

To: **Mayor and City Council**
From: **Ryan Schroeder, City Manager**
Date: **February 22, 2021**

Amendments to Committee Membership and Appointment Process

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At the last OCWS, by consensus, Council provided that the Park and Recreation Committee and the Environmental Committee could both be expanded. Enclosed, please find:

- Draft ordinance denoting that Parks and Recreation membership be established in Bylaws.
- Draft Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaws amendment increasing membership from seven to nine.
- Draft Environmental Committee Bylaws amendment increasing membership from seven to eight.
- Resolution amending Park and Recreation and Environmental Committee Bylaws.

Additionally, there was significant discussion regarding the desire to amend the committee appointment process. Background follows.

Committee Appointment Process Background:

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

- From mid-90's through early 2000's – applications were submitted and sorted by ward (Bylaws state that the committee is to be ward balanced). The City Council members from the specific ward would call and conduct phone interview all applicants from their ward and then submit their recommendation for appointment. They would also make the decision on reappointments for members of their wards. The committee was ward balanced with the 7th member being an at-large member and selected by the Mayor.
- Mayor Zanmiller decided to have the committees review the applications for all vacancies and submit their recommendations to Council for appointment (around 2009). Incumbent members continued to be automatically reappointed if they desired to stay on the committee.
- Mayor Halverson decided to just have current Councilmembers review and choose members to fill vacancies, with reappointments remaining automatic during 2017-2018.

Environmental Committee (EC)

- Committee was formed in 2008. Originally included 9 appointed members (1 of which was a high school student). Ward balance was recommended, but not required. Also includes 1 Planning Commission and 1 Parks and Recreation Committee liaison.
- In 2012, the Council changes the composition of the Committee so that the 9th member could be either a high school student or a resident (due to difficulty in finding a high school student).

- Similar to PRAC, EC began reviewing applications and making their recommendations to Council around 2009.
- In 2017, the committee continued to experience turnover and had 5 of the 9 positions vacant and were having trouble getting a quorum of members to attend monthly meetings. Council decided (attached) to reduce the number of members to 7 (similar to other committees).
- Mayor Halverson decided to just have current Councilmembers review and choose members to fill vacancies, with reappointments remaining automatic.

Committee Appointment Process Amendment (working from existing process):

Committee and Commission seats typically terminate end of February each year. The City solicits and receives applications for these volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Starting in November, prior to committee term expirations, the City pushes out increased volunteer recruitment narrative primarily through social media in order to refresh interest in committee opportunities and to provide the compendium of applications for Council review.

From the recent Council discussion, it seems that the process could be improved by first addressing reappointments (which was a suggestion by more than one member of Council). Proposed policy language could be drafted as follows:

- Council is informed of current committee/commission members requesting reappointment to existing seats
 - A. Committee/Commission Council liaison works with the committee chair to ascertain which sitting committee members desire reappointment and to provide a recommendation regarding those requests for reappointment.
 - B. At an OCWS, Council reviews reappointment requests, determines to reappoint or not to make reappointments at the same day regular meeting, thus determining how many seats are vacant for new applicants at a subsequent meeting.

With the above, Council would be aware of the number of seats available for new applicants. Following much of the OCWS discussion, these could be handled as follows:

- Council is provided application materials for all applicants for committee vacancies
 - A. Prior to the OCWS meeting at which applications will be considered, each member of Council provides their ranking of applicants and submits this ranking to the City Clerk.
 - B. The City Clerk creates a compendium of these rankings and invites the top applicants to the OCWS meeting to be interviewed by Council. Note, if top candidate(s) are currently seated on an existing standing committee/commission, they are to be informed of the restriction from service on two such committees (see below). It is intended that two applicants be invited for each number of open seats (i.e., one vacancy = two applicants, two vacancies = four applicants). If the number of applicants is below this threshold, the City Clerk will confer with the Mayor on whether to forward a lesser number of applications or to re-open the application pool.
 - C. Council interviews applicants at the OCWS, after which Council ballots for their top applicant for the open position(s) (i.e., if one open seat, ballot contains one name, if two open seats, ballot contains two names). City Clerk compiles the ballots and informs Council of the ballot result.
 - D. At the regular Council meeting, the Mayor requests a motion and second to appoint applicant(s) to the open seat(s).

- E. In order to accept the appointment to the committee/commission seat, the candidate receiving the Council approval for the seat must be determined to not be currently seated on another standing committee or commission. If the appointed candidate is currently seated on another standing committee or commission, that person must be removed from that seat in order to take the newly appointed seat.
- F. Ward Balance: An attempt at ward balance to the extent practicable should be made but is not a requirement of committee/commission membership.

Alternates/Issues Previously Identified:

- 1. Councilpersons from each ward review, interview, and recommend reappointments and new appointments for applicants from their ward.
- 2. Term limits? If limitations were of consecutive years, a one year absence from the committee could reset the calendar.
- 3. Require separate applications for each committee OR require applicants to pick one committee for which they are making application.
- 4. Separate agenda item or perhaps even separate OCWS meeting to consider applications for each committee (would reduce confusion).
- 5. Interview all applicants regardless of number or number of vacancies.

FISCAL IMPACT:

		Amount
Fund:		
Department:		
Account:		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Affirm proposed PR and EC Bylaws/Ordinance changes for approval
- 2. Provide additional process input