



Minutes

Ad Hoc Committee for Boards and Commissions

March 01, 2023 – 4:00 PM

**CIC Conference Room, City Hall, 300 Laporte Ave & via Zoom at
<https://fcgov.zoom.us/j/99319941882>**

Remote Participation Available

A) Call Meeting to Order

- 4:04 PM

B) Roll Call

- Committee Members Present: Emily Francis (Chair), Julie Pignataro, Tricia Canonico
- Staff Members Present: Davina Lau, Rupa Venkatesh, Kelly DiMartino, Jenny Lopez-Filkins
- Members of the Public: Kelly Ohlson

C) Approval of Minutes

1. Consideration and approval of the minutes of February 1, 2023.

The purpose of this item is to approve the draft minutes of the February 1, 2023, Ad Hoc Committee for Boards and Commissions meeting.

- Committee Member Julie Pignataro moved to approve the February 1, 2023 minutes. Committee Member Tricia Canonico seconded. The motion was adopted unanimously.

D) Discussion / Informational Items

2. Reviewing and discussing recruitment processes, the purpose of Super Issues Meetings, simplifying boards, and board composition.

The purpose of this item is to review potential changes to the recruitment processes and to discuss modifying the Code surrounding joint meetings, the purpose of Super Issues Meetings, simplifying boards, and the numbers of members on boards.

- *Discussion Highlights:* Staff Member Rupa Venkatesh outlined the purpose of the role of this Committee: to make the current Boards and Commissions system more effective and to make the entire structure more effective. She specifically mentioned the need for improved training for Boards and Commissions members, changes to the application, policies for interview no-shows, conducting exit interviews, and improving communication between Council and staff liaisons. She also noted all Boards and Commissions members will be expected to sign a code of conduct document. She outlined topics to be covered at this meeting and upcoming meetings.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the recommended changes to recruitment timing given the changes to Council election timing. She stated applications will be open December 1st-January 30th with interviews in mid-February and terms beginning in April. She discussed the process for this year only which will involve opening applications for vacancies in April with terms starting in July.

Regarding the interview process, Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the desire of the Committee to keep the current process involving two Councilmembers and the Mayor interviewing for quasi-judicial Boards and Commissions. She stated there are two options for type one and type two Boards and Commissions: one to have one Councilmember and the staff liaison interview, and one to have two Councilmembers interview with the staff liaison being present. Members discussed whether the Mayor is required to interview for quasi-judicial Boards.

Kelly Ohlson stated he does not believe the Mayor should automatically participate in the interviews for quasi-judicial Boards. Staff Member Venkatesh stated staff would research the specific Code language. Members concurred they would like three Councilmembers involved in quasi-judicial Board interviews.

Committee Member Pignataro stated she is leaning toward the second option and stated it is important for the staff liaisons to be involved in the interview process. Committee Member Canonico concurred.

Committee Member Pignataro asked about the interview process for the Citizen Review Board noting it previously involved a Councilmember and City Manager. Staff Member Venkatesh replied it has been two Councilmembers and the City Manager, who is involved due to the specific function of the Board.

Chair Francis noted option two will not decrease the amount of time spent in interviews for Councilmembers. Committee Member Pignataro noted there will be less time involved given interviews should now only occur annually. She noted they have been occurring more frequently due to various special circumstances over the past years.

Kelly Ohlson supported option two stating he does not believe staff liaisons should actually ask interview questions. He also stated he does not believe only one Councilmember should make appointment decisions. He suggested the possibility of decreasing the interview time from 15 to 10 minutes and also noted changing interview processes for incumbents will also decrease the time commitment for Councilmembers.

Committee Member Pignataro stated the 15 minute time is sufficient. Committee Member Canonico concurred.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the language related to joint meetings and stated there is a desire to update that language to provide more flexibility allowing joint meetings. Staff Member Jenny Lopez-Filkins outlined the Charter language related to the issue noting the Charter ensures Council grants specific functions to each Board or Commission. It was noted that joint meetings can only occur if they are specifically outlined in a Board's work plan or with permission from the City Manager.

Committee Member Pignataro made a motion to change Section 2-72 to strike 'work plan' and add 'the function of' and to strike 'City Council' and add 'Council Liaison(s)'. Committee Member Canonico seconded. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Staff Member Venkatesh briefly outlined the Super Issues Meetings topic. Staff Member Davina Lau stated Super Issues Meetings provide the opportunity for City staff to get input from the public and Boards and Commission members regarding ongoing and upcoming projects and programs in the city, including the Land Use Development Code updates and Halligan Water Supply Project which will be discussed in September. She stated staff uses the feedback received at the meetings to inform what comes before Council.

Committee Member Canonico asked if this replaces staff presenting to various Boards on specific topics. Staff Members replied in the negative and noted any Board or Commission member may attend a Super Issues Meeting.

Chair Francis questioned the usefulness of the Super Issues Meetings noting many of the Boards already receive the same presentations from staff. Staff Member Venkatesh stated it can be useful for members to hear perspectives of other Boards. City Manager Kelly DiMartino stated the facilitation style of the meetings has varied over time and interactive meetings seem to be most helpful. Additionally, she noted staff members do not provide presentations for every topic to each Board; therefore, the Super Issues Meetings provide opportunities for members of every Board to engage and determine whether a full presentation could be helpful for other Boards.

Staff Member Lau stated she is working to make the Super Issues Meetings quarterly and include sharing more information after the meetings with the staff liaisons as part of her follow-up process.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the next topic relating to how the effectiveness of Boards and Commissions is measured. She provided a list of criteria developed by staff and requested input from the Committee.

Committee Member Pignataro stated the quantity of recommendations provided to Council is not relevant.

Committee Member Canonico also questioned whether Council asking Boards for feedback may not always be relevant depending on Council's priorities at the time.

Staff Member Venkatesh commented on the example of the Golf Board perhaps no longer being relevant on its own, but having its functions absorbed within the Parks and Recreation Board. Additionally, she noted the same could be said for the Parking Board being absorbed by the Transportation Board.

Committee Member Pignataro stated it may not be possible to establish criteria for effectiveness that will fit every Board.

Chair Francis commented on the need to have a process to review the Boards on a more regular cadence. City Manager DiMartino replied Boards and Commissions used to come before Council on a four-year cadence and she stated those presentations were deemed to be not particularly constructive in terms of a critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the Boards.

Staff Member Venkatesh commented on the current periodic review and annual review process noting the Committee suggested removing the periodic reviews from the language as they are no longer occurring. She suggested the Committee now needs to consider how Council determines whether Boards need to be added or readjusted. Members discussed the most recent Board that was created, the Land Conservation and Stewardship Board, which Mr. Ohlson stated was formed due to ballot language triggering it.

Committee Member Pignataro noted the processes for forming and eliminating Boards will need to be completely different from one another. Chair Francis suggested the possibility of having annual work sessions for Council to discuss and review Boards. Committee Member Canonico suggested bi-annual discussions of that type seem sufficient. City Manager DiMartino asked if there would be a role for the Council liaisons in that process, or if the Committee would like to see some options. Chair Francis replied it would be helpful for staff to present some options.

Committee Member Canonico supported staff-initiated work sessions for the full Council on the topic on a bi-annual basis. Mr. Ohlson concurred.

City Manager Di Martino asked if the Committee agrees that if a Board or Commission wanted to self-initiate dissolution, that could be discussed by Council. Committee members concurred.

Members discussed which Boards may be considered for merging.

Committee Member Pignataro noted the Human Relations Commission is quasi-judicial; therefore, merging it with the Women's Advisory Board may not be feasible. Chair Francis questioned whether the work of the Women's Advisory Board is captured in the Human Relations Commission. Committee Member Pignataro stated she had wanted to change the Women's Advisory Board to a gender equity board and have it remain as advisory.

Staff Member Lopez-Filkins noted the Human Relations Commission has not taken any quasi-judicial action in about 16 years; however, the way the Code as currently written states it must be quasi-judicial.

Staff Member Venkatesh suggested the Committee could consider making recommendations to the full Council to dissolve certain Boards at its April meeting then staff could open applications for recruitment.

Committee Member Pignataro stated she would be comfortable recommending the Golf Board be absorbed into the Parks and Recreation Board and rebranding the Women's Advisory Board into a gender equity board.

Chair Francis stated she would be comfortable recommending the Golf Board be absorbed into the Parks and Recreation Board and stated she would be more comfortable dissolving the Women's Advisory Board and following more of a process to critically look at instituting a gender equity or other board. Committee Member Canonico concurred.

Members concurred recruitment should not occur for either the Golf Board or Women's Advisory Board.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the suggestion for the incumbent process which would involve them applying during regular recruitment, a meeting between the staff and Council liaison regarding any issues with the incumbents or complaints received, and an ultimate decision by the Council liaison as to whether the incumbents who have applied should be re-interviewed or reappointed without an interview.

Members discussed the importance of notifying Council liaisons immediately upon any complaint being received about a Board or Commission Member.

Committee Member Pignataro suggested leaving the incumbent process up to each individual Council liaison. Chair Francis and Committee Member Canonico questioned whether not having a specific process would be a good idea.

City Manager DiMartino suggested the possibility of having each Board do a 'pulse check' survey among its members prior to recruitment which could provide information about certain issues and/or desires.

Chair Francis stated it would be helpful for staff to return with some recommendations for the incumbent process.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the next issue for discussion: board member composition numbers and quorum issues. She discussed the possibility of having Boards be comprised of seven members, but allowing for nine if enough quality applications are received.

Committee Member Canonico asked if regular Boards would then be comprised of seven members which would determine quorum, then the number could go up to nine with 'bonus members.' Committee Member Pignataro replied that is the current practice with the Youth

Advisory Board. Staff Member Lau replied quorum for that Board is based on the number of members it currently has, which is flexible.

Members discussed the definition of quorum and whether flexible Board composition numbers should be allowed. Chair Francis stated she would prefer all Boards have the same number of members.

Committee Member Pignataro stated her suggestion of keeping the quorum number the same regardless of the number of members was aimed at helping decrease the amount of interviews in the instance a Board does not have quorum and at allowing for more members if there is more interest.

Mr. Ohlson suggested narrowing the number to seven for each Board could limit input from various perspectives. He noted several Boards have been comprised of nine members for some time and have had no issues.

Staff Member Venkatesh noted there are nine type one Boards, one type two Board, and three quasi-judicial Boards with nine members each.

Chair Francis stated she would like to be able to accurately answer the question as to why some Boards have seven members and others have nine.

Committee Member Pignataro asked how many of the five Boards that could not meet due to lack of quorum are nine-member Boards. Staff Member Venkatesh replied the Disability Advisory Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Natural Resources Advisory Board, and Parks and Recreation Board have nine members.

Chair Francis stated she does not have a strong opinion about the exact number of members; however, she would like to have a consistent process for that determination.

City Manager DiMartino suggested the possibility of tying the type of Board (one, two, or quasi-judicial) to a number of members. She stated staff could return with some options.

Staff Member Venkatesh outlined the information staff will provide at the next meeting.

E) Review of Upcoming Calendar

F) Other Business

- None

G) Adjournment

- 5:58 PM

Next Scheduled Committee Meeting: 4:00 PM, April 5, 2023

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