TOWN OF WOODSIDE

A HANDBOOK FOR MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION, THE ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE REVIEW BOARD AND THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to provide a convenient source of information about the functions and activities of the Town of Woodside's Architectural and Site Review Board, Planning Commission, and citizen advisory committees. It is intended to assist members of these bodies in carrying out their roles, as well as to provide useful information to prospective members and other interested citizens.

The voluntary participation of Woodside's citizens in the operation of the Town government is critical to the Town Council's and the Town staff's success in serving the community. The Town Council has established several standing boards, commissions, and committees composed of volunteers. Additionally, the Council establishes ad hoc committees as the need arises. Members of volunteer bodies are appointed by the Town Council and charged with the responsibilities of gathering, synthesizing, and analyzing the information relevant to their areas of responsibility and providing the Town Council and Town staff with advice and recommendations. The Council and staff rely on this advice for the development and execution of Town policies. Consequently, serving on a board, commission, or committee can be a rewarding and challenging experience, as well as a considerable responsibility. Such positions provide an opportunity to play a vital role in the communications process between citizens and their elected representatives, as well as an opportunity to become intimately aware of the operating policies and problems of municipal government in general and to provide input within a specific program area. Citizen involvement is the hallmark of Woodside government, and the Town Council encourages all residents to participate.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Geography and Demographics

Woodside is a small, rural, primarily residential community, with no industrial land-use base and with relatively small retail, commercial and professional service activities located in the Town Center and the Skylonda area. The Town, which is approximately 14 square miles in area, is especially valued for its wooded hillsides, natural stream corridors, fields of grasses and wildflowers, graceful buildings, and scenic vistas.

Woodside’s population consists of 5,287 residents who live in 1,977 households, according to the 2010 census. The median age in 2010 was 48.8 years. Almost 1,000 horses are boarded in the Town. In 2016, there were 4,075 registered voters.

The History of Woodside

Original Inhabitants, Spanish and Mexican Period
The story of Woodside begins with the local Ohlone/Costanoan people, who made their home in this area for thousands of years before Spanish explorers arrived. These native people were attracted to the mild climate, plentiful good water and abundant food supply. The Lamchin band of Ohlone made their living by hunting, fishing and gathering in this Valley’s lush terrain of grassy meadows and forested hillsides. Their presence is evidenced by the frequent discovery of burials and artifacts near creeks.

In 1769, a group of explorers led by Gaspar de Portolá set out from Mexico in search of a great bay that had been noted during earlier sailings up the coast. That expedition, which camped near present day Woodside, may have marked the first appearance of Europeans in the area. As exploration and settlement increased, many of the Ohlone were moved to Mission Santa Clara to work in the vineyards and orchards and in the raising of cattle.

Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821, after almost 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. With independence, California came under Mexican rule until it was acquired by the United States in 1848. In 1833, the Mexican government secularized the rich lands and holdings of the missions and transferred them from the church over to new settlers and colonists, many of whom were veterans of the Mexican War. Following secularization of mission lands, Mexican authorities granted to friends and loyalists some 18 ranchos in what is now San Mateo County. One of those, Rancho Cañada de Raymundo, was a large parcel in the middle of the Peninsula. The rancho’s boundaries encompassed much of present day Woodside.

Anglo-American Settlers and the Logging Industry

In the 1830s, the Woodside area became home to some of the first English-speaking settlers on the San Francisco Peninsula. Many came to seek their fortunes in the burgeoning lumber industry, and among them would emerge community builders and leaders.

John Copinger came to California by ship and made his way to the Woodside area. He was awarded the rancho after assisting Mexican government official Juan Bautista Alvarado in a dispute with Mexican authorities. Copinger married Maria Luisa Soto, the daughter of another rancho owner whose property included modern day downtown Palo Alto. In 1840, the couple built an adobe home at the corner of Kings Mountain Road and Woodside Road, which was later destroyed in the 1906 Earthquake. Copinger was a respected and industrious man who made many improvements to the property, including a dam and a grist mill on Bear Gulch Creek. He also raised cattle and planted many crops. He died in 1847, at the age of 37.
Around 1840, Charles Brown purchased one major portion of the Copinger land grant consisting of 2,880 acres of land, which he named “Mountain Home Ranch”. He is credited with having built one of the first sawmills on the Peninsula, as well as an 1839 adobe house that still stands near Portola Road.

Another early resident of note was Dennis Martin, who came in the first wagon party over the Truckee Pass in 1845. He bought land from John Copinger, built sawmills, a house, planted orchards and built St. Denis Chapel as a place of worship near Searsville. That area was named for John Sears who bought land from Dennis Martin in 1854 and built a hotel and other businesses there. Searsville was the largest village in this area until 1891, when the Spring Valley Water Company displaced the community and built a dam creating the reservoir called Searsville Lake. The lake was a popular recreation spot until 1975, when it was incorporated into the Jaspar Ridge Biological Reserve.

Dentist Robert Orville Tripp left his native Massachusetts, came west in 1849 and later to Woodside, establishing a business and home. He joined Matthias A. Parkhurst and Charles Ellis to establish a sawmill and, along with partners from San Francisco, opened a direct road from the redwood forests to the head of the tidewater in Redwood Creek - now the heart of Redwood City. Oxen and mules dragged the lumber down this road to the Bay to be floated to San Francisco on ebb tides.

*Early Commercial and Social Development*

By 1852 there was regular stagecoach service from Woodside to San Francisco and more people were attracted to the area. Recognizing the need to service the increased traffic and workers, Tripp and Parkhurst opened a general food and supply market called the Woodside Store. In 1854, Andre Neuman established a nursery and grocery store on Woodside Road where it crosses Bear Gulch. Soon after, Tripp and Parkhurst re-located their store to its present location on the corner of Kings Mountain and Tripp Roads. That building is now preserved as a San Mateo County Museum. Dr. Tripp also established the first post office and, in 1858, a circulating library.

John Greer, an Irish sea captain who arrived in San Francisco in 1850, explored the creeks and sloughs of the Bay at what is now Redwood City. He became acquainted with John Copinger’s widow, Maria Luisa. They married and resided in the Copinger adobe in Woodside. The Greers became community leaders, and in 1851, donated land for the first schoolhouse in the area, which is now Woodside Elementary School. It was originally called Greersburg Elementary School.

The Woodside area consisted of several small clusters of businesses and residences that developed at important intersections. Like Searsville, Whiskey Hill grew in importance because it was located between the redwoods on the hillside and the sawmills and Redwood City. As the more accessible redwoods were depleted the mills moved up the steep hills and over the ridge making it a two-day journey to the Bay. The teamsters would typically spend the night at hotels at Whiskey Hill and partake of the beverage from which the name derives. The only surviving hotel, the Pioneer Hotel, was built by Peter Hudson on Whiskey Hill in 1884.

Along the road known as the Redwood City-Pescadero Road (today’s Woodside Road), other important additions were added to this young community. Independence Hall, also built in 1884, was originally located next to the Woodside Elementary School. After several moves, it was placed at its present site next to Town Hall in 1991, and reconstructed for use as a
community meeting space. The Woodside Village Church Chapel dates from 1893 and has continuously served the community along with the newer, larger sanctuary added in 1961. Several of the original commercial buildings are still in use today, including: Independence Hall, the San Mateo County Museum (formerly the Woodside Store), and the Pioneer Hotel (now the Pioneer Saloon, a bank, and office space).

The Vineyard Era
By the 1870s and 1880s, the majestic stands of redwoods in this valley had been depleted. Entrepreneurs began to seek other uses for the rich bottomlands and hillsides. One of these entrepreneurs was Emmett H. Rixford, who purchased land near the corner of Cañada and Woodside Roads and in 1884 established the 37-acre La Questa Vineyards. His cabernets, fine enough to win awards in Europe, inspired others to begin planting grapes. In 1894, John A. Hooper, a San Francisco banker, planted a thirty-acre vineyard on the former Charles Brown property. These efforts marked the beginning of an interest in viticulture that continues today.

By the turn of the twentieth century there were well over 800 acres of grapes in the Woodside-Portola Valley area. The west side of Cañada Road, from Olive Hill to Edgewood, was planted in vineyards and olive groves. Increasing urbanization of the peninsula gradually forced the wineries to move to the more agricultural areas, both to the north and south. Historically, the entire Woodside-Portola Valley area has been considered a single viticulture unit, with over 100 acres of grapes in production.

Each year, the one remaining acre of the La Questa Vineyard grapevines produces a modest 50 cases of the coveted La Questa Cabernet Sauvignon. The handsome stone winery, built 100 years ago, has been remodeled as a residence. The three remaining acres of the Hooper Vineyard contain the only other vines that date back to the nineteenth century. These produce both Cabernet Sauvignon and Zinfandel grapes, which like the La Questa grapes are made into wine by Woodside Vineyards. Chaine d’Or is another local area winery. Viticulture is limited but still thriving in Woodside, and in recent years more than thirty backyard vineyards (ranging in size from ½ to 3 acres) have been planted, principally to supply grapes to the two local wineries. The remaining foundations of the Hooper Winery are located at one of these vineyard sites.

Early Estates
The logging of the redwoods opened up tremendous vistas of the valley and the Bay. This factor, combined with the largely fog-free climate and ease of access to San Francisco, lured many successful City families to seek country estates in the Woodside area. Large tracts of land became available as the original pioneer families passed on and their landholdings were divided, beginning an era of estate building.

Among the first San Franciscans to locate in Woodside was John A. Hooper, who purchased the Mountain Home Ranch. Coffee magnate James Folger II followed with the purchase of 1,500 acres in 1902, which he named Hazelwood Hills. About the same time, Charles Josselyn, owner of a ship chandlery business in San Francisco began building his Vine Grove Estate. San Francisco banker Mortimer Fleishhacker started building Green Gables in 1911. Just outside the Town’s limits is one of Woodside’s largest and most intact estates, Filoli, built between 1915 and 1917. Later examples of notable estates include the Selah Chamberlain residence, built in 1912; and the house and stable built by copper magnate, Daniel Jackling, in 1925.
**Equestrian Heritage**

Since the early twentieth century, Woodside has been known for its idyllic setting and presence of horses. Originally, horses were a necessity for work and transportation, and later for pleasure, leisure, and sport. Starting in 1931, the development of the current horse trail system began. Two parks are adjacent to the Town: Huddart Park, 974 acres acquired by the County in 1944 from the James M. Huddart Estate; and Wunderlich Park, 942 acres donated to the County by Martin Wunderlich in 1972. These parks expand the trail network, and provide increased access between public and private lands.

The equestrian community has influenced the rural character of the Town by promoting the values of land conservation, open space and trail preservation, private barns, and community stables. As part of the Town’s fabric, the equestrian culture is sustained by the community in many ways. The restoration of the historic Folger Stable at Wunderlich Park was energetically supported through financial contributions from a broad spectrum of Woodsiders, as was the installation of Spring and Sprite, an impressive bronze sculpture of a mare and foal situated on Village Hill. The equestrian influence is also clearly evidenced by the annual Day of the Horse, an event which includes a Horse Fair and Progressive Ride through the Town. Each October since 2005, as many as 300 horse and rider teams enjoy the Town’s equestrian trails and provide a colorful spectacle for the non-equestrian portion of the Woodside community. Additionally, the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County held its sixtieth Junior Rodeo in 2010. This organization also supports Woodside’s National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy and the Sherriff’s Star Program. The Woodside-area Horse Owners Association (WHOA!) operates the Born Again Barns and Back in the Saddle (BITS) programs to assist people wanting to get involved with horses on any level. Woodside residents include jockeys, equestrian competitors, Olympians, coaches, and trainers of national and international acclaim. Horses continue to be a popular reminder of Woodside’s frontier past and countrified present.

**Land Divisions and Growth of Town Center**

The first known residential subdivision was laid out in 1888, a tract known as Woodside Villas. The larger lots were accessed from Albion Avenue and the smaller half-acre residential lots were located along Woodside Road.

Woodside experienced a spurt of subdivision activity and commercial development during the 1920s. Many larger properties were divided into lots, including Portola Woods, Lakeshore Hills, Portola Hill, Toyon Knolls, Woodside Glens, and Country Club Estates.

The area stretching along Woodside Road from Whiskey Hill to Mountain Home Road also underwent further commercial development during the 1920s. In addition to the businesses already serving community needs were George E. Shine’s Blacksmith Shop and the Neuman Brothers’ General Merchandise store. In 1928, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company built a telephone exchange which brought the first direct dial telephone service in Woodside.

The Depression and War Years in the 1930s and 1940s slowed development activity. It was not until 1950 that San Mateo County’s real estate market fully recovered, unleashing a flood of development in neighboring communities. Several major tracts of nearby land were subdivided and developed, especially in areas adjacent to Redwood City. Some of these included East Greenwood Terrace, Woodside Heights, Woodside Oaks, Woodside Knolls, Greenways, and Woodside Hills.
Town Incorporation and Present Day

The steady encroachment of suburban development in the post WWII boom alarmed many Woodside residents and spurred them to revisit incorporating as a Town (an idea first considered in 1928). A group called “Woodsiders for Woodside” filed papers, collected signatures, and established boundaries encompassing twelve square miles. Their stated goal was to preserve Woodside’s rural character. On October 20, 1956, residents favored incorporation by a slim margin and elected its first Town Council. William L. Lowe was elected by the Council to serve as its first Mayor.

The government of the new Town was quickly pressed into action. Meeting at the Woodside Elementary School, the Council passed ordinances setting up building codes, zoning restrictions, established tax rates, and contracted for fire and police protection. The first Town Master Plan, the predecessor of the General Plan, was adopted in 1958.

On November 16, 2016, Woodside celebrated the 50th anniversary of incorporation. Since incorporation in 1956, five annexations of additional territory have been approved by the Town Council. These annexations included the addition of Emerald Hills and Summit Springs in 1962, Skywood Acres and Stockbridge Avenue in 1975, and the Greenways-Ward Tract in 2002. Surrounding communities have seen unprecedented growth due to the success of technology, research, investment, and other industries in the area. Thanks to the diligence of Woodside’s citizens and officials through the years, Woodside maintains its rural charm. With cherished annual traditions like the May Day Parade dating from the early 1930s to more recent events such as the Environment Fest, and the annual “Day of the Horse”, Town celebrations offer residents the opportunity to enjoy and reflect on the rich history of Woodside.
THE TOWN GOVERNMENT’S STRUCTURE

Woodside is a general law town operating under the council-manager form of government. This provides the Town with public policy direction from the Town Council and professional administration and policy implementation through the Town Manager. Approximately 80% of the towns and cities in California operate under general law, which means they are organized pursuant to general state law concerning town government structure contained in the State of California’s Government Code.

The general law system of municipal government provides that the Town has no powers except those it receives under a constitutional or statutory grant of authority. The powers so granted are enumerated in Article XI of the California Constitution, which provides two kinds of powers for general law towns. These kinds of powers are the power to regulate people’s actions (known as regulatory power), and the power to provide services for the benefit of the Town’s inhabitants (known as commercial power). Section Seven of Article XI states that the Town government has the authority to enact regulatory ordinances for the benefit of its citizens so long as those ordinances are not in conflict with state or federal law. Section Nine of Article XI provides that the Town may also establish and operate public works to furnish its inhabitants with light, heat, power, transportation, water, and means of communication.

The General Plan

The General Plan guides the future development of the Town, describes the desired character and quality of the community, sets forth the goals that govern the Town, and states the policies that the Town government will follow to achieve those goals. The Plan’s primary goals are to preserve and enhance Woodside as a scenic, rural residential community, to conserve the natural environment and its open space, to protect people and their property from exposure to hazards, to assure access to utility services, to manage and maintain the Town’s system of roads, trails, paths, and bikeways, and to allow minimal commercial development. A copy of the Plan is on file with the Town Clerk and on the Town’s website (woodsidetown.org), and interested parties are encouraged to peruse it.

The Municipal Code


The Town Council

The Town Council is the legislative body of the Town of Woodside, with all the regulatory and corporate powers provided under California state law. The Town Council provides the policy direction that guides the operation of the Town, adopts ordinances and resolutions that constitute the legislative intent of the Town, and sets the Town’s priorities through the adoption of an annual budget and the provision of direction to the Town Manager. The Town Council represents the Town’s residents through these actions and through the conveyance of constituent requests and concerns to the Town staff. The Town Council also appoints members to all advisory committees, the Planning Commission, and the Architectural and Site Review Board.
The seven members of the Town Council are elected at-large to four year terms, but must be respectively nominated from one of seven Town Council districts. Elections occur in November of even-numbered years and the terms are staggered so that no more than four Town Council seats are up for election at any one time. The Council in turn selects one of its members to serve as Mayor for a one-year term. The Mayor presides at the Town Council meetings and represents the Town as the official head of the Council on public and ceremonial occasions, but has no special authority beyond that of the other Councilmembers. Neither the Mayor nor the other members of the Council are paid.

The regular public meetings of the Town Council are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month and, unless otherwise noticed, start at 7:30 p.m. The meetings are adjourned by 11:00 p.m. unless extended by motion of the Town Council. The regular meeting place of the Town Council is Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, Woodside, California.

The Town Manager

The Town Manager is appointed by the Town Council. The Woodside Municipal Code, Sections 31.15 through 31.23, provides for the establishment of the office of Town Manager and delineates the powers and duties of the office. The Town Manager serves as the chief executive of the Town, administering its day-to-day affairs. The Manager's responsibilities include enforcing the Town's laws; preparing the annual budget and submitting it to the Town Council for approval; hiring, developing, and disciplining staff; directing and organizing staff in the execution of Council policies; providing information and recommendations to the Council; and investigating complaints concerning the Town's administration.

The Town Clerk

The Town Clerk is appointed by the Town Manager. The Clerk serves as the Secretary to the Town Council at meetings, performs the official recordation of Town Council actions, and composes the minutes. The Clerk administers and organizes all municipal elections and coordinates the filing of Political Reform Act conflict of interest statements. The Clerk also manages the Town's records and is responsible for the care and custody of all official records and documents of the Town. Those records include all Town deeds, contracts, leases, ordinances, resolutions, minutes, and the Municipal Code. The Clerk publishes public notices and ordinances as required by law and assists staff and the public in researching information contained in the Town's official records. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring timely responses to Public Records Act requests.

The Town Attorney

The Town Attorney is appointed by the Town Council. The Town Attorney acts as legal advisor to the Town Council, Town Manager, the various Town departments, and all Town commissions, committees, and boards. The Town Attorney prepares and approves for legality all proposed Town ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents. The Attorney also represents the Town in litigation and prosecutes violations of Town laws.

The Planning Director

The Planning Director is appointed by the Town Manager. It is the responsibility of the Director to provide current and long-range planning to ensure the balanced physical development of the Town in accordance with the Town's adopted General Plan and to
administer the Town’s adopted zoning ordinances. The Director is the Town’s zoning administrator and enforces the zoning codes of the Town.

**The Town Engineer**

The Town Engineer is appointed by the Town Manager. The Town Engineer is responsible for the work of the Department of Public Works. This work encompasses the oversight of the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure, primarily sewers, roads, and other public rights-of-way. This work also includes a variety of engineering support services that are provided to the Town's planning, building regulation, and public utility functions.

**The Building Official**

The Building Official is appointed by the Town Manager. The Building Official is responsible for ensuring compliance with the California Building Code and related codes, regulations, and standards.

**The Commission, Board, and Committees**

The Town of Woodside is assisted by citizen advisory commissions, committees, and boards. When convened as a Town advisory body, each body is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Advise the Town Council and the Town Manager on matters within their area of responsibility or jurisdiction, under articles of the General Plan, as prescribed by the Town Council and its ordinances and resolutions.
- Help focus attention on specific issues and problems within their scope of responsibilities and recommend actions and alternatives for Council consideration.
- Act as channels of communication and information between Town government and the general public, including groups with interests related to the work of the advisory bodies.
- Consider and assist in reconciling contradictory viewpoints and provide direction toward achievement of Town-wide goals.
- Encourage citizen participation in the definition and formulation of Town goals and actions for their achievement.
- Balance community desires with municipal responsibilities and resources.

The bodies to which this handbook applies and their membership and responsibilities are outlined in the following pages.
**The Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission participates in the administration of the zoning laws and policies of the Town. The Commission makes recommendations to the Town Council regarding land use, reviews proposed development projects, and advises as to the overall development and maintenance of the General Plan of the Town. The Commission also conducts necessary public hearings to administer the planning laws and policies of the Town and acts on applications for zoning amendments, conditional use permits, variances, subdivisions, and other related functions as may be assigned by the Council. The Commission’s powers and duties are specifically enumerated in State planning law (Government Code Section 65100 et seq.) and in the Town’s Municipal Code (Section 32.06).

The seven members of the Planning Commission are appointed by the Town Council for staggered four-year terms. A Planning Commission member is appointed from each of the seven Council Districts, although the Municipal Code does provide for exceptions to this process.

The regular public meetings of the Planning Commission are held the first and third Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road. The Planning Commission has adopted a three-hour meeting limit, unless extended by motion during the meeting.

**The Architectural and Site Review Board**

The Architectural and Site Review Board (ASRB) reviews applications for community character, site planning, building design, and landscape elements; and makes recommendations to the Planning Director or Planning Commission regarding the approval or disapproval, and suggests modifications or imposes conditions in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in the Woodside Municipal Code (Title 15, Chapter 153, beginning at Section 153.910). The Code charges the ASRB with protecting the rural character and natural beauty of the Town and ensures that projects are consistent with the General Plan and are in keeping with the Residential Design Guidelines.

The ASRB consists of five members appointed to staggered four-year terms by the Town Council. The regular meetings of the ASRB are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 4:30 p.m. in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road.

**The Arts and Culture Committee**

The Arts and Culture Committee strengthens multigenerational community involvement within the Town of Woodside by initiating, sponsoring and celebrating local art, creativity and cultural activities including, but not limited to, the areas of art, photography, design, music, horticulture, culinary arts, literature, drama, and dance. The Committee will create opportunities to educate, inform and engage the community about cultural affairs and will organize and supervise events to showcase local creative talent (Resolution No. 2013-6922).

Members are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

**The Audit Committee**

The Audit Committee, with the Town Manager, develops the scope of the annual Independent Audit, reviews proposals for auditing services, and recommends an auditing firm to the Town
Council for engagement. The Committee reviews the annual Independent Audit report and General Purpose Financial Statements and issues its own independent report to the Town Council on the Town’s financial status and on the Town's progress in implementing the Independent Auditor’s prior fiscal year’s recommendations for improvement to fiscal operations, if any. The Committee reviews and provides comments to the Town Council on the Town's annual self-assessment of performance against the Town Council's Financial Management Policies and recommends revisions to those policies (Resolution No. 1993-4886).

Members are appointed by the Town Council for unlimited terms. Nominations for replacement members are offered by the existing Audit Committee.

**The Circulation Committee**

The Circulation Committee supports the General Plan goal to balance circulation system user needs and works to foster a community for all users of the public roadway system, including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians. The Circulation Committee works with the Town Engineer, Sheriff’s Department, and local and regional organizations to develop programs to encourage dialog on circulation system needs, promote “share the road” programs for all users, and develop educational programs to promote traffic safety. The Committee advises Town staff and the Town Council about ways to make the roadway system safer for all users, to encourage effective traffic enforcement, and to promote safe, convenient access to schools, Town businesses, public and private institutions, and neighborhoods. The Committee shall review applications for special event permits for the Town's roadways, offer expert participation on the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and make recommendations regarding grant applications that seek to improve the Town’s bicycle and pedestrian system. The Committee shall confer with the Trails Committee on programs and recommendations of mutual interest (Resolution No. 2012-6888).

Members are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

**The Emergency Preparedness Committee**

The Emergency Preparedness Committee supports the General Plan policies to institute or participate in education related to natural hazards and to support emergency preparedness education. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with Town staff to develop and maintain appropriate plans and procedures for responding to disasters including wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and other emergencies. The Emergency Preparedness Committee supports the work of the Citizens' Emergency Response and Preparedness Program (CERPP) to develop a network of volunteers to respond to emergencies at the neighborhood level. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with staff to recruit, organize, train and maintain a team of volunteers who can assist staffing an Emergency Operations Center when Town staff is partially or wholly unavailable. The Emergency Preparedness Committee works with staff to develop emergency communication facilities and capabilities and to provide residents of the Town with information and training in emergency topics (Resolution No. 2014-6971).

Members are appointed by the Town Council for two-year terms.
The Environment: Open Space, Conservation & Sustainability Committee

The Environment: Open Space, Conservation & Sustainability Committee advises and assists the Town Council, Planning Commission, and staff on implementing the goals and policies of the environmental elements of the General Plan: Open Space, Conservation, and Sustainability. The primary emphases of this committee are the preservation, restoration, and expansion of the natural and rural environments, wildlife habitat, where possible, and their wise management for the benefit of all residents now and generations to come. The Committee makes recommendations to the Town Council, Planning Commission and staff on the acquisition and maintenance of open space and conservation easements. The Committee develops and recommends educational and incentive programs which promote the value of greenhouse gas mitigation; natural terrains for scenic vistas, wildlife habitats and tranquility; energy and water conservation; protection of water sources; waste minimization; and other environmental issues. Current programs include the Backyard Habitat, Heritage Tree, and other awards and events. The Committee also makes recommendations to the Town Council on actions to implement the Town’s Climate Action Plan. When requested by the Town Council, the Committee drafts regulations that foster the sustainability and conservation principles in the General Plan. The Committee collaborates with Town governing bodies and neighboring towns on goals and projects of mutual interest (Resolution No. 2017-7169).

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

The Livestock and Equestrian Heritage Committee

The Livestock and Equestrian Heritage Committee reviews applications for professional stable permits and forwards recommendations to the Planning Commission. It also reviews applications for exceptions to the private stable regulations and forwards recommendations for approval or disapproval to the Planning Director. The Livestock and Equestrian Heritage Committee conducts inspections of stables in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Code.

The Livestock and Equestrian Heritage Committee develops and supports education and information programs which aid the community in sustaining, protecting, enhancing, and enjoying equestrian activities and facilities. The Committee is also a resource for Town Council, staff, and residents on equestrian matters (Resolution No. 2012-6890).

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

The Recreation Committee

The Recreation Committee was established by the Town with the cooperation of the Woodside Elementary School District for the purpose of guiding the activities of the community recreation program. The Committee provides organized and supervised community recreation services and facilities in all areas of the Town and makes recreation budget recommendations to the Town Council (Resolution No. 1986-4379).

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered three-year terms.
The Trails Committee

The Trails Committee reviews land divisions, subdivisions, and conditional use permits for locations for equestrian, pedestrian and bicycle trails and makes recommendations to staff and to the Planning Commission. It also advises on trail maintenance projects and rules, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the trails.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

The Woodside History Committee

The Woodside History Committee advocates, advises, and develops recommendations regarding matters of Woodside history for the Town Council and its advisory bodies and staff; sponsors and supports the history of Woodside through educational programs; and encourages and supports the collection, maintenance, and display of historic materials (Resolution No. 1996-5077).

Members are appointed by the Town Council for staggered two-year terms.

Ad Hoc Committees

From time to time the Town Council appoints ad hoc committees to gather information on a particular area of interest or concern and make recommendations to the Town Council as a whole. These committees meet at the direction and call of the Town Council. Ad hoc committees will identify key issues, research alternative solutions and make recommendations to the Town Council for policies related to their assignment. Once the ad hoc committee has completed a final report or recommendation on the area of assignment and the report is accepted by the Town Council, the ad hoc committee is disbanded.

Current Committee Information

An updated list of members of the various volunteer bodies is included in the Town Directory, available at the front desk in Town Hall. It also includes the most current information on the regular meeting dates and times for the committees and the approved committee size.
RULES OF OFFICE

Qualifications and Appointment to Office

Interested citizens who live within the Town of Woodside are encouraged to submit applications for positions on the Planning Commission, ASRB, or an advisory committee. The Town Council may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the Town residency requirement, depending upon the membership needs of the involved advisory body at the time appointments are being considered and the availability of sufficient applications from which to fill existing vacancies. The application form is available from the Town staff and includes space for the applicant to state the qualifications, experience, and skills which he or she can bring to the service of the Town. Applications may be submitted at any time. Completed forms are kept on file at Town Hall and may be considered by the Town Council when vacancies occur. In addition to considering the applications placed on file, the Town Council may make its own nominations to the Planning Commission, ASRB, and advisory committees.

Notice of openings and requests for applications for the Planning Commission, ASRB, and advisory committees are posted and published in "The Almanac" and on Nextdoor Woodside. Regular appointments to all bodies are made by the Town Council in February of each year at a duly noticed meeting of the Town Council. Requests for applications for candidates to fill unexpected vacancies, which occur from time to time, will be solicited when the vacancies arise. All vacancies will be filled by the Council in as timely a manner as is practicable.

The members of the Planning Commission, ASRB, and advisory committees are appointed by simple majority vote of the Town Council. The process by which appointments are made to the Planning Commission and the ASRB, however, is different than that used to appoint advisory committee members. In the case of the Planning Commission and the ASRB, the Town Clerk will distribute the applications/statements of qualifications of the applicants/nominees to all members of the Council with the Council packets for the meeting designated for the interview and appointment of Planning Commission and/or ASRB candidates. The Town Clerk will include the attendance records of all incumbent applicants in the packet. During the Council meeting when the interviews and appointments are to occur, each applicant will be interviewed by the Town Council and will be allowed to address the Council on his/her qualifications. After all applicants have been interviewed, the Town Council will undertake the appointment process.

In order to facilitate the advisory committee appointment process, the Town Council Committee Appointments Subcommittee will review all applications and nominations. Prior to presenting its recommendations to the full Town Council at a duly noticed public meeting, the Subcommittee may, at its discretion, interview some or all of the applicants and nominees. If the full Council wishes to interview candidates, the interview shall take place in a public meeting forum. The Subcommittee may solicit input from the Chair and the Council Liaison of the advisory body for which members are being considered, as a part of its review process. Once the review process is completed, the Subcommittee will make its recommendations to the full Council, which will vote on the entire slate of recommended appointments at one time. If there are appointments among those recommended by the Subcommittee that Councilmembers wish to consider individually, those specific appointments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
When making board, commission, and committee appointments, the Town Council will favor applicants who do not already belong to another board, commission, or committee. Members of the Planning Commission are prohibited by Town Council Resolution No. 2003-6376 from holding a voting membership on any of the Town’s other advisory bodies. The Council seeks a diversely representative body of membership for each board, commission, and committee so that there will be a broad balance of views. Rather than fill an advisory panel with people who are all dedicated to the same ideas or goals, the Council will attempt to assemble groups of applicants with a variety of interests and experience. Similarly, the Council will attempt to select members from across the Town's geographically diverse make-up. For all of the Town’s citizen advisory bodies, the Town Council may decide to refrain from appointing candidate(s) if, in its judgment, the qualifications and/or experience of the candidate(s) are insufficient. When this occurs, the Town Clerk will again advertise the vacant position(s) involved and the appointment process will be included on a subsequent Town Council agenda.

**Code of Ethics and Conduct**

Public officers owe an undivided duty to the public they serve and are not permitted to place themselves in a position which will subject them to conflicting duties or expose them to the temptation of acting in any manner other than in the best interest of the public. Town officers may not, under any circumstances, use their official position to their own benefit or for the benefit of anyone except the Town itself, nor may they represent the Town in any transaction in which they are personally interested in obtaining an advantage.

The Town Council first adopted a Code of Ethics and Conduct in 1994. Recently, on October 9, 2018, the Town Council adopted a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct for the members of the Town Council, Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, and Town committees, and it reads as follows:

I.

**PREAMBLE**

It is the intent of this Code of Ethics and Conduct (the “Code”) to achieve fair, ethical, and accountable local government for the Town of Woodside. The people of Woodside expect public officials, both elected and appointed, to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws of the State of California, the United States of America, the Town of Woodside Municipal Code and General Plan, and the laws and established policies of the Town of Woodside affecting the operations of local government. In addition, public officials are expected to comply with the provisions of this Code. All persons covered by this Code will aspire to meet the highest ethical standards in the conduct of their responsibility as an elected or appointed official of the Town of Woodside.

This Code addresses various aspects related to the governance of the Town of Woodside and supplements but does not supplant other laws and rules that prescribe the legal responsibilities of Town officials. These include, but are not limited to, the Federal and State Constitutions, various provisions of the California Government Code (such as the Brown Act and the Political Reform Act), the Labor Code, laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment, and the Town of Woodside Municipal Code. Elected and appointed officials are expected to be familiar with these laws to ensure that they exercise their public responsibilities in a proper fashion. This Code is not designed to be used as a tool to remove appointed officials, as the Town Council retains the right under the Municipal Code to remove appointed officials in accordance with those provisions.

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While it is not possible to anticipate and provide a rule of conduct and ethics for all situations that public officials may face, this Code is designed to provide a framework to guide public officials in their daily duties.

II.

SCOPE

The provisions of this Code shall apply to the Mayor and members of the Town Council, and to all members of the boards, commissions, and committees appointed by the Town Council or the Mayor or the Mayor and Town Council, including any ad hoc committees. Further, the provisions of this Code shall only apply to these officials and members acting in their official capacities and in the discharge of their duties.

The Town values participation from all of its residents, and therefore, residents who do business with the Town are not precluded from seeking election to the Town Council or from seeking appointment to the Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, or Citizen Advisory Committees. Members of the Town Council who do business in the Town are not required to recuse themselves when voting to appoint members of the Planning Commission, Architectural and Site Review Board, or Citizen Advisory Committees.

III.

CORE VALUES

Attitudes, words, and actions should demonstrate, support, and reflect the following qualities and characteristics for the well-being of our community. The five core values and expressions that reflect these core values are as follows:

INTEGRITY/HONESTY

- I am honest with my fellow elected officials, the public and others.
- I do not promise what I believe to be unrealistic.
- I am prepared to make unpopular decisions when my sense of the public’s best interests requires it.
- I credit others’ contributions to moving our community’s interests forward.
- I do not knowingly use false or inaccurate information to support my position or views.
- I safeguard the ability to make independent, objective, fair and impartial judgments by scrupulously avoiding financial and social relationships and transactions that may compromise, or give the appearance of compromising, objectivity, independence, and honesty.

RESPONSIBILITY/PROTECTING THE PUBLIC’S INTERESTS

- I do not accept gifts, services, or other special considerations because of my public position.
- I excuse myself from participating in decisions when my or my immediate family’s financial interests may be affected by my agency’s actions.
- I disclose any personal or financial interest which may be affected by my agency’s actions even though it would not require a recusal from hearing or deciding an issue,
considering and enacting an ordinance, or considering an appointment to a commission, board, or committee.

- I disclose whether a policy under discussion may affect a current or pending client of mine.
- I do not give special treatment or consideration to any individual or group beyond that available to any other individual.
- I refrain from disclosing confidential information concerning litigation, personnel, property, or other affairs of the Town, without proper legal authority, nor use such information to advance my financial or other personal interests.

**FAIRNESS/ACCOUNTABILITY**

- I promote meaningful public involvement in the agency’s decision-making processes.
- I treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner; I make decisions based on the merits of the issue.
- If I receive substantive information from sources outside the public decision-making process that is relevant to a matter under consideration, I publicly share it with my fellow governing board members and staff.
- I work to contribute to a strong organization that exemplifies transparency and open communication.

**RESPECT FOR FELLOW ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIALS, STAFF, AND THE PUBLIC**

- I treat my fellow officials, staff and the public with patience, courtesy, and civility, even when we disagree on what is best for the community; I strive to resolve disagreements amicably.
- I work toward consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions.
- I respect the distinction between the role of office holder and staff; I involve staff in meetings with individuals, those with business before the agency, officials from other agencies, and legislators to ensure proper staff support and to keep staff informed.
- I conduct myself in a courteous and respectful manner at all times during the performance of my official Town duties.
- I encourage full participation of all persons and groups; I acknowledge important celebrations and events which reflect the values of our diverse population.

**PROPER AND EFFICIENT USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

- I do not use public resources, such as agency staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.
- I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the agency, especially its financial stability.
- I demonstrate concern for the proper use of agency assets (such as personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.
- I am a prudent steward of public resources and actively consider the impact of my decisions on the financial and social stability of the Town and its residents.
IV.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Town of Woodside elected and appointed officials of the various boards, commissions and committees have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government. This Code will be most effective when the elected and appointed officials are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions.

Upon adoption of this Code, all current elected or appointed officials shall be given a copy of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and asked to understand its provisions, and pledge to conduct themselves by it. All new members of the Town Council, upon election or reelection, and members of boards, commissions, and committees appointed by the Mayor or the Town Council, upon appointment or reappointment, shall be given a copy of this Code and are required to understand its provisions, and pledge to conduct themselves by it. Additionally, all members of the Town Council, boards, commissions, and committees, as part of their AB1234 training, shall be provided additional training clarifying the provisions and application of this Code. The Town Attorney, or his/her designee, shall serve as a resource person to those persons covered by the Code to assist them in determination of appropriate actions consistent with the Code.

Complaints of possible violations of this Code of Conduct and Ethics should be submitted to the Town Manager. The Town Manager will take steps to determine the validity of the complaint including speaking to the parties. If the complaint can be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, the Town Manager should effect such a solution. If the complaint cannot be informally resolved, the Town Manager will determine the appropriate action. Actions may include taking no further action, consulting with the Town Attorney, consulting with the Mayor, referring the matter to the Town Council for action, or referring any serious alleged violation of law to the appropriate enforcement authority.

If the complaint is about a member of the Town Council, the complaint should be submitted to the Mayor. If the complaint is about the Mayor, the complaint should be submitted to the Mayor Pro Tempore. The Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore will take steps to determine the validity of the complaint including speaking to the parties. If the complaint can be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore should effect such a solution. If the complaint cannot be informally resolved, the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore will determine the appropriate action. Actions may include taking no further action, consulting with the Town Attorney, referring the matter to the Town Council for action, or referring any serious alleged violation of law to the appropriate enforcement authority.

A periodic review of the Code shall be conducted to ensure that the Code is an effective and vital document.

This Code of Conduct and Ethics is intended to be a reflection of the community’s values as articulated by the Mayor and Town Council as they represent the will of the people of the Town of Woodside.

The Town’s customized Oath of Office includes a promise to uphold and abide by the tenets of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.
Conflict of Interest

As the Town’s Code of Ethics and Conduct indicates, it is necessary for the Town’s officers to diligently avoid any circumstance in which their personal and public interests or responsibilities could come into conflict, or in which Town officers could be tempted to use their positions for personal gain. The potential for conflicts of interest to occur between the public and personal interests of public officials is a concern that is embodied in State law, as well.

In accordance with State Government Code Section 87200, the Fair Political Practices Act, the members of the Town Council, Planning Commission, and key staff members and consultants must file Statements of Economic Interest upon assumption of office, on an annual basis and when leaving their elected or appointed positions or office. The proper forms are supplied by staff. In these statements, members must disclose all investments, business positions, sources of income, and interests in real property which could be materially affected by the decisions made by their commission. The completed statements are kept on file by the Town Clerk and are available for public inspection.

While the State requirement of filing Statements of Economic Interest does not apply to committee or ASRB members, on July 23, 2002 the Town Council adopted Resolution 2002-6347, which added the members of the ASRB to the Town’s list of officials required to file Statements of Economic Interest with the Town Clerk. The Town Council has the discretion to require other appointed officials to file the Statements when it reviews the Town’s Conflict of Interest Code in every even-numbered calendar year. The spirit of the state law as well as the letter of the Town’s Code of Ethics and Conduct demands that members avoid any conflict between their personal or financial interests and their public duties.

When a member of the Town’s advisory bodies has a financial interest in a matter that comes before the body upon which he or she serves, he or she must recuse him/herself from the body’s discussion of and action upon that matter. The member must announce that he or she has such a conflict and physically leave the meeting room until the body has concluded its action on that matter. The Town Attorney will assist members in identifying what constitutes a “financial interest” under the Fair Political Practices Act.

It is important that Town officers scrupulously conform to all conflict of interest laws because violations will taint the fairness of the democratic process and may also subject the offending official to fines, criminal penalties, and forfeiture of office. If any questions arise in this area for board, commission, or committee members, the Town Attorney will be pleased to discuss them ahead of time to help prevent problems from developing.

Terms of Office

The terms of office of members of boards, commissions and committees end in February. The only exception is the Audit Committee, the terms for which are of an unlimited duration. The specific terms for each board, commission, and committee are included in an earlier section of this handbook in the specific entries for each body. The terms are staggered so that no more than half-plus-one of the seats on any given body are up for appointment at the same time.
Orientation for Members

Shortly after appointment, each new member will be provided with a current copy of “A Handbook for Members of the Planning Commission, the Architectural and Site Review Board and the Citizen Advisory Committees” and will be encouraged to direct any questions to the Town Manager and/or other Town staff. Additionally, the Town Manager, Town Attorney, and other appropriate Town staff will provide periodic training sessions with each of the advisory bodies in order to reacquaint all members with Town goals, the responsibilities of appointment, current issues before the Town, and to highlight new rules, regulations, or laws that may impact the work of the advisory bodies and their individual members.

Limit on Committee Meeting Length

The length of Committee meetings will be limited to two hours. This limit may be extended only by a successful motion of the majority of the members present when additional time is needed because of the complexity of or community interest in an item being considered. Town staff will work with the Committee Chairs to ensure that agendas are not overly ambitious and that the business before the Committee can be addressed within the two-hour limit.

Committee Attendance Confirmation/Quorum Determination

Town staff will send an e-mail to the members of every committee at least seventy-two hours prior to each Committee meeting, seeking confirmation of the members’ attendance. Committee members should respond to this e-mail no later than twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. If a quorum of members confirms attendance within this time period, the meeting will move forward. If not, the meeting will be canceled and members will be so notified. If a member does not reply as to his or her intention within the defined time period, staff will assume the member does not plan to attend.

Meeting Attendance

The Town Council has established formal attendance standards for the members of its own body, and for all of the Town’s citizen advisory bodies. Members of the Planning Commission and the ASRB who do not attend at least 75% of all regular meetings held within a calendar year, or who miss four consecutive regular meetings, and committee members who do not attend at least 60% of all regular meetings held within a calendar year or who miss four consecutive regular meetings, are deemed to have resigned from office unless excused by the Town Council for good cause upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances. The various advisory bodies may not excuse any of their members from attendance. The Town Council’s Committee Appointments Subcommittee will review attendance records once each calendar year to determine the need for removal action. An advisory body may also report an attendance problem to the Town Council for its action. This policy as it applies to the Planning Commission and the ASRB is established in Council Resolution 1994-4936.

Town staff will track the attendance of members of the volunteer advisory committees. When a regular meeting is canceled for lack of a quorum, an absence will be counted for those members who: (1) did not respond to the Town’s meeting confirmation e-mail; (2) responded that they would not attend; or (3) do not show up for a meeting for which the existence of a quorum was assumed.
**Resignation**

If an appointee resigns from office before the end of his or her term, the member should write a letter announcing the resignation and deliver it to the Town Manager or Town Clerk, who will forward copies to the Town Council, and the commission, committee, or board chair.

**Compensation**

Since service on boards, commissions, and committees is purely voluntary, there is no monetary compensation.

**Reimbursement**

In the event that a member purchases an item, with prior approval from the Town Manager, for the benefit of the commission, committee, or board or for a Town sponsored activity or event, reimbursement will be paid upon submission of a receipt to staff for the item.

**Benefits/Insurance/Immunity**

Board, commission, and committee members are covered by Workers' Compensation and, in the event of an accident while serving in an official capacity, the member will be required to file an accident report. Members are also covered under the Town's general liability insurance policy for actions taken in the course and scope of their duties. The Tort Claims Act limits municipal liability. Actions taken by board, committee, or commission members in exercising discretion, or in exercising duties of their positions, are immune from legal suit under this act.

**Travel Expenses**

Any board, commission, or committee member who is authorized to travel outside of the geographic boundaries of Woodside, in the performance of his or her duties, or to attend an authorized meeting or conference which is of benefit to the Town, will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred for transportation, meals, lodging and incidentals. A request for reimbursement should be made to the Town Manager prior to the occurrence of the travel, in order to ensure that budgetary authority exists. It should be noted that partners who wish to accompany these members cannot be covered for any such expenses.

**Authority of Advisory Bodies**

Members of any of the Town's advisory bodies are not authorized to expend public funds, enter into agreements or contracts, employ staff, sign documents on behalf of the Town, or bind the Town in any way. This authority can only be granted by a resolution of the Town Council.
OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Planning Commission, ASRB, and advisory committees do all of their official work in meetings which are open to the public. A detailed set of formal procedures has been established for the conduct of such meetings addressing public business. Formal rules may occasionally appear arcane or inconvenient, but they are necessary to guarantee a fair and democratic process. The rules are designed to ensure Woodside's compliance with State law, to guarantee fair and equal treatment of citizens, to encourage citizen participation in civic affairs, and to foster a productive climate which encourages the communication of constructive ideas.

Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code § 54950 et.seq.)

The Brown Act is a State law, first enacted in 1953, requiring that all local government business be conducted in open and public meetings, with the exception of a limited number of defined subjects that may be discussed in a Closed Session of a local government body. These exceptions generally apply only to the Town Council and not to the appointed advisory bodies. This requirement is based upon the belief that the people must remain informed about the activities of government in order that they may retain control over it. The Brown Act applies to all members of boards, commissions, and committees. Any time in which a majority of the members of a board, commission, or committee meet face-to-face or use intermediaries or technological devices (such as phone, fax, e-mail, text, or letters) to hear, discuss, or deliberate upon any public business, a "meeting" is taking place under the definition in the Brown Act. Such meetings must be open to the public and must be announced at least 72 hours ahead of time for a regular meeting and 24 hours ahead for a special meeting with a posted agenda indicating the time and place of the meeting and describing each item of business which is to be discussed. No action may be taken at any meeting unless a quorum is present. Action may be taken by the body only on items which properly appear on the meeting agenda. Finally, minutes of the proceedings must be taken for entry into the public record.

Copies of the Brown Act are distributed to the chair of each body and are available for examination at Town Hall. All members should be sure to understand this law. Staff will be happy to assist in interpreting its requirements and will provide members with summaries of any changes that the State legislature may make to the provisions of the Brown Act that may impact their advisory body’s or their own activities.

Regular Meeting Procedures

Meetings of the Planning Commission, ASRB, and advisory committees are conducted according to the rules in the parliamentary procedure manual Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except as modified by this handbook, the Brown Act, and the Code of Ethics and Conduct. Parliamentary procedures are intended to help meetings run in a smooth and orderly fashion to facilitate the conduct of business.

Most of the commissions, committees, and boards are scheduled to meet at designated times in Independence Hall. Such meetings are considered regular meetings. At least 72 hours before a regular meeting takes place, an agenda must be posted by the Town Clerk at Roberts Market, the Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Town Hall. The agenda must announce the scheduled time and place of the meeting and provide a brief description (which need not exceed 20 words per item) of each item of business which is to be discussed. Agendas and their contents are discussed in a later section of this handbook.
Meetings are overseen by the chair of the convening body. The chair begins by calling the meeting to order and then guides the meeting though the items on the agenda. The usual order of business after the chair calls the meeting to order and ensures that attendance is noted, is to allow Public Communications on matters not on the agenda, approve the minutes of the previous meeting, and then to take up each item of Old Business, New Business, and Reports from Staff or Subcommittees, as included on the agenda. It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the proceedings of his or her advisory body within the spirit and the letter of the Brown Act. This means that the Chair must ensure that discussion and the adoption of motions and resolutions are limited to items listed on the posted agenda, and the chair must not allow digression to other items. This includes subjects that members of the public may raise during the “Public Communication” period. Members of the public may make comments or ask questions pertaining to items not on the agenda or may suggest new items to be placed on future agendas. The public may also submit written statements or requests to be entered into the record.

If it is known in advance that there is a lack of business for the board, commission, or committee to address, a scheduled meeting may be canceled. A notice shall be posted by the Town Clerk within 24 hours of the decision to cancel the meeting and the door to the meeting room shall be posted with a notice, informing the public that the next scheduled meeting has been canceled due to a lack of business.

**Motions**

A motion is a formal proposal made by a member of an advisory body asking that the body discuss or act on an idea or proposition. Several different kinds of motions exist for different purposes. These motions are detailed in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Motions may only be made in the context of business items that are on the body’s posted agenda.

Motions are usually not made until after the advisory body has: (1) received a report from the staff, a subcommittee of its own body, a member of its body, or a member of the public, as appropriate; (2) allowed an opportunity for members of the advisory body to ask questions; and (3) asked for public comment and input on the subject or issue at hand.

A motion which brings an action before an advisory body is called a main motion. There are four steps through which a main motion is brought before a body:

1. A member asks to be recognized by the chair.

2. Once recognized, the member makes the motion, saying “I move that....” Members should try to avoid including more than one proposal in the same motion, especially when members are likely to disagree about the merits of the proposal. If a member would prefer to see a proposal divided and voted upon separately, the member should ask the chair to divide the motion.

3. Another member must second the motion in order for discussion to be allowed.

4. If the motion is seconded, then the chair asks for discussion.

Once a motion has been brought before the body through the above steps there are three further steps through which the motion is discussed and acted upon:
1. After a motion has been brought before the advisory body and the chair has asked for discussion, he or she will turn to the member who made the motion and grant that member the floor if he or she wants it.

2. When everyone who wishes to speak has done so, the chair will put the question to a vote. When doing so it is very important that the chair restate the motion to assure that the members all clearly understand what they will vote on.

3. After the vote, the chair announces the result by saying either "The motion has carried [or "is adopted"]," or "The motion has failed." To be carried, a vote requires the support of a majority of the members present, excluding those who abstain. Tied motions fail. No proxy or absentee voting is allowed.

**Motion for Adjournment**

When a board, commission, or committee has finished its business, a motion to adjourn is in order. This motion is not debatable; therefore, it is the duty of the chair to see that no important business is overlooked.

**Quorum Requirements**

A quorum must be present in order to conduct any business at a meeting. For the Planning Commission and ASRB, a quorum is present when a majority of the number of potential members is in attendance. For the Advisory Committees, the Council establishes the number of members present required for a quorum. The chair must determine that a quorum is present before business may be undertaken, and the quorum must be maintained throughout the meeting in order to continue to carry out business.

If a member has a conflict of interest with a matter that is before his or her advisory body and has recused him/herself from participation (see “Conflict of Interest” under the “Rules of Office” section of this handbook), that member no longer counts towards a quorum.

If it is known in advance that a quorum cannot be achieved, members and interested parties should be notified. A notice must be posted by the Town Clerk on the door of the meeting room within 24 hours of the cancellation, advising the public that the meeting has been canceled due to a lack of quorum.

**Adjourned Regular Meetings**

If for any reason the business to be considered at a regular meeting cannot be completed, the body may then adjourn to a specified time and location. A notice announcing the adjournment must be posted by the Town Clerk at the standard locations (Roberts Market, Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Town Hall) within 24 hours of adjournment. This type of meeting is referred to as an adjourned regular meeting.

**Special Meetings**

Special meetings are those called by the advisory body in order to consider an important issue that needs to be addressed immediately. Written notice, signed by the Town Clerk, calling the special meeting, and describing the item(s) to be discussed, shall be delivered to the members of the body, and to the public and press, and posted at Roberts Market, the Woodside Library, the U.S. Post Office, and Woodside Town Hall at least 24 hours in advance.
of the convening of the special meeting.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are conducted during meetings for the purpose of soliciting testimony from the general public on issues for which public hearings are required by state law and/or the Municipal Code. These issues typically fall under the purview of the Town Council and Planning Commission and include consideration of such matters as subdivisions, use permits, site development permits, variance applications, and amendments to the zoning code and General Plan.

Official notice of public hearings will be published in the "Mercury News" at least ten days before the hearing. Courtesy notices may be published in "The Almanac" approximately one week before the hearing. Members of the public who wish to submit written statements may do so. Members of the public may also speak during the hearing. However, if there are numerous people who would like to speak who represent the same views, the chair may ask that a spokesperson be designated for the group or require that each speaker's comments be limited to a set amount of time such as three minutes. If a time limit is to be imposed the chair should be sure to announce it before any members of the public have begun speaking.

As the hearing commences, the chair shall open the hearing and explain the hearing procedures. The staff will then present the staff report, followed by commissioner or board member questions relating to that report. The applicant or advocate of the matter is then given the opportunity to make a presentation, followed by the opportunity for any other interested members of the audience to present their cases. After all interested parties have been heard, the hearing will be closed, ending the audience participation. The members may then discuss the proposal and take action on it.

Role of the Chair

The principal qualification to be chair of a board, commission, or committee should be the ability to preside at meetings. This requires tact, courtesy, and familiarity with parliamentary procedures and Town advisory body policies, as outlined in this handbook. The responsibility of the chair of the body is to direct the discussion of and deliberation over the matters at hand. The chair should encourage the input of ideas, clarify ideas, and re-state motions in order that all members understand the item on which they are voting. It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that the body is operating within the confines of all applicable rules and regulations, and to act as the key liaison between the body and the Town Council and Town staff. The chair should ensure that all members of the body have an opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions and should not allow any individual member or members to dominate the proceedings to the detriment of the remaining members or the members of the public.

Since the chair must preside over meetings, he or she must maintain a certain degree of impartiality and be sure to allow all views on an issue to be expressed. However, the chair may also participate in debate, expressing his or her own views, and may make or second motions.

The chairs of each advisory body will be provided with copies of the agendas and minutes of each other board, commission, and committee meeting. The chairs should review these records of the other bodies' work and inform their own members of any items of business pertaining to their board, commission, or committee.
It is also the chair’s responsibility to try to resolve and mediate any conflicts within the committee itself. If conflict cannot be resolved, the chair should approach the Town Council’s appointed Liaison to the body or the Town Manager.

**Role of the Vice Chair**

All of the Town’s advisory bodies shall elect vice chairs at the time elections for chairs are held. The vice chairs act in the absence of the chairs. For all bodies, if neither the chair nor vice-chair is present at a meeting, then the panel should immediately elect a chair pro tem to preside during the current session.

**Rotation of the Chair**

The Town Council has had a longstanding policy of rotating its chair (the Mayor) every year. This provides the Council, as a whole, with a useful and fruitful opportunity to experience a variety of leadership styles and ideas and it provides individual members the chance to gain leadership experience and to broaden their knowledge of Town operations and issues. The Town Council believes that the rotation of the chairs of all standing Town commissions, boards, and committees is an equally positive undertaking and has adopted a policy, through Resolution No. 2002-6352, regarding the rotation of the chairs.

The policy applies primarily to the Town’s standing committees. The ASRB, which elects a chair and vice chair annually, has rotated chairs periodically independent of Town Council direction and the Planning Commission has adopted its own rules for selection of a chair and vice-chair. Its appointments to these posts are for two-year terms, running from April 1st to March 31st. For all standing committees, the election of a chair and a vice chair shall occur at the regular committee meeting held in April of each year. For those committees that do not have a regular meeting date, this election shall occur during the first meeting that occurs after April 1st of each year. The term of the Chair shall be two years, at the end of which the vice chair or other committee member shall be elected chair and a new vice chair elected. In the event that the vice chair is unable to assume the role of the chair and no other committee member is willing or able to do so, the incumbent chair may be elected beyond his or her two-year term on a year-to-year basis until a successor can be elected.

Resolution 2002-6352 also stipulated that for the ASRB and the Planning Commission the chair and vice chair shall be elected for no more than two years within a four-year period.

**Role of the Secretary**

Each committee designates a secretary from among its members. The secretary's responsibility is to prepare a draft agenda, in coordination with the chair, and keep the minutes of each meeting. The Planning Commission and ASRB do not designate secretaries because this function is performed for them by staff.

Secretaries are not necessarily selected for any fixed term, and the responsibility may rotate from member to member at different meetings if the committee so chooses. It is perfectly acceptable for the chair and the secretary to be the same person. However, a secretary must be officially designated for every meeting and a record of his or her identity must be included in the minutes he or she keeps. The secretary is responsible for coordinating with the Town Clerk so that all necessary meeting notices can be posted in a timely manner pursuant to the
Brown Act. The secretary should also deliver draft agendas and minutes to the Town Clerk for distribution.

**Agendas**

Draft agendas are prepared by the secretary of each committee and submitted to the Town Clerk at least two weeks prior to the meeting to which the agenda applies. The contents of the agenda must adhere to the requirements of the Brown Act. Agendas must announce the scheduled time and place of the meeting and provide a brief, but specific, description of each item of business which is to be discussed. Generally, the description of each item of business need not exceed twenty words. This description, however, must clearly convey what the item of business entails. For example, an item of business on an agenda that reads “motorcycle noise” is not sufficient to convey what will be discussed and/or acted upon during the meeting to which the agenda applies. Similarly, an agenda item that reads “Items from the last meeting requiring further discussion” is also inappropriate, unless there is an itemization that follows, which clearly describes each item to be discussed. Further, the potential action that the body will be considering needs to be identified. If action on an item is anticipated, that action should be identified (e.g., “Discussion and Formulation of a Recommendation Regarding Cat Licensing”). Draft agendas should be specific about what the committee will be doing concerning each item. The Town Manager, or designee, will review each agenda prior to its finalization. Staff will attempt to contact committee chairs and/or secretaries to secure information that will clarify or expand upon agenda item descriptions. When such contacts cannot be made in a timely manner, items in question will be removed from the agenda and placed on a subsequent agenda to allow for the needed clarification or expansion.

**Jurisdiction**

When a board, commission, or committee is established by the Town Council, the duties of that body are set forth in the ordinance or resolution that creates it. The body is limited to the consideration of those matters which are specifically assigned to its jurisdiction. In considering the placement of an item on a board, commission, or committee agenda, the members must consider whether or not the matter proposed for placement on the agenda falls within its jurisdiction. If the body finds that the matter is not within its jurisdiction then it must decline to discuss the matter and should refer the interested party to the appropriate board, commission, or committee, or should request authorization from the Town Council to broaden its jurisdiction. The Town Manager’s review of all draft agendas shall include a consideration of whether the items included are within the jurisdiction of the body.

**Minutes of Meetings**

Minutes need to be kept for all meetings. The Planning Commission and Architectural and Site Review Board meetings (as well as those of the Town Council) are audio recorded. Staff produces the written minutes from these audio recordings. Audio recordings of the meetings are kept by the Town staff and must be available for public inspection for at least twenty years, pursuant to the Town’s Records Retention Schedule. The standing and ad hoc committees take simple minutes and, after final approval by the involved committee during a public meeting, staff distributes and files them for the public record at Town Hall. Committee secretaries, including secretaries of those committees that do not meet on a regular basis, should deliver their minutes to the Town Clerk within two weeks after the meeting date for which the minutes were prepared.
Written minutes, upon approval of the commission, committee, or board, constitute the official record of its activities. Minutes include a list of who is present, the times of convening and adjournment, a record of motions made and votes taken, and a description of items discussed. They need not contain a summary of what is said. Additions and corrections to the minutes may only be made in public meetings, with the approval of the body, and not by the private request of individual members.

In keeping with the foregoing, the Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2003-6420 on October 28, 2003, establishing formal “Standards for the Minutes of the Town’s Advisory Committees” that provide the following direction:

1. Minutes shall be kept for all meetings;

2. Minutes shall be simple in form, recording only the most basic information about the proceedings;

3. Minutes shall include:
   a. Date and time of convening.
   b. List of committee members present.
   c. List of committee members absent.
   d. List of other Town officials present, including staff members and those appointed and elected officials who are appearing in their official capacities.
   e. As is applicable for the “Public Communications” section of each meeting agenda, the name (if provided) and subject of each speaker and the committee’s response, if any.
   f. A brief description of each item discussed, including the names of members of the public/audience (if provided) who address the committee on each item and a summary of each speaker’s comments.
   g. A record of each motion made, including names of members making and seconding motion.
   h. A record of the vote taken on each motion.
   i. As is applicable, a record of written communications received by the committee, to include the name of the correspondent and the date and subject of the communication.
   j. The time of adjournment of the meeting.

4. Verbatim recounts of the comments of any committee member or other attendee(s) should not be included.

**Agenda Packets**

For advisory committees, agenda packets detailing the items of business to be discussed and any communications to be presented will be prepared by the Town Clerk, based upon the materials supplied by the chairs and/or secretaries, and delivered to the members of the body prior to each regular or special meeting. In order to be prepared for the meetings, members should read these packets and contact the chair or secretary or the Town Clerk if there are any questions regarding the information presented.

Pursuant to Town Council Resolution No. 2006 - 6577, agenda packets prepared in support of the meetings of the Planning Commission and the Architectural and Site Review Board shall be available for dissemination no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day that is seven calendar days prior to the subject meeting date.
Subcommittees

Subcommittees are formed by majority vote of boards, commissions, or committees for the purpose of addressing issues best considered by a group smaller than the entire body membership. Subcommittee appointments are made by consensus of the establishing body, and must be composed of less than a quorum of that body. Usually subcommittees meet for no longer than six months, by which time their task is complete and they are disbanded.

Subcommittees may meet privately and informally and need not keep minutes, follow agendas, or announce their meetings publicly. However, discussion or presentation of their work to the majority of the panel constitutes a meeting for the transaction of public business and must therefore be announced, agendized, and open.

Annual Reports

Each advisory body will prepare an annual report to the Town Council, highlighting the efforts and accomplishments of the body and delineating the body's objectives for the upcoming year. This report should be submitted in March of each year in order to coincide with the annual process of setting Town-wide objectives for the budget preparation cycle. In order to increase the flow of information and communication between all of the Town's advisory bodies, each body's report will be distributed to each of the other committees, board, and commission.
RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC, TOWN COUNCIL, AND TOWN STAFF

Relations with the Public

It is important for you, the members of the Town’s advisory bodies, to remember that you are agents of the Town when you are acting in your official capacity as a member of the Planning Commission, ASRB, or committee. It is equally as important for you to remember that there is a clear distinction between your official role and your role as a private citizen. This holds true for all elected and appointed Town officials and is at the heart of the Town’s Code of Ethics and Conduct. Each individual member of each of the Town’s appointed bodies should act in a manner that underscores that member’s fiduciary responsibilities to the Town and that makes it consistently clear to the members of the public, no matter what the forum, that no single member of any of the Town’s advisory bodies has any authority independent of a majority of the body on which he or she serves and that, in most cases, the body upon which he or she serves is advisory in nature and has no final decision-making authority. This is in keeping with the longstanding Town policy that a primary role of boards, commissions, and committees is to determine the attitudes of citizens concerning Town programs and to serve as a link among the community, staff, and Council. Members are in a unique position of serving as liaisons between the public and its government officers, helping to reconcile contradictory viewpoints and build consensus around common goals. In so doing, members need to remember their duty to the whole Town, not just to particular groups or interests.

Providing the best possible service to the public, however, involves more than maximizing the quality or wisdom of policy choices. It also involves the policy-making process. This process is critical to outcome. Members of the public who come before the Town’s advisory bodies not only wish to have their specific concerns addressed and points of view heard, they also have a reasonable expectation that the advisory body will listen to their comments and respect their input. Therefore, members should always clearly demonstrate their respect for members of the public, both in word and in deed. This means keeping meetings flowing smoothly and efficiently to avoid wasting people’s time, giving members of the public feedback on their ideas, treating all sides fairly, not interrupting speakers unless they are out of order, not being afraid to admit that there is something to learn from the public, and always being as encouraging and constructive as possible. Public service is the first duty of all the members of the Town’s volunteer bodies, and the public is best served when it is treated well.

Relations with the Town Council

The primary responsibility of boards, commissions, and committees is to make recommendations to the Town Council. Even though these recommendations may not always be followed, the Council will always benefit from the advice, and a rejection in no way implies a lack of confidence or a disinterest in the advisory body’s decisions.

Members of boards, commissions, and committees should review Town policies related to programs under their jurisdiction and make recommendations through formal committee action for changes to the Council. However, all bodies must adhere to the policies approved by the Council, as expressed in the General Plan, the Municipal Code, and other official documents.

When a board, commission, or committee reaches conclusions which warrant report to the Council or wishes to ask questions or make requests of the Council or staff, the body should
do so in writing. Such written communications should be sent to the Town Manager, who will review all requests and recommendations and forward those matters within its jurisdiction, as appropriate, to staff or to the Town Council. The Town Manager will provide a written report to the body that generated the communication, indicating disposition and status as appropriate. An official report of a body's activities, findings, or recommendations may only be made by a majority vote at a proper meeting and should include a description of relevant information which was obtained, how that information was gathered and interpreted, and what recommendations, if any, were agreed to.

When reports are made to the Town Council, one of the members of the reporting body (typically the chair) should attend the Council meeting to present the report. When a member of an advisory body addresses the Council at a public meeting, it should be made clear whether he or she is speaking as a member of the advisory body or as an individual citizen.

To help coordinate the activities of the ASRB and advisory committees with those of the Town Council, the Council may appoint liaisons from among its members to facilitate communications between the Council and the bodies. One liaison will be assigned to each body, and will be encouraged to attend the body’s meetings and help its members in any way possible.

Any letters from boards, commissions, or committees to be addressed to the public or other agencies and concerning official positions being taken must first be forwarded to the Town Council for approval before being mailed. Although it is possible that board, commission, or committee members may disagree with the Town Council from time to time, once the Council has established its position, the actions of the boards, commissions and committees shall not, in any way, be contrary to the policies and programs adopted by the Council.

**Relations with Staff**

The Town staff, with the exception of the Town Attorney, works under the direction of the Town Manager. It is not appropriate for board, commission, or committee members to direct staff or to become involved in the administrative or operational concerns of the Town departments. However, the staff will be happy to answer questions and provide whatever assistance they can when authorized to do so by the Town Manager.

The Town Council hopes and expects that a mutually respectful and professional relationship will be maintained between the staff and the board, commission, and committees. In the event that a conflict does arise, the problem should be brought to the attention of the chair, who will in turn bring the matter to the attention of the Town Manager.

**CONCLUSION**

On behalf of all the residents of the Town of Woodside, the Town Council thanks you for devoting your time and effort to become actively involved in your community. The Town Council and staff sincerely hope that you will enjoy your participation in the governing process as a member of the Council's advisory bodies, and that you will feel free to call upon any of the Town's representatives for advice, background information, or assistance.

Congratulations on your appointment!