

ARTICLE IV – CAUCUSES

Added 11/3/98

4.0

Preamble

The word “caucus” may derive from an Algonquin Indian term describing their advisory form of representative democracy. In the Pitkin County experience, the word connotes representative democracy at the most local level where policies are formulated and recommended by the people whom they most affect. Once formulated at the local caucus level, these policies provide elected and appointed county officials with recommendations to enact just laws and policies.

4.1

Establishment of Caucuses: Initial Meeting

- 4.1.1 A caucus may be established by any qualified elector who calls a meeting at a convenient time and place within the proposed caucus area. An information campaign shall be conducted to ensure that all qualified electors and non-resident real property owners in the proposed caucus area know of the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting.
- 4.1.2 At the initial meeting it shall be decided by majority vote of the qualified electors (and non-resident real property owners) in attendance whether a caucus should be formed.
- 4.1.3 Each caucus shall adopt its own operating procedures and by-laws within the scope of this Article.

4.2

Recognition of Caucuses

The Board, after satisfying itself that the provisions of this Article have been met, shall recognize the caucus and establish the caucus area by resolution.

4.3

Composition

A recognized caucus shall consist of all the qualified electors who reside in the caucus area, together with the non-resident owners of real property within the caucus area.

4.4

Voting

Each caucus member shall have one (1) vote on all matters appropriate for caucus voting. Voting on any other basis may be conducted on special matters for information purposes only, and must be clearly identified as such.

4.5 Recognized Caucus Area

Recognized caucus areas to the greatest extent possible shall reflect geographically contiguous areas with social, economic, cultural and environmental communities of interest. There shall be only one (1) recognized caucus in each geographic area. Each caucus shall provide proposed definite boundaries for their caucus area to the Board.

4.6 Function

A caucus, upon recognition by the Board, shall have a recommendatory function for all matters directly affecting the caucus area, and shall permit its members to report minority views, as well as majority views, and division of votes with any such recommendation. Further, a caucus shall have a recommendatory function for all planning matters affecting the caucus area, as well as other County matters affecting the caucus area including, but not limited to, budgetary and work program matters.

Added 11/3/98

4.7 County Government Support of Caucus

The County Manager, or designee, shall designate staff to be responsible to serve as liaison with the caucuses to facilitate and assist caucus communications and processes. The county may provide such other technical, logistical and financial assistance to facilitate effective caucus activity.

Added 11/3/98

4.8 Notice of Meetings

The caucuses shall provide notice of meetings through such means as newspapers, Internet, radio, mailings, telephone and local public notice bulletin boards. The county may help in this process by providing up to \$1,500.00 annually in cash or in-kind services to each caucus to help provide notification and publication of minutes of its meetings.

Added 11/3/98

4.9 County Notification of Citizens

The County will annually publish, in at least one (1) local paper, by a one-third page notice, the date, time and place of the annual caucus meeting if that information is known to the County prior to annual caucus meeting.

Added 11/3/98

4.10 Meetings

Each recognized caucus must designate a set date, time and place for its annual meeting when officers are elected.

Master Plans

The County Commissioners and the Planning and Zoning Commission will encourage the development of Caucus Master Plans. The County Commissioners shall specify the criteria for the Caucus Master Plan development procedures, and local caucus approval. Caucus Master Plans which satisfy such criteria shall be recognized by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and County Commissioners. The Caucus Master Plan shall be considered as one of the primary advisory documents in the development of county laws, rules and regulations which affect caucus areas.