

For several months the ANC has been engaged in conversations surrounding “community engagement” and what strategic steps we can take as a Commission to fully engage our community. ANC 3/4G believes community engagement is a way to help our Commission identify and understand community priorities, ways the community views a particular problem or issue, and different alternatives/solutions.

As a first step in this process, in executive session on April 19th the ANC agreed to redesign regular Commission meetings to foster greater community engagement and meeting efficiency. Thus, effective May 8, 2023, Commission meetings will include the following new procedures:

- Regular Commission meetings will be in person at the Chevy Chase Community Center with a Zoom component – a hybrid format.
- Meetings will observe an 1 hour, 45 minute time limit in keeping with a reasonable citizen time commitment and Community Center scheduling requirements.
- ANC 3/4G community-related agenda items will now be placed first on the agenda.
- Currently, when discussing agenda items ANC 3/4G allows Commissioners the first opportunity to express their views on the topic. ANC 3/4G is in agreement that residents will now have the first opportunity to speak on agenda items, followed by Commissioner briefs.
- A new, 15-minute block of unstructured time for resident comments will be incorporated into every regular Commission meeting – for new business other than agenda items.
- Commissioner briefs on agenda items will be kept to three-minutes with a two-minute follow-up, as needed.
- Resident briefs on agenda items (i.e., scheduled contributions by residents as part of the agenda) will be given the same time as Commissioners: three minutes with a two-minute follow-up.
- Ad hoc comments by residents in response to agenda items and during the 15-minute open session will be kept to one minute with a one-minute follow-up, as needed.
- Commissioner introductions and community/agency announcements will be abbreviated to one-minute each.
- Routine Business items that have the unanimous approval of the Commission will be moved to a new “Consent Agenda.” The following types of items are sometimes included in the consent portion of meeting agendas: Topics of a routine/recurring nature; procedural decisions; Non-controversial issues that do not require debate or deliberation; Items previously discussed for which the Commission has come to a consensus, but that still need an official vote. The following items should be considered for consent items: The previous meetings’ minutes; Financial reports or any other reports that are informational only and that do not require debate; and Resolutions that do not require debate, like ceremonial resolutions.

- Task Force/Committee Reports should be limited to two-minutes each. If a Task Force is submitting recommendations to the Commission or has any report that may extend beyond two-minutes, the recommendation and report shall be submitted to the full Commission 7 days in advance of the ANC meeting it is to be discussed.
- These changes are subject to Robert's Rules of Orders.

The Commission sees these measures as a first step and agreed to have a series of community discussions to explore additional feedback on enhancing engagement. This includes looking at ways to improve our outreach to community members to make sure we're sharing information on important meetings and events, and strengthening our collaboration efforts to seek information with the intent to incorporate community feedback in our decision making process. The Commission also reiterated its continued commitment to schedule ad hoc, single-issue meetings to address key community concerns in depth with substantial citizen input. In terms of communications, the ANC will be posting community updates and news on our ANC website and other social media channels and working to build out our mailing list to directly contact residents and distribute our newsletter.

The Commission appreciates the many suggestions thus far from ANC 3/4G residents on how to improve engagement and looks forward to holding additional discussions and taking further steps as recommended by the community.

Sincerely,

Lisa R. Gore
Chair, ANC 3/4G