

Appendix B

Role of Chair

The position of chair is the single most important role in council meetings. The chair is in the prime position of being able to affect the direction of any meeting. The chair is responsible for keeping the meeting on course by ensuring the agenda is followed with only relevant discussion being permitted. The chair essentially has four major roles to play at any meeting:

1. **Be fully informed on each item to determine what the objective is.**
An effective chair:
 - Sets aside the time to review each agenda item with the person responsible for bringing it forward.
 - Must know why council is dealing with an item and what action is required.
 - Must be generally aware of all the various alternatives.
 - Must be able to guide council members towards their objectives.

2. **Ability to encourage the involvement of each council member in discussions to ensure all relevant points are heard.**
Encouraging discussion, without allowing it to drift, entails a fairly high degree of control by the chair. Individuals should not be allowed to dominate the discussion. The chair **should not** be the main spokesperson on the agenda items, but to elicit comments from council members and if possible, arrive at a generally agreed upon course of action.

3. **Ability to determine various alternatives.**
The chair must be able to take a wider view of the current issues and to point out the various options available to council.

4. **Capable of summarizing the main points and bringing the item to a decision.**
The chair serves in a directing capacity; to draw out the main points, summarize them and have a motion made on the item.