

## **The GWCSO “Punch List” as of March 2016.**

A generically defined “Punch List” was instituted after public suggestion and Board recommendation in June of 2015. The intent of the list was to capture future actions defined or directed by the Board, deferred agenda items, items required to be addressed on upcoming agendas and tabled agenda items. This short document describes the present workings of the Punch List, how it’s maintained and managed, and certain suggestions for improving its utility to the Board.

### **A. Punch List Content**

The Punch List organizes items for action or Board consideration into four categories:

- 1) **Actions** – These are activities to be performed or taken by specifically assigned persons within a defined period of time, as directed by the Board. Critical information documenting each action include the date the action was assigned, which agenda item the action was assigned under, a description of the action to be taken, the person or persons to which the action was assigned, the due date requested for completion of the action, the action status (“open” = incomplete, “closed” = complete), and a brief description of the evidence of completion where warranted.
- 2) **Deferred Items** – These are topics or items suggested for a future agenda that have not yet been assigned to a specific agenda. Critical information tracked for deferred items include the name of the person proposing the item, the date of the meeting for which the item was originally proposed, a description of the proposed item and the status of the item (“open” = not yet placed on an agenda, “closed” = item was included in a meeting agenda).
- 3) **Docketed Items** – These are topics or items that must be included on a future agenda. The necessity to consider an item could arise from a statutory requirement or Board action. Critical information tracked for docketed items includes the required date for consideration on the meeting’s agenda, a description of the item to be considered, whether the item is for possible Board Action or only for Information, and the item’s status (“open” = awaiting being placed on the agenda, “closed” = placed on the meeting agenda listed).
- 4) **Tabled Items** – These are agenda items that have been tabled by motion of the Board. Items can be tabled for consideration at a specific future meeting, or tabled indefinitely. Critical information tracked for tabled items includes the meeting date at which the item was tabled, the meeting’s agenda item number that was tabled, a description of the tabled agenda item, whether the item was for possible Board Action or simply for Information, the meeting date to which the item was tabled, the status of the item (“open” = not yet placed on a meeting agenda, “closed” = placed on the meeting agenda as indicated).

One will note that several formats are possible to organize the information above. The initial implementation of the Punch List adopted a spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel) format,

which resembles a database of tables that can be queried and sorted. While the spreadsheet format may not be very familiar to some, it offers a compact and economical structure within which to organize the various data listed above. One particular advantage of the spreadsheet format is that it allows filtering (essentially a database query), so that viewers might view only those items with critical defining properties (e.g. all Action Items that remain Open, all Docketed Items scheduled for a particular date, etc.). The filtering capability provided by the spreadsheet format has the potential to allow the “database” to become both current (e.g. listed by date or status) and archival (everything listed). The archival capability provides the Board with an opportunity to retrieve historical information about the various items committed to the Punch List for action by person or docket, deferral or action to table.

## B. Punch List Maintenance

To date, the Punch List has been maintained by the Secretary and the Board Consultant. The Secretary updates the Punch List after every Board meeting to close the items that were acted upon or reported as complete at the meeting, and to add new Action, Docketed or Tabled items per Board actions taken at the meeting. During the process of assembling the following meeting’s agenda, the Board Consultant updates the lists of Deferred, Docketed and Tabled items as follows:

- 1) Potential agenda items suggested by the Board, staff or public that are not selected for consideration on the next meeting’s agenda are added to the list of Deferred items;
- 2) Items selected from the Deferred, Docketed and Tabled lists that are added to the agenda are noted as “closed” in their respective lists with appropriate notations.

The Board Consultant then forwards the updated Punch List back to the Secretary for distribution to the Board as part of their advance meeting packet and to begin the next update cycle.

## C. Suggestions for Improvement

The present list-maintenance process does not efficiently determine how/when Action items are to be listed as “closed,” nor does it address when, or by what process, any items could or should be removed from any particular Punch List category. It is clearly in the Board’s better interest to install an efficient process that will ensure its directions are acted upon in an appropriate and timely manner. Toward that end, I offer the following suggestions with the aim of stimulating discussions and possibly identifying other ways in which the Punch List might be structured and used more effectively. To wit:

- 1) Distribute the Punch List with the Director’s Agenda Packet for each Regular Meeting;
- 2) Instruct Directors and staff on use of software features to filter and sort information, enabling their efficient review of the Punch List;

- 3) Adopt a regular or periodic “Board Operations Review” agenda item in which Actions can be reported and closed, Tabled items that are no longer relevant can be closed, near-term Docketed items can be brought to the attention of the Board, and aging of Deferred items can be assessed and discussed.
- 4) Determine an appropriate retention period for Punch List entries, and instruct staff to purge entries once their retention period has lapsed. For example, once Tabled items are addressed in a subsequent agenda, the meeting’s Agenda and Minutes will have captured all actions associated with those items (i.e. Motion to Table, consideration on a meeting Agenda, and related actions taken by the Board), so such items would no longer need to be tracked by the Punch List. Actions reported as closed should not have much relevance following their closure, so perhaps they could be removed after a suitable period of time (e.g. monthly or quarterly).

Respectfully Submitted,

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GWCSO Secretary