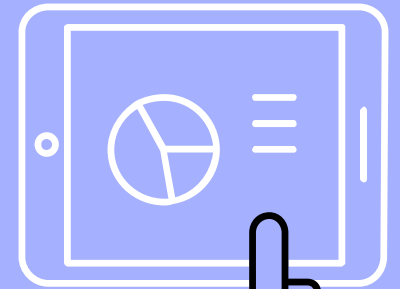
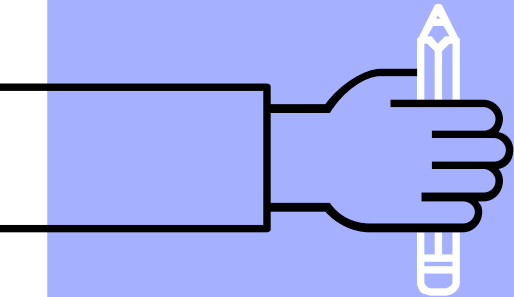
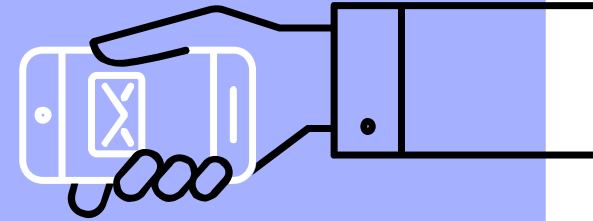
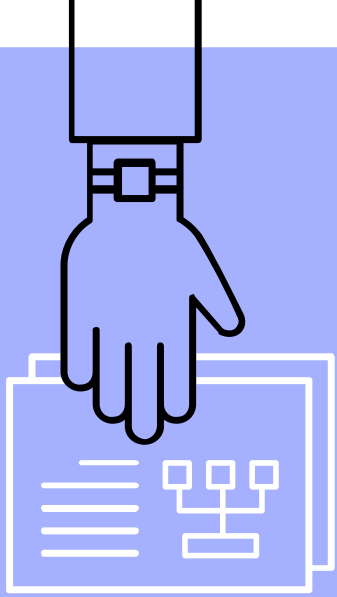


# MEETING DECORUM

MODERATING MEETING  
DISRUPTIONS



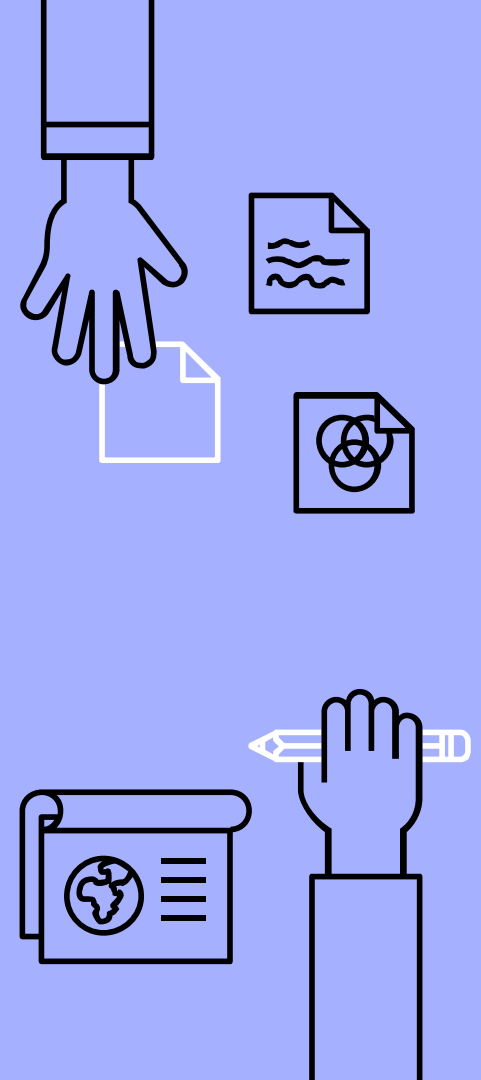
# COMMISSION MEETINGS AND ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS

- ▶ Open to the Public
- ▶ Public Comment
- ▶ In Person
- ▶ Zoom Telecommunications

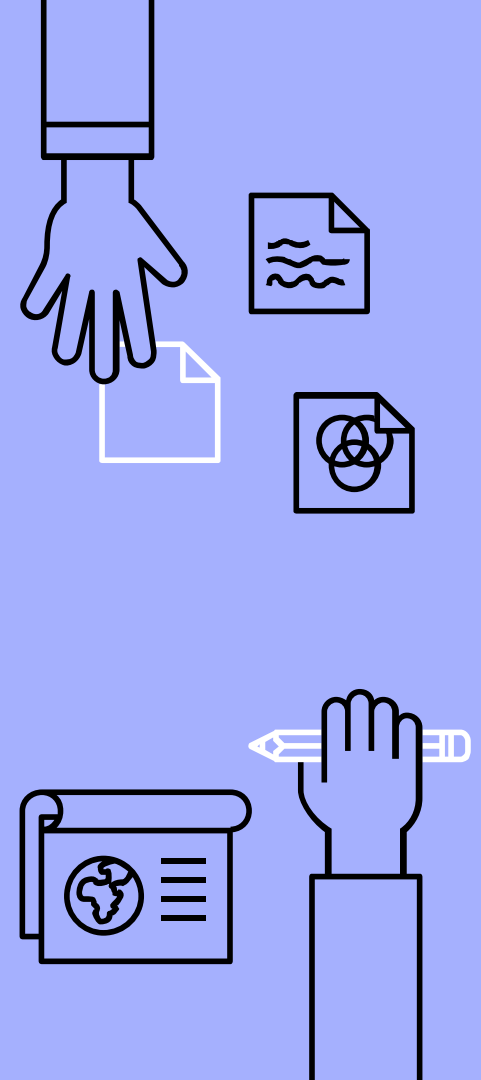


# Definitions

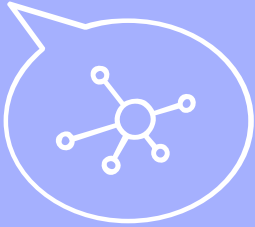
- ▶ **“Disruptive conduct”** includes addressing the commission or board without first being recognized; not addressing the subject before the board; repetitiously addressing the same subject, shouting at or threatening the members of the commission or board in a manner which makes it difficult or impossible to maintain decorum, or which places the members of the board in fear for their lives or safety or safety of other persons in attendance of the meeting; failing to relinquish the podium when requested to do so, or otherwise preventing the meeting from continuing in an orderly manner.
- ▶ **“Sergeant at Arms”** for a public meeting is an official of a legislative assembly whose duty includes maintaining order and security.



- ▶ **“Willful disruption”** of a public meeting shall mean persistent disruptive conduct, after a verbal warning has been issued by the presiding officer; or conduct which is violent and which immediately jeopardizes the public health and safety.
- ▶ **“Civility”** is caring about one's identity, needs and beliefs without degrading someone else's in the process. Civility is more than merely being polite. Civility requires staying "present" even with those persons with whom we have deep-rooted and perhaps strong disagreements. It is about constantly being open to hear, learn, teach and change. It seeks common ground as a beginning point for dialogue. It is patience, grace, and strength of character. Civility is practiced in our City Hall.



“





## BALANCING THE FIRST AMENDMENT AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

When “public comment” is offered during an open meeting, a citizen may exercise their First Amendment rights. The government may not silence speakers on the basis of their viewpoint or the content of their speech.



# Public Comment & Motions

- ▶ **Prior** to a Motion, and at the **discretion** of the Chair, public comments **may** be heard for discussion purposes. (Not necessary)

## *AND AGAIN...*

- ▶ Before Motion vote is called, Public Comment **must** be offered.
- ▶ Pros & Cons
  - input prior to motion
  - prolonged meetings
  - increased frustration; person not to speak twice on same topic.

Robert's Rules  
of Order

“I move that...”

“I propose that...”

“Second”

Parliamentary  
Procedure

# Public Comment Guidelines

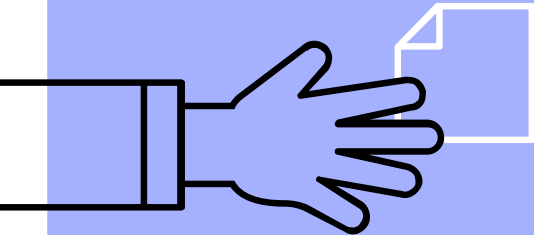
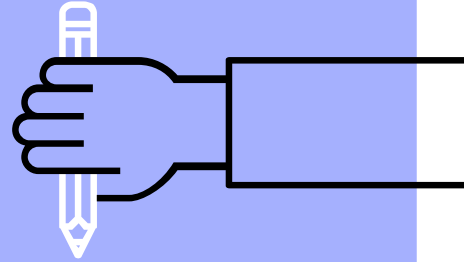
- ▶ Be consistent.
- ▶ Keep public comment to the 3-minute maximum for all.
- ▶ Comments only; this is not a time to debate or participate in a question and answer exchange.





# HOW TO HANDLE MEETING DISRUPTIONS

Let's start with "In Person"



# DISRUPTION OCCURS, NOW WHAT?

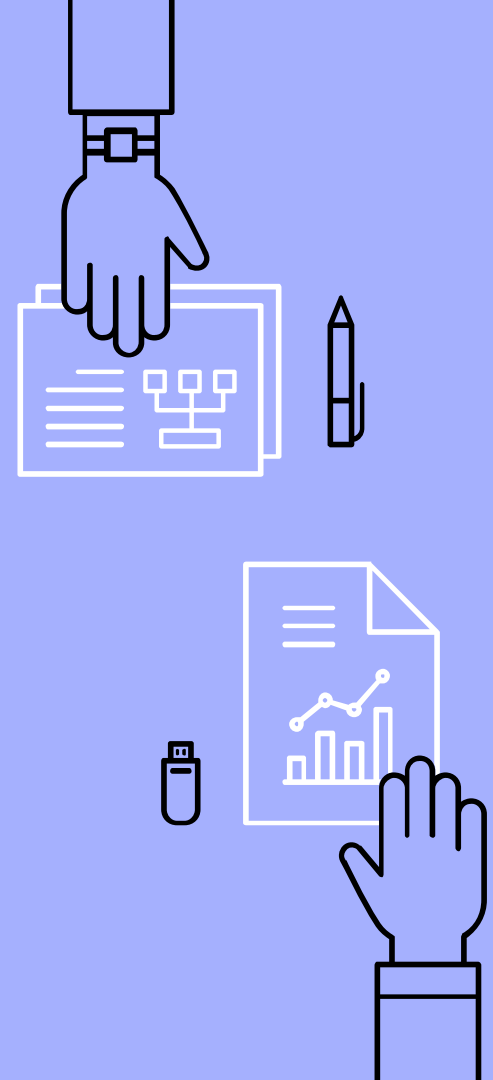
- ▶ Above all – keep your **cool!**
- ▶ Chair to immediately **STOP** the meeting by calling a brief **recess**. A recess will provide you time to gather your thoughts.
- ▶ Following the recess, Chair must immediately **address the situation** among fellow board members and the audience.
- ▶ **Apologize** for the disruption/offensiveness.  
*“On behalf of the City of Stuart/Board, we are sorry for the disruption...”*



# IF BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, OR THREATENING ACTION OCCURS

- ▶ Politely remind the person of the **civility policy** and ask them to save their comments until the **end** of meeting.
- ▶ Sergeant of Arms may **escort** the person out.
- ▶ Call **authorities**.
- ▶ Last resort – **suspend** the meeting.

ACTIVE THREAT, **CALL 911**



# Behaviors to Actions

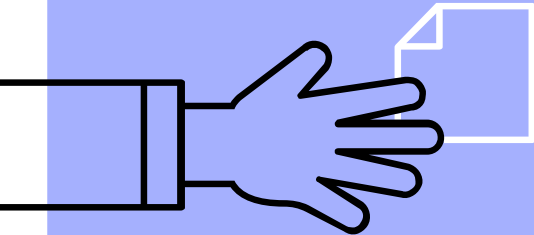
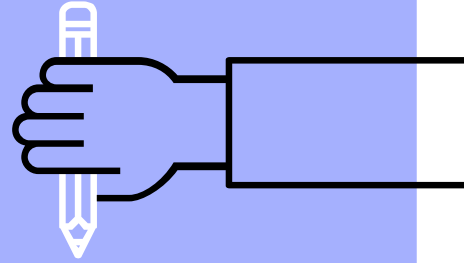
BEHAVIOR	Disruptive ▶ Bullying, Intimidation ▶ Losing Composure, Angry ▶ Threatening ▶ An Active Threat!
RISK LEVEL	SAFE, BUT DISRUPTIVE SAFETY MAY BE AT RISK SAFETY <u>IS</u> AT RISK!
ACTION	MTG FACILITATION CALL NON-EMERGENCY NO. CALL 911, END MTG RESPOND



*Reference: Making a Safe Space: Spectrum of Disruption & Incivility, Washington County*

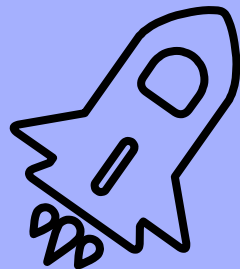
# HOW TO HANDLE MEETING DISRUPTIONS

*Let's Zoom!*



# Zoom

- ▶ Keep your **cool**!
- ▶ Immediately **STOP** the meeting by calling a brief **recess**. A recess will provide you time to gather your thoughts.



# ZOOM DISRUPTION

- ▶ Following the recess, Chair must immediately **address the situation** among fellow board members and the audience.
- ▶ **Apologize** for the disruption or any offensive behavior/comments.
- ▶ Remind audience of the **open government** meetings and that people are **not restricted** from logging into the meeting via ZOOM.

Suggested statement: *“On behalf of the City of Stuart Commission/Board, we are sorry for the disruption (name the incident that occurred).”*



# BE PREPARED

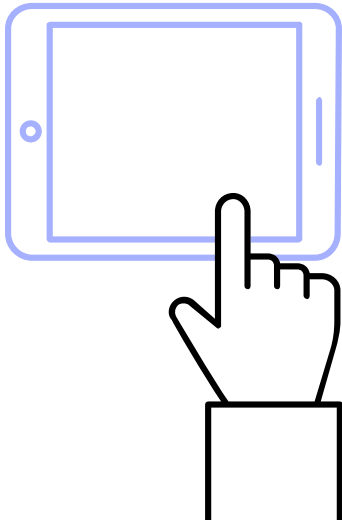
A MEETING  
DISRUPTION  
CAN HAPPEN  
AT ANY TIME





## Zoom Telecommunications

The City of Stuart is happy to offer Zoom Telecommunications as an additional resource to increase government transparency and convenience for its residents. Zoom Public Meeting links are available on meeting agendas and the City's website at [www.CityofStuart.us](http://www.CityofStuart.us)



# REFERENCES

- ▶ Quality Cities Publication, Moderating Public Comment by Scott C. Paine
- ▶ Disruption of Public Meetings, Highland, CA
- ▶ Making a Safe Space: Spectrum of Disruption & Incivility, Washington County
- ▶ Freedom Forum Institute

