

The Manzanita Minute

CITY OF MANZANITA NEWSLETTER



Happy New Year Manzanita!

The focus of this Manzanita Minute is how to get involved in your local government.

You can participate directly in decision making through several channels, depending on what you're interested in. In terms of formal committees and decision-making bodies there is the City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Budget Committee. This two part series begins with how you can participate in City Council meetings. The next Manzanita Minute will focus on how to participate in Planning Commission and the Budget Committee meetings so stay tuned!

So, how do you participate in City Council meetings to learn what your local government is up to and how can you make sure your voice is heard if you have something to say?

Council / Manager form of Government

There are all kinds of ways to engage and participate in your local government. First thing to know is what kind of local government you have. The City of Manzanita is a Council/Manager form of government. That means that the five members of Council, including the Mayor, all have an equal vote and work together to establish policy for the city. The City Manager serves as the chief policy advisor to the Council and is responsible for implementing policy and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the city.



City Council Meetings

There are a number of ways to stay on top of what is happening at the City Council level, and what has happened in the past. The best way to stay informed is to track City Council meetings. Currently these are held on the first Wednesday after the first Monday of every month. There is a work session that starts at 3pm and the Regular Session starts at 6:00 pm. Agendas for these meetings are published one week in advance on the City's Website and can be found by clicking on the link on the city calendar <https://ci.manzanita.or.us/calendar/> or going to the City Council webpage at <https://ci.manzanita.or.us/city-council/>. The agendas include a link for you to use to join the Zoom meeting.

What are City Council Meetings all about and what is the difference between a Work Session and a Regular Session meeting?

This is where policy for the city is discussed and ultimately where decisions get made. One thing to note is that your elected representatives can't discuss policy with more than one other elected representative unless it's in a public meeting. This ensures that decisions impacting the community are discussed openly and in front of the community. Therefore, Councilors and the Mayor can only talk about policy with each other when it's being discussed in a public meeting. But you can talk to your elected officials anytime about things you care about. There are currently two types of City Council meetings that the public can attend. A Work Session, and a Regular Session. A work session is where Council engages in a dialogue around specific policy, programs or projects. It's the prep work that takes place in advance of a policy decision. Once the Council is satisfied that their questions have been answered, and that there is enough information to decide the issue it will move to the Regular Session.

The Regular Session is the council's business meeting. This is where decisions are made, and the regular business of the council takes place. This includes such things as approval of contracts, adoption of Resolutions and Ordinances and other decisions of the City Council requiring a vote.

2023

City Council Meetings

Work Sessions begin at 3pm
Regular Sessions begin at 6pm

January 4, 2023
February 8, 2023
March 8, 2023
April 5, 2023
May 3, 2023
June 7, 2023
July 5, 2023
August 9, 2023
September 6, 2023
October 4, 2023
November 8, 2023
December 6, 2023



What Information is there available to me to stay informed?

The City Council webpage also includes all the materials for the Council meetings. Scroll down and you will find the last 9 months of meetings including an audio recording and the materials presented at previous meetings. The packets for the meetings are also posted here. The packet is posted by 5PM the Friday before the meeting and includes the materials Councilors receive. You can also watch previous meetings on the City's YouTube page here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cityofmanzanitaoregon>

How to participate in City Council Meetings

Written comment

You can always send an email to staff about anything. If you want your comments shared with the City Council and it is not on the agenda just send an email to cityhall@ci.manzanita.or.us and let us know you want Council to hear what you have to say. Your email will be sent to the Council, but if it's not on the agenda it won't be included in the packet.

If you have a comment about something that is on the current agenda, you can also send it to cityhall@ci.manzanita.or.us and it will be sent to all Councilors and included in the final packet (which is posted after the meeting.)

In person comments

You can also attend a City Council meeting in person to provide your comments. Currently these meetings are held via Zoom, and while that could change for meetings requiring public comment a virtual option will always be available. The Audience Participation portion of the agenda, which is at the beginning of the regular session meeting is where the public is invited to provide feedback to the council. You will be provided with up to three minutes to say whatever is on your mind on topics not on the agenda. To participate in the Audience Participation portion of the agenda you will need to log into the Zoom meeting and raise your hand during the time dedicated for Audience Participation. If we move to in person meetings you will be asked to submit a comment request form to the city manager to speak during this time.



In addition to the Audience participation portion of the agenda, there are also opportunities to participate on topics that require a vote. The City Council has a set of Rules of Procedure which can be found here: <https://ci.manzanita.or.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Procedures-for-Council-Meetings-adopted-040319.pdf>

These rules outline how meetings are structured and is a good resource to be familiar with. In terms of participation at the Regular Session meetings Chapter Section 3 and is describes this process as follows:

- A. Public Comment. The public shall be entitled to comment on all matters before the Council that require a vote.
- B. Public comment shall occur after the matter up for vote has been presented by city staff and before the Council takes any formal action on the matter.
- C. Each member of the public is entitled to comment on the matter before the Council for five minutes.
- D. Public comment is a time for comment, it is not a time for debate, nor is it a time for members of the public to ask questions of and receives answers from the Council or city staff.
- E. Each person desiring to give public comments shall provide the Council with his or her name and address prior to giving comment. This information shall be used to insure the minutes of the meeting properly reflect those persons who provided public comment.

Not all meetings include an option for public comment, but the lines of communication are always open. You can submit public comment to the city at cityhall@ci.manzanita.or.us. And even if there isn't a public comment option there is a lot to be gained by listening in. Below are some additional meetings happening in January. Some will take comment, others will not.

January 6th, 2023 from 9-2pm - Council Retreat to discuss Goals. No public comment will be taken but there will be an option to listen in.

January 11th, 2023 at 2pm- City Council meeting regarding the City Hall Project and Short Term Rentals. No public comment will be taken but there will be an option to listen in.

January 18th, 2023 at 5pm-6:30pm Public Meeting at the Pine Grove regarding the City Hall Project, Public Comment will be accepted and encouraged.

January 24th, 2023 10am via Zoom, Quarterly Budget Committee Meeting

January 28th, 2023 Joint Planning Commission /City Council training Land Use 101 – this will be live streamed.

Participation leads to better outcomes

Knowing how to participate is critical for the democratic process to succeed. If you care about something, then it's your responsibility to engage and reach out to your elected officials, talk to staff and show up to the meetings and provide your feedback on the issues you care about. Public policy is so much more effective when it is based on inclusive and robust community engagement. You have the tools to participate so I do hope we hear from you as we move forward into the new year. We have so much to accomplish and so much opportunity before us to collaborate and work toward a more livable Manzanita. I have a great deal of optimism that we will be wildly successful and I look forward to continuing to work with you, and our new council to achieve whatever goals we set our minds to.

Best wishes to you all for a healthy, happy and fulfilling New Year.

Leila Aman
City Manager