

# Draft Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership (Top Five)

## Definition

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Effective Boards operate with formally adopted protocols that provide an operational framework for how Board members will work together. Protocols are descriptions of the “way we do things here” and are important as guides for what is an acceptable and unacceptable process and behavior. Protocols exist whether they are identified or not. When they are not overtly stated, they become the habits by which groups perpetuate behaviors, some of which can become detrimental to the effective operation of the Board.

Topic	Role with Advisory Boards
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has established through policy and county ordinances a number of county advisory committees. Additional committees are required by state law. Advisory committees are established to provide advice and counsel to the entire board and reflect the commitment of the Board of Supervisors to transparency, engagement of the community, and high quality, evidence based decision making.</p> <p>Because of their importance, it is essential that advisory committees operate in a highly efficient and professional manner.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>Because of the importance of the county advisory committees, the following guidelines should be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Every advisory committee should receive Brown Act training on an annual basis.</li><li>• There should be a bi-annual review of the advisory committee’s purpose and effectiveness.</li><li>• Advisory Committees should report to the Board on a semi-annual basis.</li><li>• Ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of advisory committees should be provided.</li></ul> <p>No more than two supervisors may attend or be appointed to any advisory committee. Supervisors are observers and not expected to influence the committees.</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Board Meeting Agenda Development</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Critical to effective discussion and deliberation is clarification of the agenda placement process, appropriate placement of items on the board agenda and sufficient time for gathering information on the issue. The major objective of the agenda process is to allow for open deliberation by the board of supervisors on all county matters not to be considered in Closed Session. It is important for the agenda development process to be conducted in an orderly, effective manner to ensure transparency and meeting effectiveness.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors prepares an agenda for each meeting in collaboration with the Board Chair, Chief Administrative Officer, and County Counsel. The Board of Supervisors' Agenda is prepared weekly according to the Board of Supervisors meeting calendar.</p> <p>An agenda review meeting is typically held on Mondays, 8 days prior to a regular meeting. The CAO, Board Chair and/or Vice Chair, the Clerk and County Counsel participate in the agenda review meeting. A draft of each board meeting agenda is discussed at the Agenda Review meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk of the Board publishes the final agenda by close of business the Wednesday before a regular meeting and if necessary, an addendum to that agenda is published by close of business the Friday before the meeting.</p> <p>Board Members may submit items to be added to a given agenda at any time, provided the item(s) are submitted in a timely fashion to be compliant with the Brown Act. (Emphasis on 72 hour requirement for agenda publication)</p> <p>Supervisors are encouraged to contact the CAO's office with any technical or detailed questions regarding the agenda prior to the board meeting to ensure adequate information is available if necessary.</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Public Comment in Board Meetings</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Board of Supervisors meetings are business meetings of the Board held in public. It is the policy of the Board that public input to the Board is encouraged. The board is committed to transparency in all of its governance activities. However it is essential that the Board operate in a consistent and professional manner in order to accomplish the business of El Dorado County. Consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act and in order to provide equal treatment to all, the board may adopt reasonable rules and regulations regarding public input.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>Time for public input will be provided at every Board of Supervisors meeting. Individuals will have three minutes to address the Board. Individuals authorized by organizations will have up to five minutes to present organizational positions and perspectives. Public comment on certain agenda items designated and approved by the Board may be treated differently with specific time limits per speaker or a limit on the total amount of time designated for public comment. It is the intent of the Board that quasi-judicial issues have additional flexibility depending upon the nature of the issue.</p> <p>Individual Board members may ask clarifying questions but will not engage in substantive debate with persons providing input to the Board.</p>

Topic	Role of the Board Chair
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The Board of Supervisors annually appoints a Chair of the Board. This position is among the most important positions on the Board. It has a major impact on both the stability and effectiveness of the Board.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The Chair of the Board of Supervisors facilitates the efficient and transparent operation of the Board during Board meetings, and performs a lead role in setting the tone for all interactions among the board, with staff, and the community. The Board Chair ensures that every board member has the opportunity to participate in the deliberations, and in most cases is the last to speak on specific issues. The Chair of the Board is charged with preserving order and decorum and shall decide questions of order subject to appeal to the Board.</p> <p>The Chair of the Board also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborates with the Clerk of the Board and CAO on the Board meeting calendar.</li> <li>• In consultation with the County Administrator, Clerk of the Board and County Counsel, develops Board meeting agendas.</li> <li>• Appoints, with consent of the Board, supervisors to those committees, commissions, agencies, associations, districts, boards, councils or other organizations on which the Board desires representation or which is required by law.</li> <li>• Serves as a sounding board for the County Administrator on matters of significant concern.</li> <li>• Generally serves as spokesperson for the County in:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press releases and media events</li> <li>• Public events</li> <li>• Correspondence</li> <li>• Exceptions: District-specific events or areas of expertise</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensures, for complex and significant topics, talking points are provided to all Board members.</li> </ul>

Topic	Handling Complaints from the Community
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The Board of Supervisors is accessible and responsive to community concerns and issues. The Board strives to be consistent and fair in dealings with complaints and concerns expressed from the community. The Board values open communication and timely resolution of issues.</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>It is important that the Board have a clear and consistent process when considering and responding to constituent concerns. When approached with concerns or complaints, Board members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen openly and without prior judgment.</li> <li>• Take care in responding, understanding that they are hearing one side or perspective on an issue.</li> <li>• Be mindful of their role in quasi-judicial review.</li> <li>• Always be mindful that the authority to take action rests solely with the majority of the board.</li> <li>• Strive to ensure community members understand the appropriate steps in the complaint process.</li> </ul> <p>Complaint process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily resolved complaints, concerns, or questions are directed to the appropriate department head with a copy to the County Administrator.</li> <li>• Complaints requiring a complex solution and/or policy change are directed to the County Administrator. The County Administrator should inform the supervisor of actions or non-actions if appropriate related to the complaint. When considered appropriate either the supervisor or the CAO may inform the Board Chair regarding the complaint and resolution.</li> </ul>