

# GOVERNANCE POLICY

The function of the policy governance branch is defined in the policies they approve (i.e. by-laws). Customarily these functions include:

- Acting as a governing body of the Housing Commission
- Providing leadership
- Ensuring fairness in the administration of the Commission's policy (oversight)
- Accept limitations and responsibilities established by federal, state, and local law
- Act as an advocate for the agency within the community
- Act as an advocate for low and moderate income affordable housing within the community
- Guarantee proper administration of the agency through employing a competent Executive Director
- Practice fiscal responsibility
- Assure the agency business is conducted with the highest possible ethical standard
- Develop policies that act in the best interest of the commission and the residents

The board will govern with an emphasis on:

- a) Outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation;
- b) Strategic leadership more than administrative detail;
- c) Clear distinction of board and chief executive roles;
- d) Collective rather than individual decisions;
- e) Future rather than past or present; and
- f) Proactivity rather than reactivity

The Board will:

1. Deliberate in many voices, but govern in one.
2. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The board will use the expertise of individual board members to enhance the ability of the board as a body, rather than to substitute the individual judgments of the board's values.
3. Direct, control, and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the board's values and perspectives. The board's major focus

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will be on the intended long term impacts outside the operating organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

4. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policy making principles, respect of roles and ensuring the continuity of governance capability. Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board's governance process and periodic board discussion of process improvement. The board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.
5. Monitor and discuss the board's process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Staff Linkage categories.

The public and residents are represented by the Allen Park Housing Commission acting as a body. Consequently, the Allen Park Housing Commission is answerable to the commission as a body not to individual board members. The Commission fails to be accountable to the public and residents if it allows any breach in this principle. Therefore, the individual commissioners are committed to proper use of their authority and to decorum consistent with maintaining the integrity and discipline of the commission leadership.

1. While the commission as a body cannot exercise authority over individual members, the commission is responsible for the organization's exposure to members acting as individuals. To that end, the commission can exercise authority over the Executive Director's response to individual members and can enumerate its expectations for individual member discipline.
  - A. While the commission expects individual members to be given common courtesy, it does not require the Executive Director and staff to heed any individual member's opinions or instructions.
  - B. Regard less of any individual member's dissent from a decision of the commission, he or she must support that the Executive Director is bound by directions given by the commission as a whole.
2. Individual commissioners may not attempt to exercise authority over the organization unless explicitly set forth in Allen Park Housing Commission Policies.
  - A. Individual members' interaction with the Executive Director or staff must recognize that individual members have no authority over staff or to insert themselves in staff operations. (Nothing contained in Section 2a is intended to

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restrict or discourage normal and open communication between the commission, staff, residents and community).

- i. No commissioner can place himself or herself between staff members in their disputes or negotiations.
  - ii. No commissioner can serve on staff committees, engage in solving staff problems, or interpret anything to staff.
- B. Although all commissioners are obligated to register differences of opinion on board issues at the board level as passionately as desired, individual members may not direct their differences of opinion to staff in a manner which would create dissension polarization in the organization or undermine a decision of the commissions' majority.
- C. Commissioners' interaction with public, press, or other entities must recognize that individuals have no authority to speak for the Allen Park Housing Commission unless specifically authorized by the Commission.
- D. Commissioners will not individually render judgments of Executive Director of staff performance apart from compliance with Allen Park Housing Commission policies as monitored by the commissioners as a body.