



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

**CB 4 MEETING POLICY**

**9/3/08**

*City Charter: Chapter 70 “City Government in the Community”, Section §2800  
“Community boards”, subsection (d)(3) states:*

*d. Each community board shall: (3) At its discretion hold public or private hearings or investigations with respect to any matter relating to the welfare of the district and its residents, but the board shall take action only at a meeting open to the public.*

The board chair shall be informed of all meetings that occur and is an automatic invitee. There are five (5) types of non-public meetings that occur from time to time:

1. District Service Cabinet – City Charter mandated meetings between the board office and city agencies. Although the District Manager (DM) has the option to invite a community member to observe or a community representative to provide details, the meetings are not subject to the provisions of the NYS Open Meeting Law.
2. Follow-up of Board Policy or District Service Issues – part of the DM’s role is: “makes policy recommendations to the community board and executes the policy set by the community board”. Also, “serves as a conduit among residents of the district, members of the community board and district personnel”.

This requires many types of meetings, including:

- Visiting establishments and/or specific neighborhood sites where there are community issues;
- Meetings with contractors/developers before or during development to discuss/review community concerns
- Meetings with restaurant/bars re noise complaints, rear yard uses, posting, etc.
- Meetings with applicants to execute existing board policy or a decision of the board.

3. Informational – when representatives of a committee meet with a potential applicant or developer who is thinking of or is in the process of opening a business, establishment, non-profit/cultural/social association, or developing a particular site in the district. Chairs and/or designees may meet with applicant or developer (along with the DM and/or ADM) to familiarize them with board policy and community concerns. A potential applicant or developer shall, if applicable, be directed to committee meetings for informal presentations prior to any certified presentation where a vote is needed.

These types of meetings help the board govern efficiently with its limited resources. A community board is nothing if not governance at the community level.

Committee chairs shall, if possible, give adequate notice to committee members in advance of such meeting. Participation is at the discretion of the committee chair, but in no case may a quorum of the committee participate so as to violate the NYS Open Meetings Law.

Committee chairs shall report on all meetings to their respective committees at the next committee meeting. The board chair and DM shall make sure committee agendas include updates and reports so that all committee members are fully informed on what is occurring.

4. Constituent – these are meetings held with community residents, businesses, establishments, or city service agencies and concern city service issues or community needs. The board office will at its discretion invite committee chairs and/or board members to participate. If things reach a point where it is felt the office cannot resolve things on its own, these issues will be referred to the appropriate board committee, the Manhattan Borough President, the Public Advocate or the Mayor, as authorized by the City Charter.

5. Miscellaneous – the office staff and some committee chairs and/or members are invited to meetings held by elected officials, community groups, city agencies, not-for-profit groups, citizens committees, task forces, et al. These are not CB4 meetings and those attending act as a conduit on behalf of the board.