

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE



Local Government Center

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PRINCIPLES ¹	APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION
1. LEGITIMACY AND VOICE	<p>PARTICIPATION – all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.</p> <p>CONSENSUS ORIENTATION – good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures.</p>
2. DIRECTION	<p>STRATEGIC VISION – leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.</p>
3. PERFORMANCE	<p>RESPONSIVENESS – institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders.</p> <p>EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY – processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.</p>
4. ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>ACCOUNTABILITY – decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organizations and whether the decision is internal or external.</p> <p>TRANSPARENCY – transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.</p>
5. FAIRNESS	<p>EQUITY– all men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their wellbeing.</p> <p>RULE OF LAW– legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights.</p>

¹ Principles organized and presented by, Graham, John, Bruce Amos and Tim Plumptre (2003) *Principles for Good Governance in the 21st Century*, Policy Brief No.15. Ottawa, Canada: Institute On Governance as based on United Nations Development Program "Governance and Sustainable Human Development" (1997), www.mirror.undp.org/magnet/policy. Updated 11/13

GENERAL BOARD STATUTES
Montana Code Annotated (2013)

TITLE 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS
Part 2. Boards

7-1-201. Boards (1) A board of county commissioners may by resolution establish the administrative boards, districts, or commissions allowed by law or required by law to be established pursuant to 7-1-202, 7-1-203, Title 7, chapter 11, part 10, and this section and listed in 7-1-202. The resolution creating an administrative board, district, or commission must specify:

- (a) the number of board, district, or commission members;
- (b) the terms of the members;
- (c) whether members are entitled to mileage, per diem, expenses, and salary; and
- (d) any special qualifications for membership in addition to those established by law.

(2) (a) An administrative board, district, or commission may be assigned responsibility for a department or service district.

(b) An administrative board, district, or commission may:

(i) exercise administrative powers as granted by resolution, except that it may not pledge the credit of the county or impose a tax unless specifically authorized by state law;

(ii) administer programs, establish policy, and adopt administrative and procedural rules.

(c) The resolution creating an administrative board, district, or commission must grant the board, district, or commission all powers necessary and proper to the establishment, operation, improvement, maintenance, and administration of the department or district.

(d) If authorized by resolution, an administrative board, district, or commission may employ personnel to assist in its functions.

(3) (a) Administrative boards, districts, and commissions may be made elective.

(b) If an administrative board is made elective and if the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be elected, the election administrator may cancel the election in accordance with 13-1-304. A position for which there were no nominees must be filled by appointment by the county commissioners for the same term as if the position were filled by election. If there is only one nominee for a position, the nominee may be declared elected by acclamation.

(4) Administrative boards, districts, and commissions may not sue or be sued independently of the local government unless authorized by state law.

(5) Members must be appointed by the county commissioners. The county commissioners shall post prospective membership vacancies at least 1 month prior to filling the vacancy.

(6) The county commissioners shall maintain a register of appointments, including:

- (a) the name of the board, district, or commission;
- (b) the date of appointment and confirmation, if any is required;
- (c) the length of term;

(d) the name and term of the presiding officer and other officers of each administrative board, district, or commission; and

(e) the date, time, and place of regularly scheduled meetings.

(7) Terms of all members, except elected members, may not exceed 4 years. Unless otherwise provided by resolution, members shall serve terms beginning on July 1 and shall serve at the pleasure of the county commissioners.

(8) An administrative board, district, or commission must consist of a minimum of 3 members and must have an odd number of members.

(9) The resolution creating an administrative board, district, or commission may provide for voting or

nonvoting ex officio members.

(10) Two or more local governments may provide for joint boards, districts, or commissions to be established by interlocal agreements.

(11) A majority of members constitutes a quorum for the purposes of conducting business and exercising powers and responsibilities. Action may be taken by a majority vote of members present and voting unless the resolution creating the board, district, or commission specifies otherwise.

(12) An administrative board, district, or commission shall provide for the keeping of written minutes, including the final vote on all actions and the vote of each member.

(13) An administrative board, district, or commission shall provide by rule for the date, time, and place of regularly scheduled meetings and file the information with the county commissioners.

(14) Unless otherwise provided by law, a person must be a resident of the county to be eligible for appointment to an administrative board, district, or commission. The county commissioners may prescribe by resolution additional qualifications for membership.

(15) A person may be removed from an administrative board, district, or commission for cause by the county commissioners or as provided by resolution.

(16) A resolution creating an administrative board, district, or commission must contain, if applicable, budgeting and accounting requirements for which the board, district, or commission is accountable to the county commissioners.

(17) If a municipality creates a special district in accordance with Title 7, chapter 11, part 10, the governing body of the municipality shall comply with this section if the governing body chooses to have the special district governed by a separate board.

7-1-202. Creation of new boards. Subject to 7-1-201 and 7-1-203 and in addition to the following, a county may create administrative boards, districts, and commissions that are not otherwise provided for by law:

- (1) county building commission;
- (2) cemetery districts;
- (3) county fair commission;
- (4) mosquito control board;
- (5) museum board;
- (6) board of park commissioners;
- (7) road district;
- (8) rodent control board;
- (9) solid waste district;
- (10) television district;
- (11) weed management district.

7-1-203. County commissioners to assume duties of administrative boards, districts, and commissions.

(1) If the minimum number of qualified persons is not available for membership on an administrative board, district, or commission, the county commissioners may by resolution, at a public meeting, assume the duties of the administrative board, district, or commission and may act as that board, district, or commission with the same powers and duties as that board, district, or commission.

(2) County commissioners, acting in the capacity of an administrative board, district, or commission may not receive any compensation in addition to their compensation as county commissioners.

NOTICE: This model policy is a draft work in progress by the Local Government Center at Montana State University. It is intended to serve as a guide to the development of rules of procedure for a Sewer/Water Board. It should not be adopted prior to review by the competent legal counsel. Recommendations for improvements should be communicated to Dan Clark 994-6694 or email at daniel.clark@montana.edu.

Rules and Procedures for Governing Water/Sewer Districts

PART I. General Provisions

Section 1.01 Purpose The purpose of this policy is to establish the rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings and the transaction of business by the _____ Water/Sewer Board of _____ Sewer/Water District. These rules of procedure are intended to assure that the Board can accomplish its work efficiently, in full view of the public and with reasonable opportunity for the public to participate in the deliberations and decisions of its county government.

Section 1.02 Authority These rules of procedure are promulgated pursuant to and supplement Part 10, Chapter 11, Title 7, Montana Code Annotated.

PART II. Public Participation

Section 2.01 Policy It is the policy of _____ Water/Sewer District that the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to participate in the operation of Board prior to the final decision of the Board concerning any matter of significant interest to the public. A matter of significant interest to the public includes but is not limited to any matter:

1. Requiring a public hearing;
2. Adopting, Implementing, interpreting, prescribing or altering a rate, rule or policy of the District;
3. Relating to the budgetary and financial affairs of the District.

Section 2.02 Open Meetings A meeting of the _____ Water/Sewer Board is convened whenever a quorum of Board members hear, discuss or act upon any matter over which they have jurisdiction. All meetings of the _____ Water/Sewer District shall be open to the public. However the presiding officer of the Board may close any meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and then if an only if the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains and in that event, the meeting must be open.

Section 2.03 Notice The _____ Water/Sewer Board shall give timely notice of any public hearing or any meeting to discuss or act upon any matter of significant interest to the public, as prescribed by law. Additionally, the agenda of all scheduled meetings of the _____

Water/Sewer District shall be posted on the designated public posting board not later than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Section 2.03 Public Posting Board The Board of _____ Water/Sewer District designates as its official posting place the (e.g. posting board in the lobby of the courthouse near the East entrance.)

PART III. Procedures

Section 3.01 Quorum A quorum of the _____ Water/Sewer Board shall consist of _____ Board Members. No meeting of the Board shall be convened without a quorum and no decision of the Board on any matter requiring a majority vote of the Board shall be made except by the affirmative vote of _____ (e.g. 50% of the Board +1) Board Members.

Section 3.02 Agenda Preparation Proposed ordinances, resolutions, reports, recommendations, contracts and all other matters requiring consideration, discussion or decision by the Board shall be submitted to the Chairperson of the Board or to the secretary of the Board by 12:00 noon on _____ (e.g. Friday) immediately preceding the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. The Chairperson or his/her designated representative shall arrange the matters requiring discussion or action into an agenda according to the order of business specified herein. Copies of the agenda shall be provided to each member of the Board not later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. Copies of the agenda shall be readily available to the press and to the public at large and one copy shall be posted on the designated public posting board not later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

Section 3.03 Order of Business The presiding officer shall prepare the agenda in substantially the following form which may be altered by consent of the Board:

1. Roll Call of the Board Members
2. Pledge of Allegiance (optional)
3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting.
4. Public Comment over anything on the agenda.
5. Scheduled Matters.
 - a. Opening of Bids.
 - b. Appeals.
 - c. Consent Items (no discussion)*.
 - i. General Business
 - ii. Claims (paying the bills)
 - iii. Routine internal operations matters
 - d. Public Hearing (required by law or ordinance)
 - e. Other Scheduled Matters
6. Public Comment on anything not on the agenda but within the jurisdiction of the Board.
7. Unscheduled Matters: An item that is not scheduled on the agenda for the current meeting may be discussed during the session at the discretion of the Board. However, the purpose of such discussion shall be to decide whether or not to schedule the item for discussion and/or vote on a subsequent agenda. As a general rule no matter of

significant interest to the public should be decided upon without prior notice to the public as a scheduled Board agenda item.

8. Adjournment

** Consent Items are those upon which the presiding officer considers no discussion should be necessary. However, at the beginning of each meeting any Boarder may request one or more items to be removed from the consent agenda for the purpose of discussion prior to a separate vote on the item(s). The presiding officer shall schedule such discussion and vote immediately following adoption of the consent agenda.*

PART IV. Rules of Board Participation

Section 4.01 Policy To provide for the effective participation by all members of the _____ Water/Sewer Board and to protect the right of participation by members of the public appearing before the Board, all meetings of the Board shall be conducted in general conformance with the provisions of the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except when inconsistent with law.

Section 4.02 Rules Board debate shall proceed in accordance with the following rules:

1. A Board Member desiring to speak shall address the presiding officer, and upon recognition, shall confine him or herself to the question under debate, avoiding abusive and indecorous language.
2. A Board Member once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless it is to call him or her to order, or as herein otherwise provided. If a Board Member while speaking is called to order, he or she shall cease speaking until the question of order is determined, and, if in order, he or she shall be permitted to proceed.
3. Order of rotation in matters of debate or discussion shall be at the discretion of the presiding officer.
4. A motion may be made by any member of the Board but must be seconded prior to discussion and vote. If the motion is not seconded it shall be declared failed for lack of a second by the presiding officer.
5. A motion to reconsider any action taken by the Board may be made only on the day such action was taken. It may be made either immediately during the same session, or at a recessed and reconvened session thereof. Such a motion may only be made by a Board Member of the prevailing side, but may be seconded by any Board Member and it shall be debatable.
6. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent any member of the Board from making or remaking the same or any other proper motion at a subsequent meeting of the Board but the matter must be a scheduled agenda item.

Section 4.03 Suspension of the Rules of Debate The rules of debate may be suspended temporarily by the unanimous vote of the entire Board.

Section 4.04 Majority of Whole Board Required The affirmative vote of three Board Members is required to adopt any measure unless a greater number of votes may be required by law or ordinance.

Section 4.05 Duty to Vote It shall be the duty of each Board Member to vote in the affirmative or negative on each motion duly placed before the Board by the presiding officer. A Board Member may make a brief explanation of the reason why she or he voted in a particular way.

Section 4.06 Proxy Voting A Board Member who is not present in the meeting at the time a motion is put to a vote cannot vote. Board Member shall not be permitted to vote by a proxy vote or by written vote.

Section 4.07 Conflict of Interest Any member of the Board who has a private interest, as defined by law or as so advised by the County Attorney, in any matter pending before the _____ Water/Sewer District shall not participate in the debate nor vote in that matter nor seek to influence the vote of members of the Board, except as otherwise provided by 2-2-201, MCA. If the presiding officer has a private interest in a matter pending before the Board he or she shall yield the chair to the Vice Chairperson during the course of debate and decision concerning the matter in which she or he has a private interest.

PART V. Presentation to the Board

Section 5.01 Procedures The general procedure by which items are handled by the Board Members at *other than public hearings* shall be as follows:

1. The presiding officer or staff member presents the item to the Board along with a brief summary of the matter for discussion, with or without the presiding officer's recommendation.
2. For the purpose of clarification and after recognition by the presiding officer, Board Members may direct questions about the item to the presiding officer or staff member.
3. Comments from the applicant or applicant's representative will then be heard by the Board.
4. After recognition from the presiding officer the Board may direct questions to the applicant.
5. The presiding officer will then invite members of the audience to present or submit testimony beginning with those in favor of the proposal, followed by those who oppose the proposal and concluding with those who neither favor nor oppose the proposal.

6. All testimony shall be directed to the presiding officer.
7. The Board may, upon a proper motion and second, vote on the matter or table the matter until a date certain.

PART VI. Public Hearings

Section 6.01 Procedures The Board shall conduct public hearings as required by law. Public testimony will be presented to the Board in the same format as described in PART V above, except that witnesses may be required to testify under oath as provided by law in which case the Board shall not be bound by the strict rules of evidence, but may exclude irrelevant, immaterial, incompetent, or unduly repetitious testimony or evidence. The presiding officer shall, with advice from the County Attorney/legal counsel, rule on all questions relating to the admissibility of testimony or evidence. The ruling of the presiding officer may be overruled by a majority vote of the Board. Additionally, the following rules of procedure shall apply:

1. The proponents or opponents, their agent or attorney, may submit petitions and letters prior to the closing of the hearing and the same shall be entered by reference into the minutes and considered as other testimony received at the hearing.
2. Following the presentation of all testimony and evidence, the Board may: (1) Continue the hearing to a date certain to allow additional information to be submitted to the Board; (2) Close the public hearing and proceed to Board debate of the matter; or (3) Continue the Board debate and vote to a date certain.
3. A public hearing which has been formally closed may not be reopened. If additional information is required before a decision can be made, the Board, upon motion duly made, seconded and passed, may call for an additional public hearing which hearing shall be duly noticed as required by law and this policy.

PART VII. Guide for Public Participation

Section 7.01 Guidelines for Public Participation The following guidelines shall serve to assure reasonable and fair public participation in the decisions of the _____ Water/Sewer Board.

1. The public shall be invited to speak on any item under consideration by the Board after and only after recognition by the presiding officer.
2. The speaker should step to the front of the room, and for the record, give his or her name and address and, if applicable, the person, or organization he or she represents.
3. Prepared statements are welcomed and should be given to the presiding officer and noted in the minutes of the meeting. Prepared statements that are also read, however,

shall be deemed unduly repetitious. All prepared statements shall become a part of the permanent record.

4. While the Board is in session, members of public must preserve order and decorum. No person shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Board nor disturb any member of the public or of the Board while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer of the Board.
5. Any person who while testifying shall use indecorous or abusive language or who shall become boisterous or disruptive shall be barred from further presentation to the Board by the presiding officer, unless permission to continue be granted by a majority vote of the Board.

PART VIII. Ordinances and Resolutions

Section 8.01 Ordinances Except as provided by law, proposed ordinances may be introduced only by a member of the _____ Water/Sewer Board and in the following manner:

1. A draft of a proposed ordinance shall be presented to the Board as an agenda item during a regularly scheduled meeting. An emergency ordinance shall be presented and acted upon by the Board as provided by law.
2. If the draft ordinance is provisionally adopted by the Board during this first reading, it shall then be placed on the agenda for second reading and final adoption occurring at least twelve (12) days after the first reading and provisional adoption. After being provisionally adopted, the ordinance shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the Board's official posting place and copies thereof shall be available to the public.
3. The reading of the ordinance's title and number shall be sufficient to constitute a reading and an actual oral pronouncement of each word contained therein of the proposed ordinance or resolution is not required and shall be waived unless required by a majority vote of the Board.
4. All ordinances, except emergency ordinances, shall become effective thirty (30) days after the second reading and final adoption. All emergency ordinances shall become effective at the time indicated therein.

Section 8.02 Resolutions Except as provided by law, proposed resolutions may be introduced at any time by a member of the Board and if adopted shall be effective on the date specified therein.

Section 8.03 Right of Initiative The people retain the right to present ordinances and resolutions for adoption by the initiative process, as prescribed by law.

Table 1: Principal Boards, Districts, Committees, or Commissions in Montana

Name	Montana Code Annotated (Title-Chapter-Part)
Airport	
Airport Appeals Board	67-7-302
Airport Board	67-10-201
Municipal Airport Authority	67-11-102
Regional Airport Authority	67-11-103
Economic Development / Infrastructure	
Business Improvement Districts	7-12-1111
Rural Improvement Districts	7-12-2101
Special Improvement Districts	7-12-4101
Television District	7-13-2512 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Local Port Authority	7-14-1101
Regional Port Authority	7-14-1102
Local Improvement Districts	7-14-2710 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Technology District	7-15-4295
Industrial Districts	7-15-4299
Museum and Facilities for the Arts Board	7-16-2201 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Elections	
Board of County Canvassers	13-15-401
Fair	
Fair Commission	7-21-3401 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Multi-County Fair Districts	7-21-3421 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Joint Fair and Civic Center Commission	7-21-3451 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Fire	
Fire Hydrant Maintenance Districts	7-12-4601
Rural Fire Districts	7-33-2101
Fire Service Area	7-33-2401
Governance	
Community Councils	7-3-223, 317, 417, and 516
County Compensation Board	7-4-2503
Health	
Solid Waste Management District	7-13-201 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Hospital Districts	7-34-2101
Health Care Facilities Commission	7-34-2202
County Boards of Health	50-2-104
City Boards of Health	50-2-105
City-County Boards of Health	50-2-106
District Boards Of Health	50-2-107
Housing and Building	
County Building Commission	7-8-2103
County Housing Authority	7-15-2101
Municipal Housing Authority	7-15-4401
Land Use and Planning	
County Board of Park Commissioners	7-16-2301
County Park District	7-16-2411 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Municipal Board of Park Commissioners	7-16-4201
Cemetery Districts	7-35-2101 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)

Name	Montana Code Annotated (Title-Chapter-Part)
Land Use and Planning (continued)	
County Tax Appeal Board	15-15-101
County Planning Board	76-1-101
City Planning Board	76-1-101
City-County Planning Board	76-1-101
Joint or Consolidated Planning Boards	76-1-112
County Planning and Zoning Commission	76-2-101
County Zoning Commission	76-2-201
County Zoning Board of Adjustment	76-2-221
Municipal Zoning Commission	76-2-301
Municipal Zoning Board of Adjustment	76-2-321
Open Space Commission	76-6-101
Conservation District	76-15-101
Library	
Library Board	22-1-308
Public Library District	22-1-701
Livestock and other Animals	
Rodent Control District	7-22-2210 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Mosquito Control Board	7-22-2411 (Repealed, see 7-11-1001)
Grazing District	76-16-101
Livestock Protective Committee	81-6-101
Cattle Protective District	81-6-201
Schools	
Elementary School Districts	20-6-201
High School Districts	20-6-301
K-12 School Districts	20-6-701
Taxation	
Resort Area District	7-6-1532
County Land Advisory Board	7-8-2701
Transportation	
Urban Transportation District	7-14-201
Transportation Improvement Authority	7-14-1001
Railway Authority	7-14-1601
Parking Commission	7-14-4601
Aerospace Transportation and Technology District	7-15-4296
County Transportation Committee	20-10-131
Water	
Regional Resource Authority	7-10-101
Metropolitan Sanitary and/or Storm Sewer District	7-13-101
County Water and/or Sewer District	7-13-2203
Local Water Quality District	7-13-4504
Regional Water and Wastewater Authority	75-6-302
Irrigation District	85-7-101
Drainage District	85-8-101
Conservancy District	85-9-101
Weed	
Weed District	7-22-2102

Montana Boards, Districts, Commissions, and Committees

(Alphabetical Listing)

Aerospace Transportation and Technology District.....	70	Joint Fair and Civic Center Commission	49
Airport Appeals Board	43	Joint or Consolidated Planning Boards	59
Airport Board	43	K-12 School Districts	67
Board of County Canvassers	48	Library Board	63
Business Improvement Districts	44	Livestock Protective Committee	65
Cattle Protective District	66	Local Improvement Districts	47
Cemetery Districts.....	57	Local Port Authority.....	46
City Boards of Health.....	52	Local Water Quality District.....	73
City-County Boards of Health.....	53	Metropolitan Sanitary and/or Storm	
City-County Planning Boards	58	Sewer Districts.....	72
City Planning Boards.....	58	Mosquito Control Board	64
Community Councils.....	50	Multi-County Fair Districts	49
Conservancy District	75	Municipal Airport Authority	44
Conservation District	62	Municipal Board of Park Commissioners.....	56
County Board of Park Commissioners.....	56	Municipal Housing Authority	55
County Boards of Health.....	52	Municipal Zoning Board of Adjustment.....	61
County Building Commission.....	54	Municipal Zoning Commission.....	61
County Compensation Board	51	Museum and Facilities for the Arts Board.....	48
County Housing Authority.....	54	Open Space Commission.....	62
County Land Advisory Board	68	Organizations / Associations.....	77
County Park District	56	Parking Commission	69
County Planning and Zoning Commission.....	60	Public Library District.....	64
County Planning Boards	57	Railway Authority.....	69
County Tax Appeal Board.....	57	Regional Airport Authority.....	44
County Transportation Committee.....	70	Regional Port Authority.....	47
County Water and/or Sewer Districts	72	Regional Resource Authority	71
County Zoning Board of Adjustment.....	61	Regional Water and Wastewater Authorities.....	73
County Zoning Commission.....	60	Resort Area District	67
District Boards of Health.....	53	Rodent Control District	64
Drainage District.....	75	Rural Fire Districts	49
Elementary School Districts.....	66	Rural Improvement Districts	45
Fair Commission	49	Solid Waste Management District.....	51
Fire Hydrant Maintenance Districts	49	Special Improvement Districts	46
Fire Service Area	50	State Agencies.....	77
Grazing District.....	64	Technology Districts	48
Health Care Facilities Commission.....	52	Television District.....	46
High School Districts	66	Transportation Improvement Authority.....	69
Hospital Districts	51	Urban Transportation District	68
Industrial Districts.....	48	Weed District	76
Irrigation District	74		

MONTANA STATUTES ON THE RIGHT OF THE PUBLIC TO KNOW AND PARTICIPATE

Constitution of Montana – Article II Declaration of Rights

Section 8. Right to Participation. The public has the right to expect governmental agencies to afford such reasonable opportunity for citizen participation in the operation of the agencies prior to the final decision as may be provided by law.

Section 9. Right to Know. No person shall be deprived of the right to examine documents or to observe the deliberations of all public bodies or agencies of state government and its subdivisions except in cases in which the demand of individual privacy clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure.

Montana Code Annotated (2013)

Title 2. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Part 1. Notice and Opportunity to Be Heard

2-3-101. Legislative intent. The legislature finds and declares pursuant to the mandate of Article II, Section 8, of the 1972 Montana constitution that legislative guidelines should be established to secure to the people of Montana their constitutional right to be afforded reasonable opportunity to participate in the operation of governmental agencies prior to the final decision of the agency.

2-3-102. Definitions. As used in this part, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Agency" means any board, bureau, commission, department, authority, or officer of the state or local government authorized by law to make rules, determine contested cases, or enter into contracts except:

(a) the legislature and any branch, committee, or officer thereof;

(b) the judicial branches and any committee or officer thereof;

(c) the governor, except that an agency is not exempt because the governor has been designated as a member thereof; or

(d) the state military establishment and agencies concerned with civil defense and recovery from hostile attack.

(2) "Agency action" means the whole or a part of the adoption of an agency rule, the issuance of a license or order, the award of a contract, or the equivalent or denial thereof.

(3) "Rule" means any agency regulation, standard, or statement of general applicability that implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy or describes the organization, procedures, or practice requirements of any agency. The term includes the amendment or repeal of a prior rule but does not include:

(a) statements concerning only the internal management of an agency and not affecting private rights or procedures available to the public; or

(b) declaratory rulings as to the applicability of any statutory provision or of any rule.

2-3-103. Public participation -- governor to ensure guidelines adopted. (1) (a) Each agency shall develop procedures for permitting and encouraging the public to participate in agency decisions that are of significant interest to the public. The procedures must ensure adequate notice and assist public participation before a final agency action is taken that is of significant interest to the public. The agenda for a meeting, as defined in 2-3-202, must include an item allowing public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of the meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the agency conducting the meeting. However, the agency may not take action on any matter discussed unless specific notice of that matter is included on an agenda and public comment has been allowed on that matter. Public comment received at a meeting must be incorporated into the official minutes of the meeting, as provided in 2-3-212.

(b) For purposes of this section, "public matter" does not include contested case and other adjudicative

proceedings.

(2) The governor shall ensure that each board, bureau, commission, department, authority, agency, or officer of the executive branch of the state adopts coordinated rules for its programs. The guidelines must provide policies and procedures to facilitate public participation in those programs, consistent with subsection (1). These guidelines must be adopted as rules and published in a manner so that the rules may be provided to a member of the public upon request.

2-3-104. Requirements for compliance with notice provisions. An agency shall be considered to have complied with the notice provisions of 2-3-103 if:

(1) an environmental impact statement is prepared and distributed as required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act, Title 75, chapter 1;

(2) a proceeding is held as required by the Montana Administrative Procedure Act;

(3) a public hearing, after appropriate notice is given, is held pursuant to any other provision of state law or a local ordinance or resolution; or

(4) a newspaper of general circulation within the area to be affected by a decision of significant interest to the public has carried a news story or advertisement concerning the decision sufficiently prior to a final decision to permit public comment on the matter.

2-3-105. Supplemental notice by radio or television. (1) An official of the state or any of its political subdivisions who is required by law to publish a notice required by law may supplement the publication by a radio or television broadcast of a summary of the notice or by both when in the official's judgment the public interest will be served.

(2) The summary of the notice must be read without a reference to any person by name who is then a candidate for political office.

(3) The announcements may be made only by duly employed personnel of the station from which the broadcast emanates.

(4) Announcements by political subdivisions may be made only by stations situated within the county of origin of the legal notice unless a broadcast station does not exist in that county, in which case announcements may be made by a station or stations situated in any county other than the county of origin of the legal notice.

2-3-106. Period for which copy retained. Each radio or television station broadcasting any summary of a legal notice shall for a period of 6 months subsequent to such broadcast retain at its office a copy or transcription of the text of the summary as actually broadcast, which shall be available for public inspection.

2-3-107. Proof of publication by broadcast. Proof of publication of a summary of any notice by radio or television broadcast shall be by affidavit of the manager, an assistant manager, or a program director of the radio or television station broadcasting the same.

2-3-108 through 2-3-110 reserved.

2-3-111. Opportunity to submit views -- public hearings. (1) Procedures for assisting public participation must include a method of affording interested persons reasonable opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in written form, prior to making a final decision that is of significant interest to the public.

(2) When a state agency other than the board of regents proposes to take an action that directly impacts a specific community or area and a public hearing is held, the hearing must be held in an accessible facility in the impacted community or area or in the nearest community or area with an accessible facility.

2-3-112. Exceptions. The provisions of 2-3-103 and 2-3-111 do not apply to:

(1) an agency decision that must be made to deal with an emergency situation affecting the public health, welfare, or safety;

(2) an agency decision that must be made to maintain or protect the interests of the agency, including but not

limited to the filing of a lawsuit in a court of law or becoming a party to an administrative proceeding; or
(3) a decision involving no more than a ministerial act.

2-3-113. Declaratory rulings to be published. The declaratory rulings of any board, bureau, commission, department, authority, agency, or officer of the state which is not subject to the Montana Administrative Procedure Act shall be published and be subject to judicial review as provided under 2-4-623(6) and 2-4-501, respectively.

2-3-114. Enforcement. The district courts of the state have jurisdiction to set aside an agency decision under this part upon petition of any person whose rights have been prejudiced. A petition pursuant to this section must be filed within 30 days of the date on which the petitioner learns, or reasonably should have learned, of the agency's decision.

Part 2. Open Meetings

2-3-201. Legislative intent -- liberal construction. The legislature finds and declares that public boards, commissions, councils, and other public agencies in this state exist to aid in the conduct of the peoples' business. It is the intent of this part that actions and deliberations of all public agencies shall be conducted openly. The people of the state do not wish to abdicate their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. Toward these ends, the provisions of the part shall be liberally construed.

2-3-202. Meeting defined. As used in this part, "meeting" means the convening of a quorum of the constituent membership of a public agency or association described in 2-3-203, whether corporal or by means of electronic equipment, to hear, discuss, or act upon a matter over which the agency has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

2-3-203. Meetings of public agencies and certain associations of public agencies to be open to public -- exceptions. (1) All meetings of public or governmental bodies, boards, bureaus, commissions, agencies of the state, or any political subdivision of the state or organizations or agencies supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds, including the supreme court, must be open to the public.
(2) All meetings of associations that are composed of public or governmental bodies referred to in subsection (1) and that regulate the rights, duties, or privileges of any individual must be open to the public.
(3) The presiding officer of any meeting may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and then if and only if the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains and, in that event, the meeting must be open.
(4) (a) Except as provided in subsection (4)(b), a meeting may be closed to discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public agency.
(b) A meeting may not be closed to discuss strategy to be followed in litigation in which the only parties are public bodies or associations described in subsections (1) and (2).
(5) The supreme court may close a meeting that involves judicial deliberations in an adversarial proceeding.
(6) Any committee or subcommittee appointed by a public body or an association described in subsection (2) for the purpose of conducting business that is within the jurisdiction of that agency is subject to the requirements of this section.

2-3-204 through 2-3-210 reserved.

2-3-211. Recording. Accredited press representatives may not be excluded from any open meeting under this part and may not be prohibited from taking photographs, televising, or recording such meetings. The presiding officer may assure that such activities do not interfere with the conduct of the meeting.

2-3-212. Minutes of meetings -- public inspection. (1) Appropriate minutes of all meetings required by 2-3-203 to be open must be kept and must be available for inspection by the public. If an audio recording of a meeting is made and designated as official, the recording constitutes the official record of the meeting. If an official recording is made, a written record of the meeting must also be made and must include the information specified in subsection (2).

(2) Minutes must include without limitation:

(a) the date, time, and place of the meeting;

(b) a list of the individual members of the public body, agency, or organization who were in attendance;

(c) the substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided; and

(d) at the request of any member, a record of votes by individual members for any votes taken.

(3) If the minutes are recorded and designated as the official record, a log or time stamp for each main agenda item is required for the purpose of providing assistance to the public in accessing that portion of the meeting.

2-3-213. Voidability. Any decision made in violation of 2-3-203 may be declared void by a district court having jurisdiction. A suit to void a decision must be commenced within 30 days of the date on which the plaintiff or petitioner learns, or reasonably should have learned, of the agency's decision.

2-3-214 through 2-3-220 reserved.

2-3-221. Costs to plaintiff in certain actions to enforce constitutional right to know. A plaintiff who prevails in an action brought in district court to enforce the plaintiff's rights under Article II, section 9, of the Montana constitution may be awarded costs and reasonable attorney fees.

Part 3. Use of Electronic Mail Systems

2-3-301. Agency to accept public comment electronically -- dissemination of electronic mail address and documents required -- prohibiting fees. (1) An agency that accepts public comment pursuant to a statute, administrative rule, or policy, including an agency adopting rules pursuant to the Montana Administrative Procedure Act or an agency to which 2-3-111 applies, shall provide for the receipt of public comment by the agency by use of an electronic mail system.

(2) As part of the agency action required by subsection (1), an agency shall disseminate by appropriate media its electronic mail address to which public comment may be made, including dissemination in:

(a) rulemaking notices published pursuant to the Montana Administrative Procedure Act;

(b) the telephone directory of state agencies published by the department of administration;

(c) any notice of agency existence, purpose, and operations published on the internet world wide web, popularly known as a "website", used by the agency; or

(d) any combination of the methods of dissemination provided in subsections (2)(a) through (2)(c).

(3) An agency shall, at the request of another agency or person and subject to 2-6-102, disseminate the electronic documents to that agency or person by electronic mail in place of surface mail. Notification of the availability of an electronic notice of proposed rulemaking may be sent to an interested person as provided in 2-4-302(2)(a)(ii). An agency may not charge a fee for providing documents by electronic mail in accordance with this subsection.

(4) An agency that receives electronic mail pursuant to subsection (1) shall retain the electronic mail as either an electronic or a paper copy to the same extent that other comments are retained.

(5) As used in this section, "agency" means a department, division, bureau, office, board, commission, authority, or other agency of the executive branch of state government.

Open Meetings Law

Montana's "sunshine laws" are described as among the most stringent in the nation. These laws are outlined in Article II Sections 8 (Right of participation) and Section 9 (Right to know) of the state's constitution. In Title 2, Chapter 3, Public Participation in governmental Operations, the Montana Code Annotated describes provisions of the required "Notice and Opportunity to be Heard" in Part 1, and "Open Meetings" in Part 2. The Open Meetings law affords "reasonable opportunity to participate in the operation of governmental agencies prior to the final decision of the agency" (2-3-201).

There are four essential elements in the open meetings law:

1. If a quorum, defined as the number members legally required to conduct business, is convened by either physical presence or by means of electronic equipment (2-3-202) and,
2. Members will hear, discuss or act upon issues that it has jurisdiction over, (2-3-202), then,
3. The meeting must be open to the public and the press must be permitted to record the meeting (2-3-211) and,
4. Appropriate minutes of all meetings shall be kept and made available for the public (2-3-212).

Each governing board must adopt coordinated rules to facilitate public participation in decisions that are of significant interest to the public (2-3-103). These include a schedule of regular meeting times and agenda prepared and posted sufficiently in advance to provide notice of the topics to be discussed and actions to be considered. The public must also be afforded a reasonable opportunity to offer information and opinions, either orally or written, before final decisions are made.

A matter of significant public interest is defined as one "involving any non-ministerial decision or action which has meaning to, or affects a portion of the community." Discrepancies as to whether a meeting is a significant public interest should always err on the side of transparency and opportunities for public participation. Exceptions are detailed in 2-3-203 and include the following: whether the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and if the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure; litigation when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position or; any judicial deliberations in an adversarial proceeding.

The agenda for a meeting, as defined in 2-3-202, must include an item allowing public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of the meeting and that is within the commission's jurisdiction. However, the commission may not take action on any matter discussed unless specific notice of that matter is included on an agenda and public comment has been allowed on that matter. Public comment received at a meeting must be incorporated into the official minutes of the meeting, as provided in 2-3-212.

MONTANA CODE OF ETHICS

CONSTITUTION OF MONTANA -- ARTICLE XIII -- GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 4. Code of ethics. The legislature shall provide a code of ethics prohibiting conflict between public duty and private interest for members of the legislature and all state and local officers and employees.

Montana Code Annotated (2013)

TITLE 2. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 2. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Part 1. Code of Ethics

2-2-101. Statement of purpose The purpose of this part is to set forth a code of ethics prohibiting conflict between public duty and private interest as required by the constitution of Montana. This code recognizes distinctions between legislators, other officers and employees of state government, and officers and employees of local government and prescribes some standards of conduct common to all categories and some standards of conduct adapted to each category. The provisions of this part recognize that some actions are conflicts per se between public duty and private interest while other actions may or may not pose such conflicts depending upon the surrounding circumstances.

2-2-102. Definitions As used in this part, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Business" includes a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, trust or foundation, or any other individual or organization carrying on a business, whether or not operated for profit.

(2) "Compensation" means any money or economic benefit conferred on or received by any person in return for services rendered or to be rendered by the person or another.

(3) (a) "Gift of substantial value" means a gift with a value of \$50 or more for an individual.

(b) The term does not include:

(i) a gift that is not used and that, within 30 days after receipt, is returned to the donor or delivered to a charitable organization or the state and that is not claimed as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes;

(ii) food and beverages consumed on the occasion when participation in a charitable, civic, or community event bears a relationship to the public officer's or public employee's office or employment or when the officer or employee is in attendance in an official capacity;

(iii) educational material directly related to official governmental duties;

(iv) an award publicly presented in recognition of public service; or

(v) educational activity that:

(A) does not place or appear to place the recipient under obligation;

(B) clearly serves the public good; and

(C) is not lavish or extravagant.

(4) "Local government" means a county, a consolidated government, an incorporated city or town, a school district, or a special district.

(5) "Official act" or "official action" means a vote, decision, recommendation, approval, disapproval, or other action, including inaction, that involves the use of discretionary authority.

(6) "Private interest" means an interest held by an individual that is:

(a) an ownership interest in a business;

(b) a creditor interest in an insolvent business;

(c) an employment or prospective employment for which negotiations have begun;

(d) an ownership interest in real property;

- (e) a loan or other debtor interest; or
- (f) a directorship or officership in a business.
- (7) "Public employee" means:
 - (a) any temporary or permanent employee of the state;
 - (b) any temporary or permanent employee of a local government;
 - (c) a member of a quasi-judicial board or commission or of a board, commission, or committee with rulemaking authority; and
 - (d) a person under contract to the state.
- (8) (a) "Public officer" includes any state officer and any elected officer of a local government.
 - (b) For the purposes of 67-11-104, the term also includes a commissioner of an airport authority.
- (9) "Special district" means a unit of local government, authorized by law to perform a single function or a limited number of functions. The term includes but is not limited to conservation districts, water districts, weed management districts, irrigation districts, fire districts, community college districts, hospital districts, sewer districts, and transportation districts. The term also includes any district or other entity formed by interlocal agreement.
- (10) (a) "State agency" includes:
 - (i) the state;
 - (ii) the legislature and its committees;
 - (iii) all executive departments, boards, commissions, committees, bureaus, and offices;
 - (iv) the university system; and
 - (v) all independent commissions and other establishments of the state government.
 (b) The term does not include the judicial branch.
- (11) "State officer" includes all elected officers and directors of the executive branch of state government as defined in 2-15-102.

2-2-103. Public trust -- public duty (1) The holding of public office or employment is a public trust, created by the confidence that the electorate reposes in the integrity of public officers, legislators, and public employees. A public officer, legislator, or public employee shall carry out the individual's duties for the benefit of the people of the state.

(2) A public officer, legislator, or public employee whose conduct departs from the person's public duty is liable to the people of the state and is subject to the penalties provided in this part for abuse of the public's trust.

(3) This part sets forth various rules of conduct, the transgression of any of which is a violation of public duty, and various ethical principles, the transgression of any of which must be avoided.

(4) (a) The enforcement of this part for:

(i) state officers, legislators, and state employees is provided for in 2-2-136;

(ii) legislators, involving legislative acts, is provided for in 2-2-135 and for all other acts is provided for in 2-2-136;

(iii) local government officers and employees is provided for in 2-2-144.

(b) Any money collected in the civil actions that is not reimbursement for the cost of the action must be deposited in the general fund of the unit of government.

2-2-104. Rules of conduct for public officers, legislators, and public employees (1) Proof of commission of any act enumerated in this section is proof that the actor has breached the actor's public duty. A public officer, legislator, or public employee may not:

(a) disclose or use confidential information acquired in the course of official duties in order to further substantially the individual's personal economic interests; or

(b) accept a gift of substantial value or a substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift:

(i) that would tend improperly to influence a reasonable person in the person's position to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of the person's public duties; or

(ii) that the person knows or that a reasonable person in that position should know under the circumstances is primarily for the purpose of rewarding the person for official action taken.

(2) An economic benefit tantamount to a gift includes without limitation a loan at a rate of interest substantially lower than the commercial rate then currently prevalent for similar loans and compensation received for private services rendered at a rate substantially exceeding the fair market value of the services. Campaign contributions reported as required by statute are not gifts or economic benefits tantamount to gifts.

(3) (a) Except as provided in subsection (3)(b), a public officer, legislator, or public employee may not receive salaries from two separate public employment positions that overlap for the hours being compensated, unless:

(i) the public officer, legislator, or public employee reimburses the public entity from which the employee is absent for the salary paid for performing the function from which the officer, legislator, or employee is absent; or

(ii) the public officer's, legislator's, or public employee's salary from one employer is reduced by the amount of salary received from the other public employer in order to avoid duplicate compensation for the overlapping hours.

(b) Subsection (3)(a) does not prohibit:

(i) a public officer, legislator, or public employee from receiving income from the use of accrued leave or compensatory time during the period of overlapping employment; or

(ii) a public school teacher from receiving payment from a college or university for the supervision of student teachers who are enrolled in a teacher education program at the college or university if the supervision is performed concurrently with the school teacher's duties for a public school district.

(c) In order to determine compliance with this subsection (3), a public officer, legislator, or public employee subject to this subsection (3) shall disclose the amounts received from the two separate public employment positions to the commissioner of political practices.

2-2-105. Ethical requirements for public officers and public employees (1) The requirements in this section are intended as rules of conduct, and violations constitute a breach of the public trust and public duty of office or employment in state or local government.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (4), a public officer or public employee may not acquire an interest in any business or undertaking that the officer or employee has reason to believe may be directly and substantially affected to its economic benefit by official action to be taken by the officer's or employee's agency.

(3) A public officer or public employee may not, within 12 months following the voluntary termination of office or employment, obtain employment in which the officer or employee will take direct advantage, unavailable to others, of matters with which the officer or employee was directly involved during a term of office or during employment. These matters are rules, other than rules of general application, that the officer or employee actively helped to formulate and applications, claims, or contested cases in the consideration of which the officer or employee was an active participant.

(4) When a public employee who is a member of a quasi-judicial board or commission or of a board, commission, or committee with rulemaking authority is required to take official action on a matter as to which the public employee has a conflict created by a personal or private interest that would directly give rise to an appearance of impropriety as to the public employee's influence, benefit, or detriment in regard to the matter, the public employee shall disclose the interest creating the conflict prior to participating in the official action.

(5) A public officer or public employee may not perform an official act directly and substantially affecting a business or other undertaking to its economic detriment when the officer or employee has a substantial personal interest in a competing firm or undertaking.

2-2-106. Disclosure (1) (a) Prior to December 15 of each even-numbered year, each state officer or holdover senator shall file with the commissioner of political practices a business disclosure statement on a form provided by the commissioner. An individual filing pursuant to subsection (1)(b) or (1)(c) is not required to file

under this subsection (1)(a) during the same period.

(b) Each candidate for a statewide or a state office elected from a district shall, within 5 days of the time that the candidate files for office, file a business disclosure statement with the commissioner of political practices on a form provided by the commissioner.

(c) An individual appointed to office who would be required to file under subsection (1)(a) or (1)(b) is required to file the business disclosure statement at the earlier of the time of submission of the person's name for confirmation or the assumption of the office.

(2) The statement must provide the following information:

(a) the name, address, and type of business of the individual;

(b) each present or past employing entity from which benefits, including retirement benefits, are currently received by the individual;

(c) each business, firm, corporation, partnership, and other business or professional entity or trust in which the individual holds an interest;

(d) each entity not listed under subsections (2)(a) through (2)(c) in which the individual is an officer or director, regardless of whether or not the entity is organized for profit; and

(e) all real property, other than a personal residence, in which the individual holds an interest. Real property may be described by general description.

(3) An individual may not assume or continue to exercise the powers and duties of the office to which that individual has been elected or appointed until the statement has been filed as provided in subsection (1).

(4) The commissioner of political practices shall make the business disclosure statements available to any individual upon request.

2-2-121. Rules of conduct for public officers and public employees (1) Proof of commission of any act enumerated in subsection (2) is proof that the actor has breached a public duty.

(2) A public officer or a public employee may not:

(a) subject to subsection (7), use public time, facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, or funds for the officer's or employee's private business purposes;

(b) engage in a substantial financial transaction for the officer's or employee's private business purposes with a person whom the officer or employee inspects or supervises in the course of official duties;

(c) assist any person for a fee or other compensation in obtaining a contract, claim, license, or other economic benefit from the officer's or employee's agency;

(d) assist any person for a contingent fee in obtaining a contract, claim, license, or other economic benefit from any agency;

(e) perform an official act directly and substantially affecting to its economic benefit a business or other undertaking in which the officer or employee either has a substantial financial interest or is engaged as counsel, consultant, representative, or agent; or

(f) solicit or accept employment, or engage in negotiations or meetings to consider employment, with a person whom the officer or employee regulates in the course of official duties without first giving written notification to the officer's or employee's supervisor and department director.

(3) (a) Except as provided in subsection (3)(b), a public officer or public employee may not use public time, facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, or funds to solicit support for or opposition to any political committee, the nomination or election of any person to public office, or the passage of a ballot issue unless the use is:

(i) authorized by law; or

(ii) properly incidental to another activity required or authorized by law, such as the function of an elected public officer, the officer's staff, or the legislative staff in the normal course of duties.

(b) As used in this subsection (3), "properly incidental to another activity required or authorized by law" does not include any activities related to solicitation of support for or opposition to the nomination or election of a person to public office or political committees organized to support or oppose a candidate or candidates for public office. With respect to ballot issues, properly incidental activities are restricted to:

(i) the activities of a public officer, the public officer's staff, or legislative staff related to determining the impact of passage or failure of a ballot issue on state or local government operations;

(ii) in the case of a school district, as defined in Title 20, chapter 6, compliance with the requirements of law governing public meetings of the local board of trustees, including the resulting dissemination of information by a board of trustees or a school superintendent or a designated employee in a district with no superintendent in support of or opposition to a bond issue or levy submitted to the electors. Public funds may not be expended for any form of commercial advertising in support of or opposition to a bond issue or levy submitted to the electors.

(c) This subsection (3) is not intended to restrict the right of a public officer or public employee to express personal political views.

(4) A candidate, as defined in 13-1-101(6)(a), may not use or permit the use of state funds for any advertisement or public service announcement in a newspaper, on radio, or on television that contains the candidate's name, picture, or voice except in the case of a state or national emergency and then only if the announcement is reasonably necessary to the candidate's official functions.

(b) A state officer may not use or permit the use of public time, facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, or funds to produce, print, or broadcast any advertisement or public service announcement in a newspaper, on radio, or on television that contains the state officer's name, picture, or voice except in the case of a state or national emergency if the announcement is reasonably necessary to the state officer's official functions or in the case of an announcement directly related to a program or activity under the jurisdiction of the office or position to which the state officer was elected or appointed.

(5) A public officer or public employee may not participate in a proceeding when an organization, other than an organization or association of local government officials, of which the public officer or public employee is an officer or director is:

(a) involved in a proceeding before the employing agency that is within the scope of the public officer's or public employee's job duties; or

(b) attempting to influence a local, state, or federal proceeding in which the public officer or public employee represents the state or local government.

(6) A public officer or public employee may not engage in any activity, including lobbying, as defined in 5-7-102, on behalf of an organization, other than an organization or association of local government officials, of which the public officer or public employee is a member while performing the public officer's or public employee's job duties. The provisions of this subsection do not prohibit a public officer or public employee from performing charitable fundraising activities if approved by the public officer's or public employee's supervisor or authorized by law.

(7) A listing by a public officer or a public employee in the electronic directory provided for in 30-17-101 of any product created outside of work in a public agency is not in violation of subsection (2)(a) of this section. The public officer or public employee may not make arrangements for the listing in the electronic directory during work hours.

(8) A department head or a member of a quasi-judicial or rulemaking board may perform an official act notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (2)(e) if participation is necessary to the administration of a statute and if the person complies with the disclosure procedures under 2-2-131.

(9) Subsection (2)(d) does not apply to a member of a board, commission, council, or committee unless the member is also a full-time public employee.

(10) Subsections (2)(b) and (2)(e) do not prevent a member of the governing body of a local government from performing an official act when the member's participation is necessary to obtain a quorum or to otherwise enable the body to act. The member shall disclose the interest creating the appearance of impropriety prior to performing the official act.

2-2-131. Disclosure. A public officer or public employee shall, prior to acting in a manner that may impinge on public duty, including the award of a permit, contract, or license, disclose the nature of the private interest that creates the conflict. The public officer or public employee shall make the disclosure in writing to the commissioner of political practices, listing the amount of private interest, if any, the purpose and duration of

the person's services rendered, if any, and the compensation received for the services or other information that is necessary to describe the interest. If the public officer or public employee then performs the official act involved, the officer or employee shall state for the record the fact and summary nature of the interest disclosed at the time of performing the act.

2-2-144. Enforcement for local government (1) Except as provided in subsections (5) and (6), a person alleging a violation of this part by a local government officer or local government employee shall notify the county attorney of the county where the local government is located. The county attorney shall request from the complainant or the person who is the subject of the complaint any information necessary to make a determination concerning the validity of the complaint.

(2) If the county attorney determines that the complaint is justified, the county attorney may bring an action in district court seeking a civil fine of not less than \$50 or more than \$1,000. If the county attorney determines that the complaint alleges a criminal violation, the county attorney shall bring criminal charges against the officer or employee.

(3) If the county attorney declines to bring an action under this section, the person alleging a violation of this part may file a civil action in district court seeking a civil fine of not less than \$50 or more than \$1,000. In an action filed under this subsection, the court may assess the costs and attorney fees against the person bringing the charges if the court determines that a violation did not occur or against the officer or employee if the court determines that a violation did occur. The court may impose sanctions if the court determines that the action was frivolous or intended for harassment.

(4) The employing entity of a local government employee may take disciplinary action against an employee for a violation of this part.

(5) (a) A local government may establish a three-member panel to review complaints alleging violations of this part by officers or employees of the local government. The local government shall establish procedures and rules for the panel. The members of the panel may not be officers or employees of the local government. The panel shall review complaints and may refer to the county attorney complaints that appear to be substantiated. If the complaint is against the county attorney, the panel shall refer the matter to the commissioner of political practices and the complaint must then be processed by the commissioner pursuant to 2-2-136.

(b) In a local government that establishes a panel under this subsection (5), a complaint must be referred to the panel prior to making a complaint to the county attorney.

(6) If a local government review panel has not been established pursuant to subsection (5), a person alleging a violation of this part by a county attorney shall file the complaint with the commissioner of political practices pursuant to 2-2-136.

COMMISSIONER OF POLITICAL PRACTICES

The Commissioner has jurisdiction over laws and rules pertaining to: Ethics (Title 2, chapter 2, part 1), Lobbying (Title 5, chapter 7) and Campaign finance and practices (Title 13, chapters 35 and 37).

Our Mission

We fairly and impartially carry out our assigned responsibilities monitoring and enforcing campaign finance and practices and government ethics standards. We serve the public and interested parties in a helpful and responsive way.

Commissioner of Political Practices
1205 8th Ave P.O. Box 202401
Helena, MT 59620-2401
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Prepared by the MSU Local Government Center for educational use only. For interpretation of the law, please seek competent legal counsel.

Updated 11/13

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Forms of meeting minutes vary with different organizations. However, there is certain information that should always be included:

Title of Meeting (name of group, committee or organization)

- Place, date and hour
- Attendance (by roll call or observation)
- Procedure:
 - Minutes of previous meeting – approved or corrected
 - Reports
 - Unfinished business
 - New Business
 - Next meeting (if designated)
 - Adjournment (hour)
 - Signed by Secretary/Clerk
 - Countersigned by President/Mayor

Always make a rough draft of the minutes before copying them into the minute book. No large erasures should appear in the minute book. If minutes are amended or corrected at the meeting at which they are read, the corrections should be put in red ink, or the amendments should be written on a separate page to be attached. No minutes should be rewritten after they have been read. They should stand as corrected.

The clerk or secretary of the meeting should sit near the chairman or Mayor, or in a position to hear every word that is said. If unable to hear, the recorder should, by a signal, so inform the chairman or Mayor who can interrupt the speaker and ask for a repetition of what has been said if he deems it of sufficient importance to do so.

Note late arrivals and early departures, because an important point may hinge on whether or not a certain person heard a certain discussion.

The more pre-knowledge that can be had of a meeting, the easier it will be to record the minutes.

Immediately obtain copies of all papers read or discussed at the meeting and write up the minutes as soon as possible.

Notes are taken “in depth”; but minutes are written in summary. Remember that what is done or accomplished at a meeting (or left unfinished) is of the utmost importance, **not what is said**. Therefore, be alert to recognize and record all definite decisions; all actions to be taken, by whom; and all business left pending.

During debates and discussions, summarize these, noting highlights, such as the “for” and “against” arguments and by whom.

- Motions: every motion must be recorded, its maker, its second and its final outcome.
- Reports: record the presentation, by whom and the final action of each, if any.
- Voting: record all voting, how taken, and the count (if countable). Voting is by these methods in this order of formality:
 - General (or silent) assent or consent
 - Voice – all in favor say aye
 - Show of hands (all in favor raise your hand)
 - Standing (to be counted)
 - Roll call (yeas and nays or for and against, registered)
 - Secret ballot (many use this?)

The tone of the minutes should be completely impersonal, with no comments from the clerk, such as “heated”, “lengthy” or “moving”.

Acknowledgement:

Standard handbook for Secretaries by Lois Hutchinson

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE & ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Parliamentary Procedure:

- All have equal rights, privileges and obligations
- A quorum must be present for group to act
- Robert's Rules is handbook of operation
- Use of Motions (A proposal for assembly to take a stand or take action)

Five types of Motions

1. Main motion
2. Subsidiary motion
3. Privileged motion
4. Incidental motion
5. Renewal motion

1. Main motion

- Introduce subjects for consideration
- Cannot be made when another motion is before assembly
- Yield to privileged, subsidiary, incidental motions
"I move that we purchase a..."

2. Subsidiary Motion

- Change / affect main motion for consideration
- Voted on before the main motion
"I move to amend the motion by striking out..."

3. Privileged Motion

- Concern special matters not related to pending business
- Considered before other motions
"Because of the time, I move that we adjourn..."

4. Incidental Motion

- Questions of procedure
- Considered before other motions
"I move to divide the motion so that the question of purchasing ... can be considered separately."

5. Renewal Motion

- Allow certain items to be reconsidered
- Usually brought up when no business is pending
"I move to reconsider..."

Typically, organizations using Robert's Rules follow the prescribed order of business during meetings to provide a framework for conducting orderly meetings. The following is a typical order of business:

1. The Chair calls the meeting to order.
2. A roll is called of all present members.
3. The secretary reads the minutes of the last meeting.
4. Each officer gives a report.
5. Each committee representative gives a report.
6. Special orders (by way of motions) are called for and consist of any important business that was previously set aside to discuss at the meeting.
7. Unfinished business from a previous meeting is discussed.
8. New business can be brought forth at this time.
9. Announcements are made.
10. The meeting is adjourned.

Vocabulary

Robert's Rules of Order and other parliamentary procedures contain specific vocabulary to be used at meetings.

- **Point of Privilege:** This term refers to the right of the person speaking to have the floor and not be interrupted by others.
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Method to raise a point of order or to ask how to proceed when unsure of the proper motion.
- **Point of Information:** This term refers to the method used to ask the speaker a question.
- **Orders of the Day (Agenda):** If the meeting is not following the agenda a member may call orders of the day to remind the assembly to adhere to the agenda. If the members would like to deviate from the agenda, "suspending the rules" is necessary.
- **Point of Order:** Point of order is raised if a rule has been broken or a member is not using the proper meeting protocol to speak. A point of order needs to be raised right after the error occurs.
- **Divide the Question:** This term is used when a motion is split into two or more new separate motions.
- **Consider by Paragraph:** When considering adoption of a document, adoption of the full document can be postponed until each and every paragraph has been debated and if necessary amended.
- **Withdraw/Modify Motion:** After the question is stated; the person who made the motion may accept an amendment to the motion.
- **Commit /Refer/Recommit to Committee:** Sometimes a committee is needed to research a motion. In this case, an already established committee is assigned the question or a new committee is appointed. If a new committee is necessary, the chairperson may indicate how many members are needed and how selection of committee members should occur.
- **Extend Debate:** Calling to extend debate can be used for the question currently under debate and usually has a time limit.
- **Limit Debate:** This term is used to refer to the time limit placed upon debate and when debate should be considered closed.
- **Postpone:** If a motion or agenda item needs to be postponed, it is necessary to determine and state when it will be resumed.
- **Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated.
- **Lay on the Table:** This tool is used after a motion is closed to debate or is pending closure and can temporarily stop further consideration or action on the open motion.
- **Take from the Table:** If a motion has been previously "laid on the table," it can be opened and considered again by stating the motion to "take from the table."
- **Reconsider:** If a member on the prevailing side of a debate changes their view, they can state they have reconsidered.
- **Postpone Indefinitely:** Postponing a motion indefinitely stops the motion from proceeding forward just in that particular session, unless a motion to reconsider is made.
- **Informal Consideration:** This term refers to changing the debate to an informal format similar to that of a committee. To move to an informal consideration format a member moves that the assembly go into "Committee of the Whole." Voting is still done formally and is still valid while the meeting is in an informal mode.
- **Appeal Decision of the Chair:** The membership may appeal a decision made by the chair if the appeal does not relate to the violation of order of business or parliamentary rules. Appeals must also take place prior to other unrelated business.
- **Suspend the Rules:** This allows specific, stated rules with the exception of the assembly's constitution to be suspended.

Table 1: Common Motions Used in a Meeting.¹

	Wording	Interrupt another speaker	Requires a second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Reconsider
Privileged Motions							
Fix time for next meeting (12)	"I move that we meet next at..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take a recess (12)	"I move that we recess. . ."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Raise a question of privilege	"I rise to a question of privilege affecting the assembly"	Yes	No	No	No	(1)	No
Call for the orders of the day	"I call for the orders of the day"	Yes	No	No	No	(1) (15)*	No
Subsidiary Motions							
Lay on the table	"I move to lay the question on the table" or "I move that the motion be laid on the table"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	(3)*
Previous question (to close debate)	"I move the previous question" or "I move we vote immediately on the motion"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3 of assembly	Yes
Limit-extend debate (12)	"I move the debate be limited to. . ." or "I move that the speaker's time be extended by. . ."	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3 of assembly	Yes
Postpone to a definite time (12)	"I move that the question be postponed until. . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Refer to a committee (12)	"I move to refer the matter to the . . . committee"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amendment to the main motion (12)	"I move to amend by adding/striking the words. . ."	No	Yes	(5)	Yes	Majority	Yes
Postpone indefinitely (12)	"I move that the motion be postponed"	No	Yes	Yes (16)	No	Majority	(4)
Main Motions							
Main Motion	"I move that we..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Incidental Motions (11)							
Suspension of rules	"I move to suspend the rules so that. . ."	No	Yes	No	No	(9)*	No
Request to withdraw a motion (13)	"I move that I be allowed to withdraw the motion"	*	*	No	No	Majority*	(3)
Objection to the consideration of a question (10)	"I object to the consideration of the question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 of assembly (17)	(3)
Point of order	"I rise to a point of order" or "Point of order!"	Yes	No	No	No	(1)*	No
Parliamentary inquiry	"I rise to a parliamentary inquiry" or "A parliamentary inquiry, please"	Yes	No	No	No	(1)	No
Appeal to the chairperson	"I appeal from the decision of the chair"	Yes	Yes	Yes*	No	(7)	Yes

	Wording	Interrupt another speaker	Requires a second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Reconsider
Point of information	"I rise to a point of information" or "A point of information, please"	Yes	No	No	No	(1)	No
Division of assembly	"Division!" or "I call for a division"	Yes	No	No	No	(14)	No
Division of a question	"I move to divide the motion so that the question of purchasing ... can be considered separately."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Renewal Motions (8)							
Reconsider* (2)	"I move to reconsider the vote on the motion relating to. . ."	No*	Yes	(5) (16)	No	Majority	No
Take from table	"I move to take from the table the motion relating to. . ."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Rescind	"I move to rescind the motion passed at the last meeting relating to. . ."	No	Yes	Yes (16)	Yes	(6)	(3)
Discharge a committee	"I move that the committee considering . . . be discharged."	No	Yes	Yes (16)*	Yes	(6)	(3)

¹ Source: Robert, H. 2000. *Robert's Rules of Order* (Newly Revised, 10th Edition) New York: Perseus Books Group; Sturgis, A. 2000. *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* (4th Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.

*** Refer to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised**

- (1) The chair decides. Normally no vote is taken.
- (2) Only made by a member who voted on the prevailing side and is subject to times limits.
- (3) Only the negative vote may be reconsidered.
- (4) Only the affirmative vote may be reconsidered.
- (5) Debatable when applied to a debatable motion.
- (6) Majority with notice, or 2/3 without notice or majority of entire membership.
- (7) Majority or tie vote sustains the chair.
- (8) None of these motions (except Reconsider) are in order when business is pending.
- (9) Rules of order, 2/3 vote—Standing rules, majority vote.
- (10) Must be proposed before debate has begun or a subsidiary motion is stated by the chair (applied to original main motions).
- (11) The Incidental Motions have no precedence (rank). They are in order when the need arises.
- (12) A Main Motion if made when no business is pending.
- (13) The maker of a motion may withdraw it without permission of the assembly before the motion is stated by the chair.
- (14) The chair can complete a Division of the Assembly (standing vote) without permission of the assembly and any member can demand it.
- (15) Upon a call by a single member, the Orders of the Day must be enforced.
- (16) Has full debate. May go into the merits of the question which is the subject of the proposed action.
- (17) A 2/3 vote in negative needed to prevent consideration of main motion.

Parliamentary Motions Guide

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th Edition)*

Incidental Motions - No order of precedence. Arise incidentally and decided immediately.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2 ND ?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23 Enforce rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24 Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25 Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules which ...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26 Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27 Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29 Demand rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33 Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None
§33 Request information	Request for information	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None

Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly - no order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else pending.

§34 Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35 Cancel or change previous action	I move to rescind/ amend something previously adopted...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or maj. w/ notice
§37 Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider the vote ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

Parliamentary Motions Guide

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th Edition)*

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21 Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20 Take break	I move to recess for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19 Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18 Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17 Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16 Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15 Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14 Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13 Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12 Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11 Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10 Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

MONTANA STATUTES ON NEPOTISM

Montana Code Annotated (2013)

TITLE 2. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 2. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Part 3. Nepotism

2-2-301. Nepotism defined. Nepotism is the bestowal of political patronage by reason of relationship rather than of merit.

2-2-302. Appointment of relative to office of trust or emolument unlawful -- exceptions -- publication of notice. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), it is unlawful for a person or member of any board, bureau, or commission or employee at the head of a department of this state or any political subdivision of this state to appoint to any position of trust or emolument any person related or connected by consanguinity within the fourth degree or by affinity within the second degree.

(2) The provisions of 2-2-303 and this section do not apply to:

(a) a sheriff in the appointment of a person as a cook or an attendant;

(b) school district trustees if all the trustees, with the exception of any trustee who is related to the person being appointed and who must abstain from voting for the appointment, approve the appointment of a person related to a trustee;

(c) a school district in the employment of a person as a substitute teacher who is not employed as a substitute teacher for more than 30 consecutive school days as defined by the trustees in 20-1-302;

(d) the renewal of an employment contract of a person who was initially hired before the member of the board, bureau, or commission or the department head to whom the person is related assumed the duties of the office;

(e) the employment of election judges;

(f) the employment of pages or temporary session staff by the legislature; or

(g) county commissioners of a county with a population of less than 10,000 if all the commissioners, with the exception of any commissioner who is related to the person being appointed and who must abstain from voting for the appointment, approve the appointment of a person related to a commissioner.

(3) Prior to the appointment of a person referred to in subsection (2)(b) or (2)(g), written notice of the time and place for the intended action must be published at least 15 days prior to the intended action in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the school district is located or the county office or position is located.

2-2-303. Agreements to appoint relative to office unlawful. It shall further be unlawful for any person or any member of any board, bureau, or commission or employee of any department of this state or any political subdivision thereof to enter into any agreement or any promise with other persons or any members of any boards, bureaus, or commissions or employees of any department of this state or any of its political subdivisions thereof to appoint to any position of trust or emolument any person or persons related to them or connected with them by consanguinity within the fourth degree or by affinity within the second degree.

2-2-304. Penalty for violation of nepotism law. A public officer or employee or a member of any board, bureau, or commission of this state or any political subdivision who, by virtue of the person's office, has the right to make or appoint any person to render services to this state or any subdivision of this state and who makes or appoints a person to the services or enters into any agreement or promise with any other person or employee or any member of any board, bureau, or commission of any other department of this state or any of its subdivisions to appoint to any position any person or persons related to the person making the appointment or connected with the person making the appointment by consanguinity within the fourth degree or by affinity within the second degree is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished by a fine not less than \$50 or more than \$1,000, by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 6 months, or both.