

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF OPEN ROLL TO RECORD VOTES

Background

The Board's goal is to ensure that all members have the benefit of hearing a full debate on motions, including an opportunity to hear public comment, before voting. When meetings exceed the estimated time, or when a member has to leave a meeting after a motion has been made, however, it may be appropriate to open the roll to permit a member to cast a vote on a pending motion before the debate has concluded. If a member does not feel that he or she has sufficient information based on the discussion up to that point in time, the member may abstain. If, on the other hand, a member determines that he or she has sufficient information to make an informed judgment, the member should be permitted to vote in favor of, or against, the motion. Although it is common practice by the Legislature and some boards to permit members to record votes before the debate has concluded and to leave the roll open after the debate has concluded, this Board has operated under a more conservative policy. The purpose of these guidelines is to clarify that policy. The guidelines set forth below would limit the use of this procedure to specified circumstances.

Guidelines for Use of Open Roll

Provided that five or fewer members have a need to place their vote before the debate has concluded and provided that the Board has taken a sampling of public comment both for and against the motion at the instant meeting or at an earlier meeting, the Chair may open the roll to record the votes of members who have to leave a meeting under one or more of the following circumstances:

1. The Board has had a prior discussion regarding the matter under consideration and has had an opportunity to review written materials in advance of the meeting; or
2. It is critical to the agency's mission for the Board to take action on the matter at the meeting and there will be another opportunity for the Board to revisit the matter in the future.

When the roll has been opened before debate has been completed, the Board shall take additional public comment before the roll call vote is concluded.