

Dear Committee Chairs,

The Marco Island committees play an important role in the governance of the island. The advice and recommendations we receive from the various committees is highly valued by the City Council, because the work the committees do provides great background information for the Council to make informed decisions.

Recently questions have been raised about the role of the committees and the responsibilities of the committee chairs, so I have taken this opportunity to remind all of us about the division of responsibilities and the decorum required by the Committee Handbook.

The committees, while very important, play an advisory role for the City Council. As the handbook points out, the City Council may not always follow the recommendation provided by the committees. The committee functions are outlined in Section 2-210 in the committee handbook and I encourage you to review that section. Section 3-301 of the handbook describes the conduct of members during the meetings. All committee members should treat everyone attending the meeting with courtesy and respect. There have been some instances lately where the staff liaison has been disrespected and some members of the public have not been treated with the proper decorum. That sort of behavior cannot be tolerated, and violations could result in expulsion from the committee.

There also has been some confusion as to the role of committee chairs. Section 5-501 describes the role of the chair. It is critical for the committee chair to “facilitate the process that results in good decisions”. The chair should keep the meeting “focused and remain in a neutral roll until other members have expressed themselves”. Section 7-704 refers to the construction of the agenda. “The staff liaison, in consultation with the chair, shall be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for meetings”. Any member of the committee may request that an agenda item be added to a future agenda.

*Above all, treat everyone at the committee meetings with courtesy and respect. Thanks again for your service to the citizens of Marco Island.*

*Regards,*

*Erik Brechnitz*