2491>

- Advisory group members provide perspectives, questions and comments about Port projects and activities that should reflect the organizations and constituents they represent. They should support exchange and dissemination of information to/from their organizations and constituents. The appointment of alternates may be considered if it supports this liaison function. Designated alternates must be identified and coordinated with Port staff. As passive meeting bodies, advisory groups do not vote. Meeting minutes provide a record of discussions, conclusions, consensus and minority viewpoints of the advisory groups.
- Advisory groups typically will meet bi-monthly. Extra meetings can be scheduled as needed, and regular meetings can be cancelled if there are no agenda items. Advisory group meetings are all open to the public and noticed by email. Meeting agendas and minutes are maintained on the Port's website: <http://sfport.com/index.aspx?page=198>. Members of the public can request to be added to the email list to receive meeting notices. Meeting information are mailed out only upon request, and applicable reproduction charges will apply.
- Regular attendance of advisory group meetings is important to stay in touch with community discussions and new information. Port staff will strive to keep the membership active, and may excuse people who have become inactive or invite new members. Members with three unexcused absences in one year will be subject to being replaced.
- Advisory group chairs or co-chairs will manage meetings to provide opportunities for question/answer and exchange between advisory group members, and with the general public. The intent is to promote fair and respectful public engagement on topics listed on the agenda. Advisory Group members may request agenda items and the agenda is set by agreement between the Co-Chairs and Port staff.

Communications

- Port staff strives to keep advisory group members informed about news that may come up between advisory group meetings, Port Commission meetings, and availing documents and information on the Port's website, www.sfport.com. Information that may be of interest but not necessarily placed on an advisory group meeting agenda typically will be emailed to advisory group members. Port staff also can send information provided by one advisory group member to the other members upon request. Port staff will not share the email addresses of advisory group members with the public without permission of affected member(s).
- To keep informed on other Port projects and activities, staff will add advisory group members to the email list to receive Port Commission meeting notices. Individuals will have the option to remove themselves from the email list if desired.

Conflict of Interest

- On occasion advisory group members may have questions about possible conflicts between their professional (or other) responsibilities and projects that are addressed at advisory group meetings. Please see Port staff regarding any questions. Port staff works with the City Attorney's office to provide information and/or follow up on questions regarding conflicts of interest. Members that are involved with projects are encouraged to disclose that involvement.