



# CITY OF IMLAY CITY BOARD AND COMMISSION HANDBOOK

A guide for participating on a board or committee for the  
City of Imlay City, MI.

City of Imlay City  
150 North Main Street  
Imlay City, MI 48444  
810-724-2135

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Imlay City encourages residents to get involved in your local government by joining a board or committee.

The function and responsibility of each board and committee varies but all work to improve City services, beautify the City, and maintain the City's history as a benefit to all residents and for generations to come.

Members meet regularly to support the City through the efforts of the City Commission and City administration.

Your volunteerism as a member of one of our boards and committees will afford you with the opportunity to become involved with the operation of municipal government. As a member of a board and committee you will be responsible for assisting the City in the decision-making process by reviewing and evaluating information and rendering recommendations within the context of your board or committee. Your influence over policy, direction, and approvals makes your role very important.

Remember that as a member of a board or committee you are representing the City as a whole. It is important to avoid supporting single issues or pursuing a personal or private agenda.

Applications are available at the City Office and on the City's website, [www.imlaycity.org](http://www.imlaycity.org), and can be submitted to: City Clerk, 150 North Main Street, Imlay City, MI 48444.

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## **APPOINTMENT PROCESS**

Most appointments to boards and committees will be made by the Mayor and/or City Commission and may be subject to the approval of the City Commission. Sixty days prior to any expiration of a board or committee term of office, the current member will be notified and asked if they would like to be reappointed. If the member accepts re-appointment their name will be submitted to the Mayor and City Commission for approval. If the member declines, the position will be posted on the City's website, [www.imlaycity.org](http://www.imlaycity.org).

Individuals interested in an opening on a board or committee will be directed to complete an Application for Appointment which can be downloaded from the City's website or obtained from the City office.

All applications must be submitted to the office of the City of Imlay City by the deadline date specified on each posting. Those submitted after the deadline will not be considered for the current position openings.

All applications received will be given to the Mayor and City Commission for consideration.

In the event a term is vacated due to resignation, the same process will be followed once notification of said resignation has been received.

## OPERATING PROCEDURES

### **By-Laws**

Each board and committee shall have established by-laws. For those boards and committees that do not have established by-laws as of the date of this Handbook, by-laws shall be established and sent to the City Clerk's office.

### **Attendance**

Appointment to a board or committee is a privilege freely sought by the applicant. It carries with it the responsibility to participate in board or committee activities and represent the residents of the City. Good attendance ensures a steady flow of communication and keeps everyone abreast of current topics under discussion. Therefore each member should make every effort to attend all meetings.

When a member is unable to attend a meeting, the board or committee contact person should be notified as soon as possible. A member may be removed for absenteeism. Please refer to your board or commission's bylaws for specific information and rules.

If a meeting is rescheduled from its normal meeting date and time and a member cannot attend the rescheduled meeting, it should not be held against them.

### **Posting for Regular and Special Meetings**

Each board and committee will provide a public notice stating the dates, times, and places of the regular meetings which must be posted at the City offices and all other places as may be determined. Notices of Special Meetings shall be posted at least 18 hours in advance of said meeting. All postings will be coordinated through the board or committee liaison or the City Manager's office.

### **Regular Meetings**

All meetings of boards and committees shall be properly posted and held in compliance with state statutes, including the [Open Meetings Act, 1976, PA 267](#), as amended. All meetings shall be open to the public.

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-267-of-1976.pdf>

If it is known in advance that a quorum (more than half the members of the board or committee) cannot be achieved, consideration will be taken to notify all members and persons interested in the business before the body. A notice will be posted indicating that due to a lack of quorum, the meeting is cancelled or rescheduled.

### **Special Meetings**

Boards and/or committees may call for a special meeting as circumstances dictate. Special meetings of the Commission shall be called by the Clerk on the written request of the Mayor or of any two (2) members of the Commission, on at least twenty-four (24) hours' written notice to each member of the Commission, designating the time, place, and purpose of any meeting.

Special Meetings of boards and other commissions may be called by the City Manager and posted by the City Clerk or as the Charter dictates. A notice stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which called shall be given to each member of the board or committee at least 18 hours prior to the meeting.

No official action shall be transacted at any special meeting of a board or committee unless the item has been stated in the notice of such meeting as otherwise provided for in the Open Meetings Act.

### **Quorum**

A majority of the members of any board or committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings, but in the absence of a quorum, a lesser number may adjourn any meeting to a later date.

It is recommended that each board or committee wait 10 minutes after the start of each meeting before the adjournment when a quorum is not present.

### **Rescheduled or Adjourned Meetings**

For a rescheduled or adjourned regular or special meeting of any board or committee, a public notice stating the time and place of the meeting shall be posted at least 18 hours prior to the meeting in the City Hall and all other places as may be determined.

### **Meetings to be Public**

All meetings shall be open to the public and shall be held in a place available to the general public. All persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as otherwise provided by  
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state law, and all persons shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard. All decisions of any board or committee shall be made at a meeting open to the public. All deliberations of any board or committee constituting a quorum of its members shall take place at an open meeting to the public except as otherwise provided for in the Open Meetings Act.

### **Closed Meetings**

The law provides for closed meetings in a few specified circumstances. In order for a public body to hold a closed meeting, two-thirds of its members must vote affirmatively in a roll call. Also, the purpose for which the closed meeting is being called must be stated in the meeting when the roll call is taken.

Closed meetings may be called without a two-thirds vote for specific reasons. Please see the [Michigan Open Meetings Handbook](#) for more information.

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/ag/OMA\\_handbook\\_287134\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/ag/OMA_handbook_287134_7.pdf)

### **Explanation of Minutes of Closed Meeting**

Minutes of closed meetings must also be taken although they are not available for public inspection and would only be disclosed if required by a civil action. Please see the [Michigan Open Meetings Handbook](#) for more information.

### **Meeting Preparation**

There are various approaches to preparing for meetings. The following are some suggestions.

Step 1: Prepare by budgeting enough time to thoroughly review the entire agenda packet.

Step 2: When the packet is delivered, examine the agenda to get an idea of:

- a. The number of items
- b. Controversial issues
- c. Difficult procedural items
- d. Issues you know little about

Step 3: Begin your study of the individual agenda items. While some people prefer to review the agenda in the listed order, another approach is to study the most important items first.

Step 4: Visit any sites or facilities that will help you deal with the issues. Research topic as necessary for a complete understanding of the issues/topics.



Step 5: If you have questions after completing your review of the agenda, feel free to call the City Manager (or DDA Director for DDA agenda questions) to go over the various items.

Just a note: Being caught unprepared, unaware, or by surprise can be embarrassing during a public meeting. Also, never spring surprises on anyone at a public meeting.

### **Conduct of Meeting**

The Chairperson will preside at all meetings of the board or committee. In the absence of the above, the Vice-chair will preside. All comments must be directed to the presiding officer.

Members of the public will speak only when recognized by the presiding officer.

### **Agenda Preparation**

Agendas for all meetings shall be prepared by the City Manager (or the DDA Director in the case of DDA meetings). Any agenda item so requested to be placed on an agenda must generally be submitted no later than 5 business days prior to the regular meeting, subject to the discretion of the City Manager (or DDA director).

The agenda and supporting materials will be sent a least 3 days before the meeting date. Each board or committee shall have the option of deleting or adding any item to or from the agenda or postponing an item on the agenda to a subsequent meeting. Should an item be postponed, it shall appear on the next regular meeting agenda of the board or committee.

### **Agenda Format**

The following agenda format is recommended for all boards and committees:

- Call meeting to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call of Members
- Approval of Minutes and/or Consent Agenda Items
- Citizen Participation
- Public Hearings
- Agenda Items
  - Unfinished Business
  - New Business
- Report of Members, Chair, Director and/or City Manager
- Citizen Participation
- Other
- Adjournment

**Minutes**

Written minutes, upon the approval of the board or committee constitute the official action record of its activities. The minutes are not verbatim; they record the essence of the decisions made and actions taken.

**Review of Minutes by City Commission**

It is a requirement of all boards and committees to keep a record of their actions by minutes. The minutes of meetings are to be prepared and submitted to the City Commission with a copy to be kept on file with the City Clerk. The purpose of this is to keep the City Commission informed about board and committee activities.

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

Please note that any documents relating to any board or committee (i.e. minutes, personal notes, emails, public notices, etc.) are considered public records and copies can be requested under the [Freedom of Information Act](#).

<https://www.foia.gov/>

**Rules of Procedure**

All boards and committees may follow Robert's Rules of Order, the latest edition. Each board or committee shall outline its rules and procedures in their by-laws.

More information regarding [Robert's Rules](#) can be found at:

<http://www.rulesonline.com/>

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The following general information is designed to provide you with tools and techniques for you to follow as a guide in your role as a board or committee member.

### **Public Participation**

People presenting an issue or even speaking at a meeting may have never appeared before a public body. The experience can be intimidating. This is not uncommon and you can help these individuals by:

- a. Calming and reassuring them.
- b. Explaining meeting procedures.
- c. Paying attention.
- d. Actively listening to what they are saying.
- e. Avoiding the use of third-degree questioning techniques.
- f. Resisting, baiting, or lecturing.

### **Meeting Courtesy**

- An agenda shall always be available for members of the audience;
- Comments from audience members should be directed to the Chairperson;
- Commissioners and Board members shall treat the members of the public with dignity and respect;
- Commissioners and board members shall refrain from displaying negative gestures or sounds when they disagree with a member of the public or another commissioner/board member;
- Side conversations shall be avoided;
- The chairperson shall inform the audience of the time limits for speakers and should adhere to those limits;
- The chairperson shall explain the purpose of the meeting and the appropriate time to ask questions;
- The chairperson shall explain technical terms or jargon that might otherwise make it difficult for the audience to follow deliberations;
- The chairperson shall thank participants for their attendance.

### **Managing Difficult Meetings**

From time to time you may face a controversial issue that will manifest itself in a very difficult meeting environment. This type of meeting will most likely involve representatives from one or more sides of an issue who will try and convince you that their position is the correct and right

one. Aggressiveness and hostility may characterize the group's demeanor. Keep the following in mind as you prepare for and participate in this meeting environment.

### **Before the Meeting**

If possible, the Chairperson may ask that participants designate one or more spokespersons to represent viewpoints. This may help reduce redundancy while making sure that all sides of the issue will be heard.

The staff representative or recorder should make sure to have agendas and any backup information available for attendees.

Make certain that adequate seating is available. Consider moving the meeting to a larger room if necessary.

Establish and announce the rules before the meeting.

### **During the Meeting**

The Chairperson should explain the issues, the possible actions, and the procedures that will be followed at the meeting.

Consider moving an item up on the agenda if there are many people in the audience to hear a specific topic.

Have speakers address the Chairperson and not the audience.

Stop any clapping or shouting early. If not already covered at the beginning of the meeting, explain the reasons why such actions are disruptive and counterproductive.

Citizen pressure on boards and committees can be tough. It is important to remember to address an issue with an open mind and weigh all the facts. Your credibility will be greatly diminished if there is a perception that an issue is a "Done Deal".

### **Making Tough Decisions**

When considering decision making on tough issues, here are questions that might help you think through a pending decision. Not all of these apply in all situations.

- Do I have a conflict of interest in this matter and have I disclosed it?
- Do others who are involved have a conflict of interest?
- Are ethical issues involved?
- Is it permitted by law?
- Do I have enough information to make a decision?

- Can I live with the proposed decision?
- Is the fight for or against the issue really worth it?
- Who will be hurt by the proposed action? Who will benefit?
- Is the decision in the best interest of the majority of residents?
- How will the community view the decision?
- How will it look in the newspaper?
- Is the proposed action consistent with my board's or committee's mission?
- What past practices relate to this issue?
- Will it really matter five years from now?
- If the decision is made, and it turns out wrong, can it be reversed?
- If I am hesitating - why?

### **Working with Other Board or Committee Members**

It is important to remember that your fellow members have opinions and thoughts that may not coincide with yours. Divergent opinions are not a bad thing and the democratic process works best when all points of view are able to be expressed freely and openly. Your colleagues deserve your respect and the freedom to express their viewpoints. In order to be an effective commissioner or board member, each individual must:

- Work within a team framework for compromise and exchange;
- Separate people from the issues when conflict arises;
- Focus on mutual interests and shared goals;
- Look for compromises and work to understand diverse perspectives;
- Examine one's own approach to dealing with conflict and be open about concerns where there is room for compromise;
- Strive to problem-solve based on collaboration rather than simply making a decision.

Most issues will be resolved and decisions made through the voting and deliberation processes. It is important to recognize that as a commissioner or board member, you have done your job by thoroughly examining the pros and cons of each situation. Once an issue is decided, it is equally important to accept the wishes of the majority and move on to the next issue.

## GENERAL PARLIAMENTARY RULES

**Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.** The rules of parliamentary practice as contained in Robert's Rules of Order, most recent edition, may govern the board or committee in all cases to which they are applicable, provided they are not in conflict with these Rules, City Ordinances, Charter, or other applicable laws.

**Discussion.** A board or committee member may speak when no motion is pending upon recognition by the Presiding Officer as provided in these Rules.

**Withdrawal of a Motion or Support.** A member may withdraw his or her motion or support at any time before it is put to a vote.

## PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

The following principles of ethical conduct apply to all officers, employees, board members, or agents of the City of Imlay City and form the basis for specific standards:

- Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest referred to in the regulations.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any purporting to bind the City of Imlay City.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall not use public office for private gain.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all regardless of race, color, religion, sex, ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- Officers, employees, board members, or agents shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or these Standards of Ethical Conduct.

### **Conflict of Interest**

As a board or commission member of the City of Imlay City, you have a responsibility to uphold the highest of ethical standards- both for yourself and for the benefit of our community. As a member of a board or commission your service may at times result in situations involving real or apparent conflicts of interest. Believing that service should not be rendered impossible solely by reason of these conflicts, the matter shall be handled through full disclosure of such interest and noninvolvement in any decision in which conflict is in question.

To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest that could tarnish the reputation of the City of Imlay City as well as undermine the public's trust in the City, please:

- Avoid any activity or outside interest that conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of the City of Imlay City including involvement with a current or potential City vendor unless disclosed to and not deemed to be inappropriate by the City.
- Decline any gift, gratuity, or favor in the performance of City duties except for promotional items of nominal value.
- Refrain from influencing the selection of staff, consultants, or vendors who are relatives or personal friends or who are affiliated with, employ, or who are employed by a person with whom they have a relationship that may adversely affect the appearance of impartiality.
- Disclose all known conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in any matter before the board or commission for which you serve and abstain from voting in connection with such matter.
- Do not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of the City, commission, or board in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on yourself, your immediate family members, or any organization in which you or your immediate family members have a significant interest as stakeholders, directors or officers.

Conflict of interest is handled responsibly when:

- The City, board, or commission is given notification of any anticipated potential conflict of interest situations that may arise in the City's normal course of business.
- If there is a conflict, or perceived conflict, disclose your situation to the other members of the decision-making body, prior to deliberation by the body of the issue in question.
- If there is a conflict, or perceived conflict, abstain from deliberation and voting on the issue in question. The abstention should be noted in the minutes of the meeting in which it takes place.

## **CONCLUSION**

This handbook has been presented to you as a guide for your participation on a board or committee. It does not cover all aspects of the board or committee that you may be requesting or to which you have been appointed. There may be training opportunities that will be afforded to you during your term of office. You will be notified by the staff liaison of any training opportunities available. You are encouraged to take advantage of them as they arise. Also, please do not hesitate to ask any questions of staff that will assist you in the performance of your duties and responsibilities.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR DEVELOPMENT RELATED BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Please utilize the following links to access important City of Imlay City development-related plans and documents. These documents can also be located via the City website at [www.imlaycity.org](http://www.imlaycity.org). Hard copies are available at the City office upon request.

[City of Imlay City Charter](#)

[Zoning Ordinance](#)

[General Regulations](#)

[Master Plan 2014](#)

[Public Participation Plan](#)

[Development Guide](#)

[Downtown Development Authority Plan, 2014](#)

[Parks and Recreation](#)

Capital Improvements Plan

Other helpful resources can be found at:

[Michigan Open Meetings Handbook](#)

[Citizens Guide to State Government](#)

[Freedom of Information Act](#)

Board and Committee members are strongly encouraged to attend training opportunities, depending upon actual costs. Although not a complete list, important training opportunities can typically be found at the following:

[Michigan Municipal League](#)

[Michigan Association of Planning](#)

[Southeast Michigan Council of Governments](#)

If you are interested in a training opportunity, please contact Craig Hortn, City Manager, at [citymanager@imlaycity.org](mailto:citymanager@imlaycity.org) or 810-724-2135.

## LISTING OF CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Please see the City Charter and/or the Bylaws of the specific Commission or Board for more details.

### Board of Review

<b>Membership:</b>	Three (3). Members must be taxpayers and have been residents of the City for not less than three (3) years.
<b>Term:</b>	3 year
<b>Meetings:</b>	March and July, specific dates set by City Assessor
<b>Appointment/ Election:</b>	Appointed by the City Commission
<b>Responsibilities:</b>	Review and correct assessment rolls in accordance with the provisions of State Law.

### Downtown Development Authority

<b>Membership:</b>	Nine (9) members and the Mayor. Not less than a majority of the members must be persons having an interest in property located in the DDA district.
<b>Term:</b>	4 years
<b>Meetings:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month, 5:35 p.m., City offices
<b>Appointment/Election:</b>	Appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Commission
<b>Responsibilities:</b>	Propose, finance, and implement public improvements in the downtown development authority district.

### Housing Board of Appeals

<b>Membership:</b>	Five (5)
<b>Term:</b>	3 years
<b>Meetings:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday, 7:00 p.m., City offices
<b>Appointment/Election:</b>	Appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Commission
<b>Responsibilities:</b>	To protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the city by performing duties and exercising its powers to meet the objectives of the Rental Dwelling Code found in the Imlay City Charter.

### Lamb Steele Board

<b>Membership:</b>	Six (6) members and the Mayor.
<b>Term:</b>	3 years
<b>Meetings:</b>	March and September as determined by the Board
<b>Appointment/Election:</b>	4 members are appointed by the City Commission or City manager and approved by the City Commission and 2 members are recommended by the tenants of the building and approved by the City Commission.
<b>Responsibilities:</b>	Plan the use of the Lamb-Steele Building, supervise the functions enumerated in existing leases relating to the Lamb-Steele Building, establish a financial plan and respond to financial problems arising out of the use of the Building, to

arrange permits arising out of aforesaid uses, to plan the intended use of the Lamb-Steele property over the useful life of the building and to furnish, equip, improve, operate and/or maintain a building or buildings, and parking lots, and the necessary site or sites therefore for the use of the City.

### **Parks and Recreation**

**Membership:** Seven (7)  
**Term:** 2 years  
**Meetings:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 p.m., City offices  
**Appointment/Election:** Appointed by the City Commission  
**Responsibilities:** Plan, conduct, supervise, and maintain public play fields, athletic fields, recreation centers, and other recreation facilities and activities with the consent of the owners and authorities thereof.

### **Planning Commission**

**Membership:** Seven (7) members who are qualified electors of the City.  
**Term:** 3 years  
**Meetings:** 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., City offices  
**Appointment/Election:** Appointed by the Mayor with approval from the City Commission.  
**Responsibilities:** Preparation of city Master Plan and city zoning ordinances and necessary amendments for recommendation to the City Commission, consider and recommend to City Commission requested rezoning, hear and decide special land use and site plan approvals.

### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

**Membership:** Seven (7) members who are residents of the City.  
**Term:** 3 years  
**Meetings:** 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, 7:30 p.m., City offices  
**Appointment/Election:** Appointed by the City Commission  
**Responsibilities:** To hear and decide appeals from and review any order, requirements, permit, decision or determination made by the Building Official and Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission or any other administrative official in enforcing the provisions of the City of Imlay City Ordinances.

**CITY OF IMLAY CITY  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS POLICY HANDBOOK  
SIGNATURE PAGE**

My signature below confirms that I have received a copy of the City of Imlay City Boards and Commissions Policy. I agree to adhere to and abide by the policy and the Code of Ethics as written.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Board: \_\_\_\_\_