

MARIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGENCY

MTA MEETING PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

A. The Board of Directors meets to achieve the following policy objectives:

- 1) “Assure that cable communications provide and are encouraged to provide the widest possible diversity of information sources and services to the public.” (Title VI, Section 601(4) of the Cable Communications Act of 1996).
- 2) Through judicial and legislative mechanisms, protect and defend the rights of local government to control the public rights of way and the local franchise.
- 3) Promote and facilitate the exchange of information regarding local government issues as related to telecommunications.
- 4) Promote and facilitate the exchange of a diversity of ideas within the Marin community.
- 5) Utilize the media made available to the MTA to assist member agencies and schools to advance intergovernmental cooperation, operational efficiencies and improved customer service.
- 6) Exercise the authorities granted to the MTA by law and agreement to deliver broad and diverse cable programming, with high levels of customer cable service; and to insure the basic service tier rates are in accordance with Federal law, and including but not limited to, low income discounts.
- 7) Promote competition for the use of public rights-of-way for cable TV and data services.
- 8) Obtain fair compensation for private business use of public rights-of-way.
- 9) Encourage the widespread deployment of reasonably priced high-speed Internet and data transmission infrastructure.
- 10) Support and defend open and unrestricted Internet access while keeping franchise control over video and network television streaming distributed over this access.
- 11) Establish and maintain media production facilities for the production of public, education and local governmental programming.

B. Attendance

- 1) Members are to contact their alternate if they cannot attend a meeting
- 2) In the event the member and alternate cannot attend a meeting, the member is to contact the Executive Officer at least 24-hours in advance of the meeting.

C. Agendas and Reports

- 1) All members and alternates should receive a hard copy of the meeting agenda with all the packet materials.

- 2) All members and alternates should receive an electronic copy of the meeting agenda with all associated materials through email.
- 3) Members are encouraged to ask questions of staff before the meeting so that staff can be prepared to respond to your questions at the meeting.
- 4) Members of the Board of Directors may request that matters be placed on the agenda for the Board of Directors' consideration. All members have an equal right to have an issue heard before the full Board.
- 5) Members should request in writing to have an item be placed on the MTA agenda. This request can be emailed, faxed or mailed to the Executive Committee and Staff, or can be presented in writing during director comments at the regularly scheduled MTA meeting. In either case, an outline of the issue, the name of the requestor and importance or urgency of the issue should be provided.
- 6) The Executive Committee shall determine when the matter shall appear on the agenda and instruct the Executive Officer accordingly. The Executive Committee and staff will position the items on the agenda in order of urgency and priority within the context of regular MTA business.
- 7) The name of the requestor of the new business should be added to the agenda item along with the corresponding materials. The materials may include documents requested of staff to help clarify the issue to be considered.
- 8) New issues will be placed on the agenda under new business. Old business will precede non-urgent new business on the agenda. Urgent items can be considered as needed and as indicated by timing constraints of when the issue needs to be resolved.

D. Votes

The MTA will attempt to complete all business within the time prescribed in the meeting notice. However if the agenda has not been completed, the board can continue the meeting as long as a quorum is present. In the event all business is not completed, incomplete items shall become old business at the subsequent meeting.

E. Decorum

- 1) No personal verbal attacks on citizens, staff or fellow Board members will be tolerated. The Chair will focus the meeting on issues, not personalities.

F. Minutes

- 1) Board minutes are intended as a summary of discussion and a record of actions, not verbatim statements. In the case of split votes, members should be identified by their votes. An audio recording of the meeting shall be retained and be available to the public, subject to a fee that covers reproduction costs.

G. Staff and Committee Relationships

1) Relationship to Board Staff

- a) Individual Board member issues go to the Executive Committee. At the minimum, the Executive Committee is the Chair and Vice Chair of the MTA.

2) Relationship to Advisory Committees

- a) On major policy issues, the Board holds work sessions tailored to the issue(s) with the Advisory Committee e.g. MAAC to ensure there is adequate dissemination of information and input before an issue direction is pursued by the full Board.
- b) Individual Board members may attend Committee meetings. Board member should let the Chair of the Committee know he or she is an observer in order to not violate the Brown Act.

H. Relationship to the Press

- 1) Press Liaison. If members and staff of the MTA provide information to members of the press, they should differentiate between personal opinion and MTA policy. When in doubt refer the media representative to the Chair.
- 2) Opinion Pieces. No opinion pieces may be written by an individual Board member that purports to reflect the majority opinion of the Board without first obtaining Board consensus and review.

I. Email Policy for Board Members

- 1) In order to avoid violating the Brown Act:
 - (a) Do not communicate your position on a matter pending before the Board to a quorum of the Board.
 - (b) If emailing a quorum of the Board, do so only to provide information, and do not solicit a response. Email between MTA members and staff should be used to share information only.
 - (c) When replying to an email from another Board member, reply only to the sender.
- 2) Email may be discoverable by means of a public records act request or by subpoena; caution with emails is desirable.
- 3) Avoid making derogatory personal comments using email.
- 4) Use of third party contact lists should not be used without the expressed permission of the owner of that information.
- 5) When you reply to any email, assume that your reply may be transmitted to any person with an Internet connection.

ADOPTED MAY 11, 2005