



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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## **Manhattan Community Board 4 Committee Chairs Best Practices Guide – October 2014**

This guide is a living document and is intended for present and future leaders of this Community Board. The suggestions within this document are derived from examples of best practices from committee chairs new and old and recommendations from the Committees Best Practices Task Force which is comprised of members that are or have served as chairs.

Some recommendations may be applicable to multiple topics and are found in more than one section of this guide.

It may not be practical for all committees to implement everything laid out in this document, but if all members strive to incorporate many of these ideas in their dealings on behalf of the Board, we can ensure a more productive and pleasant experience for the community we serve and for all of our Board members.

A wise member of our Board shared this advice:

- Our focus is on today and the future
- Listen to each other, understand different perspectives, ask questions.
- When another speaks, it is his/her turn, listen and do not interrupt.
- New ideas are encouraged; let us hear them and not shoot them down.
- Treat each other respectfully.
- Everyone is equal today.
- Everyone gets a chance to speak, but no long-winded speeches.
- Dissenting views are okay, we do not have to agree with one another.
- Do not take things personally.
- Use CAREfrontation – confront each other in a caring way.
- Respect the facilitator and their instructions.

**We are ALL responsible for making the meetings great!**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**I. Basic Responsibility** .....3  
**II. Planning** .....3  
**III. Outreach**.....5  
**IV. Committee Meetings**.....7  
**V. Co-chairing** .....9  
**VI. Training** .....9  
**VII. Budget and Executive Committee** .....11  
**VIII. Support** .....12  
**IX. Appendix** .....14  
    Open Meeting Law .....14  
    Budget Process.....16  
    Small meetings, conflict of interest rules and procedures .....16  
    Parliament .....16  
    ULURP .....18  
    By-laws .....19  
    Policies.....19

## **I. BASIC RESPONSIBILITY**

A Committee chair is responsible for preparing and running committee meetings, writing resolutions and explaining them to the full board for adoption.

A committee chair attends four meetings a month: the Full Board meeting, the Executive committee on behalf of the committee they chair and the two committees they have accepted to serve on.

From time to time, the chair may be asked to participate in working meetings with agencies or stakeholders, or to testify at City Council or other hearings on behalf of the board.

The chair is also responsible for contributing to land use resolutions as needed, planning and committee input in the annual budget process.

## **II. PLANNING**

According to the NYC charter, Community boards have an important planning component to their mission. Committee Chairs can help the Board shape the future rather than just react to it. ([http://72.45.128.254/nyc/Charter/Charter\\_Chapter70Section%202800.asp?zoom\\_highlight=community+boards](http://72.45.128.254/nyc/Charter/Charter_Chapter70Section%202800.asp?zoom_highlight=community+boards))

As leaders, Chairs are responsible for ensuring that their respective committees:

- Define goals and priorities;
- Anticipate upcoming trends and actions;
- Reach out to the community on important issues;
- Coordinate with affecting officials, agencies, individuals and businesses;
- Train new committee members and continue educating all members;
- Participate in the budget process;
- Contribute to the ULURP process or other cross disciplinary exercises.

### Define goals and priorities

Committee Chairs are annually required to report on their respective committee's accomplishments from the previous year and establish goals for the upcoming year. Chairs should solicit input from committee members about the committee's goals, include discussion of goals at a public committee meeting, and prioritize a final list of goals. Chairs can refer to the goals and priorities regularly to assure their active pursuit and consistency in committee actions.

### Anticipate upcoming trends and important issues

Committee Chairs are encouraged to stay current on news and events related to their committee's responsibilities. If possible, Chairs should report projected committee agenda items and issues of concern to their committees when this will help committee members be more prepared and engaged with committee matters.

Also, Chairs should remain educated and as expert as possible on matters related to the committee's particular role in the Board, or at least ensure that the committee at large includes the necessary expertise to adequately understand and address all committee matters [see Education and Training]. Chairs should recruit public members, in consultation with the Board Chair, in the event that necessary expertise is not available via current Board members alone.

Help community members understand how the Community Board can serve the public and encourage members of the community to seek the services available.

### Reach out to the community on important issues

Issues that may affect the community requires outreach [see Community Outreach]. Rather than wait for the community to learn about matters indirectly or in an untimely manner, Committee Chairs should seek ways to proactively inform potentially impacted residents and businesses in the community.

### Coordinate with affecting officials, agencies, businesses, developers, and community leadership

Committee Chairs should be familiar with who key stakeholders are with regard to community matters related to their committee's responsibilities. This may include elected officials, government appointees and/or representatives, local business and organization leaders, land and community developers, and neighboring community board and local community leaders.

Contact and communication with key stakeholders should be established and maintained, but with permission and/or direction from the Board Chair [see Protocols]. This will allow the committee to be better positioned for quick responses to short-lead issues requiring interaction with other parties.

In all communications with Stakeholders, chairs should be collecting information. They should refrain from volunteering information or positions. If asked they should always refer to published board positions. All communications with the press are done through the office and the Chair of the board.

### Maintain committee member training and education

Committee Chairs are relied upon to help develop future Community Board leaders and Committee Chairs by assigning committee members to committee tasks, attend and participate in meetings and other committee-related activities in addition to required meetings, and encouraging committee members to seek training and education opportunities [see Education and Training].

### Give input to the budget process

Community Boards have an opportunity to respond to the Mayoral Budget as well as report to City Agencies on District Needs [See budget process]. Chairs need to add these discussions on their committee agendas at the appropriate time of year.

### Contribute to ULURP process or other multidisciplinary exercise

On occasion, the Board may need to participate in a review of a project, such as a development which qualifies for a Uniform Land Review. Chairs of the committee need to ensure their committee has thoroughly assessed the situation and has considered all issues that may affect the community. In the case of ULURP, there are many topics to cover and it has been effective when a committee divides up the topics and reports back their findings to the Chairs.

Often these processes will involve multiple committees. Committee chairs involved need to coordinate and delegate the work required. Committee meetings may need to be combined and agendas should be carefully considered so as to respect everyone's time.

### III. OUTREACH

One of the key missions of the Board besides planning, is outreach to the community. The role of the community board is to propagate information from agencies to the community and collect information from the community to relay cohesive and balanced positions to the agencies. By interacting on regular basis with stakeholders committees can be better informed of the broader community sentiment. Finding ways to bring in diverse voices from the community ensures the Board is representative of all its members. In order to accomplish this it is recommended that Chairs:

- Establish relationships with relevant Agencies and encourage liaisons to attend meetings as well as request updates from Agencies on relevant matters.
- Establish relationships with Block Associations and other community groups. Encourage these stakeholders to attend meetings and when possible attend Block Association and other community meetings.
- Create and review guidelines where applicable and standardize a form or documentation to create more predictability in the community *Examples of this is BLP's sidewalk cafes guidelines and BLP's applicant form when applying for a liquor license.*
- Track agency and council calendars - Attend and testify at City planning and city council hearings on matters important to the board.
- Arrange with the District Office notices to be sent out regarding meeting schedules, agendas and other relevant information.
- For any important Board/Community notices or meetings ask the office to send a general email
- Allow the public sufficient notice of meetings: the agenda for the meeting should be finalized and sent out to the community at large 5 days before the meeting. When possible necessary materials should be attached. Avoid when possible adding new agenda items that the public may not have time to review.
- Ensure yourself or the office is in touch with applicants and affected residents before and after the meeting. Ask them to gather needed information and come prepared to the meetings
- Always copy the office on emails to ensure that any matters that need to be addressed by the office can be done promptly.

There is never enough outreach or communication. In doubt, do more.

## IV. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The community Board carries its mission of planning, services and outreach through Committee meetings that result in recommendations to the full board. These meetings are public and are well-advertised to the community. The agenda can be very long and contentious topics will attract many speakers. A Committee Chair's objective is to run a productive committee meeting: one that is orderly, to the point, where the members are engaged and make decisions and where the community is heard and gets resolution.

### **Before the meeting:**

- 
- Finalize and publish final Agenda 5 days before the meeting
- Agenda topics should be relevant to community concerns,
- Ensure notification /postings are sent by the office to affected blocks
- Send background documentation to members
  - *When possible provide members visuals/graphics of Agenda items*
- Reach out to agencies/ applicant to clarify requests and ensure equipment requirements are prepared
- Arrange/Assign background tasks and or field trips
- Coordinate with office for documents to bring to meetings, including relevant Board policies.

### **At the meeting:**

- Arrive early to set up the room and welcome attendees.
- Rooms will be set up by the office, but, identify WiFi access, bring the sign-up sheet and the voting sheet, and background documentation.
- Ensure signup sheet for public is available and used
- Wait for Quorum. No Quorum = no meeting
- Note attendance: After 30 minutes = absent
- Note that meetings can be filmed.
- Introduce the committee members
- Prioritize Agency presentations and items with many community members present
- Manage time at meeting: Allocate times to each item
- Before each item check if conflict of interest
- Explain the role of the committee in regards to the Agenda item (information, vote, refer to full board)
- Explain background on the issue including relevant Board Policies
- Solicit questions by the committee then by the public
- Solicit comments by the committee then by the public.
- Parliamentary procedure is the accepted method for conducting meetings. Please note recommended procedures below.
  - *All members raise their hand to address the chairs – not the presenters or the applicant*

- *Applicant address the committee, not the public*
- *Public raise their hand to address the committee not the applicant*
- *Ask speakers to announce their name and where they live*
- *Address community, applicant and other board members with respect and deference*
- Enter in business session (only members to speak)
  - *Ensure proper outreach and neighbors consultation has been done before adjudicating an item*
  - *Enforce speaker rules; member is allowed to speak once and speak again only after others have a chance to speak.*
  - *Get a pulse on committee members, “checking-in” before crafting the resolution*
  - *Encourage committee members to say why they are in favor or against Chair cannot make a motion, must be made by others, and then seconded to be in play.*
  - *If there is an amendment to the motion, this is discussed and voted first, before the resolution itself*
- Reports on small meetings held during the month
- Solicit new or update to old business
- Allocate letters to be written to various members
- Complete voting sheet

#### **After the meeting**

- Send the voting sheet
- Consult with agencies or applicants if necessary;
- Meeting recaps sent to the committee can be helpful for absent members
- Write letters using the style guideline
  - *State the ask or the recommendations first,*
  - *Explain the back ground*
  - *Explain the specific; give the details of the recommendation*
  - *Specify whom it is addressed to, who is copied*
- Encourage feedback from committee members on pending letters. *Be careful emails are not creating a group discussion. Merits of an issue cannot be discussed by email, only exchange of information*
- Submit letters to board office on the day of the Executive Committee at the latest

## V. CO-CHAIRING

Co-chairing a committee has many advantages and few drawbacks. It has been established to ensure that both the Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen communities are well represented by a local leader. It is also helpful for busy committees to share the workload between two chairs. Co-chairing is generally the norm but in some case the workload is such that the committees have been split.

On the other hand it can create confusion if both chairs take the lead on the same items, do not communicate well and drop items or compete during the meetings to lead the discussion.

It should be noted that the co-chairing arrangement does not exempt either chair of attending meetings.

Chairs should consult with each other and find the most comfortable mode of operation. For example: working together on all items, allocating items based on time or preferences, alternating in chairing the meetings.

The key to this process is intense communication: both chairs should be copied on all emails and written communications. Phone calls and meetings with agencies, residents and applicants should invite both chairs. When one misses a meeting, the other should summarize outcomes. While only one will write letters, both should agree on the final content.

During the meeting, for each item only one of the chairs should be running this segment of the meeting. This means that the other chair should behave like any other member at that time: raise the hand and wait his/her turn to speak. Two chairs cannot run a single item.

For efficiency, it is better if a topic or applicant is handled by the same chair end to end.

## VI. TRAINING

The goal of education and training for committee chairs is well-informed, reasoned decision-making in an environment that allows appropriate discussion of issues following established by-laws and policies.

To accomplish this goal, committee chairs need to:

- (1) Be familiar with and follow these documents (on CB4 website):
  - CB 4 by-laws, in particular:
    - Article III A3 "Duties of Chairperson"
    - Article X B "Committee Chairpersons"
  - CB 4 Board Policies
  - Open meeting law (see appendix)

- (2) Develop positive relationships with city agencies and in some cases state agencies relevant to committee, for example: try to invite a representative regularly at meetings
- Business Licenses and Permits: State Liquor Authority (SLA), NYPD, DCA
  - *Housing, Health and Human Services*: NYC Housing Preservation and Planning (HPD), NYC Housing Authority, NYC Housing Development Corporation; NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA); NYC Health and Mental Hygiene
  - *Land Use*: NYC Department of City Planning (DCP): Manhattan Office: Director and CB4 Planner; Landmarks Preservation Commission (CLU now reviews many LPC applications), NYC Department of Buildings; NYC Board of Standards and Appeals
  - Quality of Life: SLA , NYPD, DEP
  - *Transportation*: NYC Department of Transportation (DOT); Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA); Port Authority (PA) NYPD , DCA
  - Waterfront, Parks and Environment: Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Environment Conservation (DEC)
- (3) Develop positive relationships with relevant local stakeholders, for example: invite them to present or attend meetings, make sure they are on the mailing list
- Civic organizations and block associations
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Health providers
  - Developers
  - Businesses
  - Elected officials
- (4) Promote the education and training of committee members
- Provide background information (before meeting) about items to be discussed at a committee meeting or small meeting
  - Hold training sessions for committee members (for example: basic zoning regulations and specific zoning districts in CD 4)
  - Invite presenters to committee meetings who would speak generally about a topic (for example: Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) representative
  - Inform committee members of upcoming conferences or training sessions offered outside of CB (for example: Manhattan Borough President's Office holds orientation sessions for new CB members)

Establish a clear line of succession and delegate responsibilities to increase committee member participation and lighten the workload for the Chairs. *Not thought of as permanent roles, but rather as assignments.*

## **VII. BUDGET & THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Budget**

Another fundamental responsibility of Community boards is to participate in the city budget process by identifying community needs and report to various agencies where our community would like funds to be allocated.

The budget process for the Board is the responsibility of the Second vice chair and the budget task force with the support of the District Manager.

The Committee chairs do review the statement of district needs, modify background information based on most recent changes in the district, and modify the needs based on what has already been accomplished, what resolutions have been issued in the last 12 months and what complaints have been received.

Subsequently, the chairs prioritize the capital requests for the district, and comment on the overall draft city budget once available.

These activities must be coordinated with the council participatory budget exercise and other grants to avoid duplications.

### **Executive Committee**

The executive committee meets once a month. It is a public meeting.

The meeting focuses on board matters: outreach, meetings, agendas, letters, policies, procedures and rules, budget, attendance, borough board resolutions, neighboring district issues. Exceptionally the executive Committee will vote on a matter that crosses multiple committees or on a matter that must be decided before the next full board.

In the case of a rezoning and ULURP, each chair will be tasked with reviewing it servant chapter and part update in the crafting of the board's answer.

The chairs are expected to report on small meetings or major milestones reached since last month. They are also submitting agenda items for their next committee meetings. These will be published at the Full Board meeting and finalized 5 days before the meeting.

## **VIII. OFFICE SUPPORT**

While this looks like a lot of work, the committee chair is supported by an experienced office staff. One of the staff members is assigned to supporting each committee and its chairs.

### **The office is responsible for**

- Setting the meeting schedules
- Finding appropriate meeting places
- Publishing agendas and other announcements by email
- Posting items on location
- Reaching out to applicants or residents
- Reaching out to agencies
- Soliciting agenda items
- Forwarding materials to committee members
- Setting up the room for the meeting, with audio, etc.
- Bringing agendas, attendance and voting sheets
- Bringing required materials
- Collecting attendance
- Collecting draft letters , completing draft letters with missing information and format
- Posting on the website agendas, letters, notices, etc.
- Emailing the Board notices and materials
- Supporting the Full Board meeting
- Finalizing letters
- Sending letters to agencies, applicants, or community and posting on the website

### **In between meetings**

- Responding to community requests, route them to chairs or proper agencies
- Responding to chairs: find information, contact agencies or follow up as requested.
- Attending small meetings with chairs

### **Recommendations on how to best work with the staff**

- Respond to their email and phone calls on a timely basis
- Notify them of delays and change of plans- well in advance
- Do not ask them everything at the last minute
- It is inappropriate to expect them to be on the go- between your co-chair or with other chairs.
- Be clear and detailed on what you expect and by when
- Provide information by the deadlines requested
- Copy the staff on all your communications so they are up to speed
- If necessary copy the District manager for emphasis

### **What you should expect from the staff**

- Prompt acknowledgement of your requests with expected action or timeline
- Status updates
- Actions and answers

## **IX. APPENDICES**

### **OPEN MEETING LAW**

In 1976 New York State enacted the Open Meeting Law (OML). Its purpose is stated in the preamble:

*“It is essential to the maintenance of a democratic society that the public business be performed in an open and public manner and that the citizens of this state be fully aware of and able to observe the performance of public officials and attend and listen to the deliberations and decisions that go into the making of public policy.”*

Advisory bodies are generally exempt from the OML. However, because Community Boards are given specific duties by the City Charter (conducting ULURP hearings and making recommendations to City Planning, as an example) it has been held that they are covered by the OML

The OML governs many facets of how Board and committee meetings are conducted. The text below covers most of the requirements in a non-technical manner. Incorporated are the impact of court decisions and advisory opinions of the Committee on Open Government.

#### **What is a Meeting?**

The OML applies only to meetings. A meeting is defined as “the official convening of a public body for the purpose of conducting public business, including the use of videoconferencing for attendance and participation by the members of the public body.” The Board and all of its committees or subcommittees have been held to be “public bodies”. However, for a meeting to take place, and the OML invoked, a quorum must be present with the intent to conduct public business. The presence of a quorum of a body at a social gathering or other non-board event does not create a meeting unless the members get together and start to discuss Board business. If there is no quorum present there is no meeting.

It is not necessary for voting to be on the agenda to have an event called a meeting. Workshops, task forces, drafting sessions, etc. are all considered meetings for purposes of the OML if a quorum is present

#### **Location**

Meetings must be held in a location that is barrier free to the physically handicapped and large enough to accommodate those that wish to attend.

#### **Recording or Filming**

Anyone wishing to do so may record, photograph, film, videotape or broadcast a Board or committee meeting provided the operation does not disturb or interfere with the proceedings. The Board can issue rules on where equipment can be located but if it does so, it must provide notice to interested parties.

#### **Public Notice**

Notice of forthcoming meetings must be given to the public in a timely fashion. If the meeting is scheduled a week ahead of time, notice must be given not later than 72 hours before the meeting. Notice must be given in 3 places: conspicuously posted in several regularly designated spaces available to the public, to the media and on the Board web site. If scheduled less than a week

before the meeting the 3 notices shall be given in a reasonable manner. If meetings take place at the same time and location each month notice may be simplified. Public notice does not require the provision of the agenda for the meeting. However, to the extent possible the topics to be discussed or voted on should be made available in the interest of having broader community participation.

If a meeting is scheduled to follow another meeting, notice should state that fact and indicate the anticipated starting time of the second meeting.

Notice and several other OML features are the responsibility of the Board office. Chairs must insure that the office receives the needed information in a timely fashion and that proper notice is given.

### **Items to be discussed**

Resolutions, letters or other items to be discussed or voted on at a meeting shall be made available to the public before or at the meeting and if possible, posted on the Board web site. Chairs have the burden of providing the Board office with the necessary documentation in a timely fashion.

### **Executive Session**

With rare exception, all meetings of the Board and its committees must be open to the public. Although there are a number of situations permitting exclusion of the public, only one is likely to be applicable to Community Boards. That is the provision to go into executive session when discussion involves “the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation” To go into executive session a majority vote of the entire membership at an open meeting is needed and the resolution to exclude the public must specifically state the reason justifying the exclusion. While discussion in executive session is confidential, any vote taken must be disclosed as if in an open meeting and appear in the minutes of the session.

### **Minutes**

Minutes must be taken at all open meetings. At a minimum they must include a record or summary of all resolutions formally voted upon and, in accordance with the requirement of the State FOIL Law, a record of the final vote of each member on every item on which the member votes. No record need be kept of voting that is preliminary, procedural or on an amendment. The Committee voting sheet adopted by CB4 meets the requirement of the law. It shows attendance, how members voted on each item and a summary of the subject matter of each item. Minutes of an executive session must show the final determination, if any, and how each member voted. If there is no final action, minutes need not be prepared.

Minutes of open meetings must be available for inspection by the public within 2 weeks after the session. Executive session minutes must be available in one week. There is no legal requirement that minutes be approved and availability to the public cannot be delayed pending approval.

### **Action Without an In-person Meeting**

Despite the ready availability of modern communication technology – e-mail, phone conferencing, Facebook and other social media. -- the overwhelming legal requirement for openness bars use of these media to transact Community Board discussion and voting by a quorum of the Board or a Committee. E-mail can be used by individual members to exchange views or by Chairs to circulate material. It is assumed that an e-mail sent to an entire Board or Committee will be opened or read at different times and that at no time will a quorum be on line.

### **Small Meetings Policy**

The small meeting policy is available on the CB4 website, [here](#).

### **Conflict of Interest Rules and Procedures**

The conflict of interest rules and procedures document is available on the CB4 website, [here](#).

## **PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

The parliamentary procedures can be found, [here](#).

## **BUDGET PROCESS**

Under the New York City Charter, Community Boards are given a broad range of responsibilities for advising the City about local budget needs and priorities. The Charter mandates that the Community Boards consult with agencies on the capital and expense budget needs of the district, hold public hearings, prepare capital and expense budget priorities for the next fiscal year and comment on the funding choices presented in the preliminary budget. The primary purpose of this responsibility is to ensure that local neighborhood opinion is considered when the City allocates its resources and services. As a result, all committee chairs should be familiar with the City budget process.

New York City's budget year begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The total budget consists of three components:

Revenue Budget is the City's best estimate of how much money will be available during the fiscal year to support operating expenditures and capital improvement projects. These include all tax and non-tax funds expected to be received during the fiscal year.

Expense Budget covers all the City's day-to-day operations such as salaries and supplies as well as debt service. It is supported by City taxes, fees and other local revenue as well as state and federal aid.

Capital Budget covers the cost of the City's long-term construction program, purchases of land and large equipment. Reconstruction of streets, sewers, parks and buildings are examples of capital projects. Capital budget items are financed by the sale of municipal bonds as well as by state and federal grants.

In addition, the Community Development Program allocates federal money for long-term physical improvements and related activities that chiefly benefit low and moderate income persons.

The process by which the Community Board participates in formulating the City's budgets has six major elements:

**1. Consultations between Community Boards and City agencies that deliver local services.**

From May through September, Community Boards have two formal opportunities to consult with agency officials about budget needs and the funding of programs and projects. The agencies that formally consult with the Boards are the Departments for the Aging; Buildings, Children's Services, Small Business Services, Economic Development, Environmental Protection, Fire, Homeless Services, Housing Preservation and Development, Parks and Recreation, Police, Sanitation, Transportation, and the Human Resources Administration.

Consultations take place at two levels:

District Level - In late spring, early summer, District Managers meet with the agencies' local representatives during the monthly District Service Cabinet meeting to discuss the needs of the district, the current level of service delivery and the resources needed to meet those needs.

Borough Level - During the month of September and October, Boards in each borough meet with agency commissioners to discuss long range needs, important budget requests, operational issues, agency policy choices and fiscal constraints.

**2. Public hearings held by the Community Board. Community Boards hold at least two public budget hearings each year:**

September/October – when the Board is developing specific budget priorities to submit to City agencies, the public has the chance to identify community district needs and the Board gets community input.

January/February - an opportunity for the public to react to the policies in the just released Preliminary Budget. This hearing forms the basis for the Community Board's Statement on the Preliminary Budget, which tells City officials how the community feels about the City's budget choices.

**3. Formal budget submissions. By the date announced by OMB, usually late October, Boards formally submit their budget requests to City agencies and the Office of Management and Budget as the agencies begin to prepare their next year's budget. Budget submissions consist of three components:**

Requests for funding in the Capital Budget for physical improvements to the City's infrastructure and public facilities, for land acquisition and major equipment;

Requests for funding in the Expense Budget for programs and personnel; and

Community Board Service Program Rankings where Boards indicate the importance of services to their community by ranking 85 programs provided by 24 agencies.

4. Agency review of Board budget requests. After Community Boards submit their requests, City agencies review them thoroughly. Agency funding recommendations are reflected in the City's Preliminary Budget and Departmental Estimates. Agency responses to each Community Board budget request are published by OMB in the Register of Community Board Budget Requests for the Preliminary Budget. Boards then have the opportunity to respond to agency decisions in their Statement on the Preliminary Budget, which is due one month later.

5. OMB review of Board budget requests. For the Mayor's Executive Budget these same budget requests are evaluated by the Office of Management and Budget. OMB funding recommendations are published in the Register of Community Board Budget Requests for the Executive Budget.

6. Public hearings at which the Boards testify:

February - Hearings held by Borough Boards prior to submitting Borough Board Budget Priorities and Borough President submissions to the Executive Budget;

OMB hearings on the City's Community Development Program Application; and

March and May - City Council hearings on the Preliminary and Executive Budgets.

Testifying lets the Boards try to advance projects which have not been recommended by the agencies or the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget.

The Community Boards find out the final disposition of the budget requests they submitted in October in the Register of Community Board Budget Requests for the Adopted Budget, which is published after the City Council finalizes the budget, sometime in late June.

As you see, the Community Boards' participation in the budget process is a year-round activity. Even before the budget is adopted, the simultaneous process of considering budget requests for the next cycle begins.

Assessing community needs is an ongoing activity which requires the involvement of each Board member and committee. Personal observations, published surveys, public hearings, discussions with local service chiefs and the use of such community records as minutes from the District Service Cabinet and the district office complaint log can all help in identifying patterns or areas of problems within the community.

The Board's long range needs are presented to City decision makers in the Statement of Community District Needs which is published by the Department of City Planning within a framework of information detailing demographics and community facilities.

## **ULURP**

The Uniform Land Use Review Procedure chart can be found online, [here](#).

## **By-laws**

The CB4 by-laws are available on the CB4 website, [here](#).

## **POLICIES**

From time to time the community board adopts internal policies on particular matters.

These policies incorporate the board members' experience in generating successful outcomes. They are useful in helping to set expectations for those that appear before us and for the community. They provide a consistent approach to comparable requests and free up time to consider the specificity of each applicant. They also play an important role in transferring institutional knowledge to new members.

These policies do not intend to replace the laws of New York City or New York State or the rules of the agencies, but they will often ask the applicants to comply with additional protocols in order to be good neighbors and conform to the peculiarities of our district.

Committees are expected to follow such policies in their recommendations to the board. In certain circumstances the committee has latitude to make recommendations to the full board that deviate from the policy. In such cases though, the committee shall highlight the deviation and articulate in detail the reasoning behind the exception in its draft letter to the board.

From time to time, the committees may propose revisions to the policies in place, or the establishment of new policies.

All policies in force are available on the website. The Chairs of the committees should have the text of the relevant policies accessible to refer to during the committee meeting.

Links to current policies: Check on [nyc.gov/mancb4](http://nyc.gov/mancb4) for the most current list of policies

- [Rear yard/roof top](#)
- [Alcohol-Serving Establishments](#)
- [Sidewalk cafe](#) additional [sidewalk cafe](#)
- [General Sidewalk](#)
- [Newsstand](#)
- [Secondary street signs](#)
- [Small meetings](#)
- [Conflict of interest](#)
- [Video taping of meeting](#)