

Staff recommended changes to Advisory Bodies as a whole

1) Public access

- Post e-mail address for each advisory body, along with appointee names, on the City website
- Swear in new commissioners at Council meetings to publicly introduce appointees

2) Evaluation

- Evaluate the advisory bodies every two years on whether they continue to serve their purpose, and if so, any modifications warranted to scope/purview, size/composition, and other policies/procedures
- Council ask for staff feedback on appointees prior to re-appointment process

3) Training

- Orientation by appointing Council member, staff liaison, and City Clerk
- Bi-annual training of appointees as a whole on running meetings, group decision-making, etc.
- Annual refresher on advisory body agenda on the above as well as subject matter of the group

4) Composition

- Eliminate positions appointed at-large by the Council as it amplifies the perspective of the majority of the Council
- Consider Albany demographics when making appointments

5) Neighborhood forums

- Periodically conduct neighborhood forums, such as using the five-zone neighborhood street sweeping system, for certain of the advisory bodies.

The City would work with neighborhood contacts to organize meetings – in publicly accessible locations in or near the neighborhoods, to engage community dialogue on issues in the advisory bodies’ area of purview. This recommendation seeks to attract persons who might not otherwise attend regular meetings to find out items of interest or concern, and is based on the success of the *Voices to Vision* outreach effort.

6) Minutes:

- Advisory body designates a member to prepare minutes.¹ Suggested format: Vice-Chair assumes this function, which serves added purpose of Chairperson training.
- Action minutes: Contain a brief descriptive entry of the item under consideration, the subsequent motion and vote of action taken by the group.² If there is Council

¹ Except Planning & Zoning Commission since it is a quasi-judicial body

² Except Planning & Zoning Commission public hearings

interest for detail on certain advisory body meetings, there can be an audio recording made and posted on the City's website.

7) Agendas

Items may be placed on advisory body agendas by:

- City Council
- City staff
- Commission when it falls within its Council-approved work program

This is an area that will need more discussion and work towards achieving a healthy balance between agendas staying with areas of purview or of Council interest and direction on the one hand, and over-control and bureaucracy on the other hand. Options include annual work plans, periodic check-ins, and/or and requests for Council direction.

8) Council referrals to include:

- Set well-defined topics and expectations
- Advisory body reports should include pros/cons analysis about policy options rather than only one recommended course of action.
- Timeline for report back

Staff recommendations on specific Advisory Bodies

Arts Committee: Establish purpose to include functioning as a working group, and provide direction on priorities.

Albany Library Board: Eliminate Council liaison and Friends of the Library seat, or make them ex-officio

Charter Review Committee: No specific changes beyond those recommended for all advisory bodies

Civil Service Board: Refer to Charter Review Committee to develop a proposed charter amendment to dissolve the Board, due to changes in laws, policies, and practices

Community Media Access Committee: Expand committee by two seats appointed by the Albany School District Board of Education, preferably with connection to the High School media program

Parks & Recreation Commission: Change name to Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission and incorporate policy advisory roles on the publicly owned area of the waterfront

Police & Fire Pension Board: Refer to the City Attorney the question of whether the existing charter language allows for less than monthly meetings absent a charter amendment; if not, refer to the Charter Review Committee to advise on developing a ballot measure to allow for less frequent meetings and any related changes.

Planning & Zoning Commission

- . Use caution in keeping Commission at policy rather than technical issues
- . Establish subcommittees to explore issues in depth where needed

Social & Economic Justice Commission

- . Establish a Social, Economic & Environmental Justice Commission to encompass policy advisory roles of the current Social & Economic Justice Commission and the Sustainability Committee
- . Council to provide greater clarity in scope and direction on work program
- . Eliminate the youth commissioner seat as it has not been a successful fit with the busy activities of high school students; to maintain an even number, eliminate or double the Board of Education appointee(s).
- . If there is sufficient interest by Commissioners to invest their time, experiment with a forum modeled after the National Issues Forum to discuss an issue of community interest

Sustainability Committee: Now that the Climate Action Plan which establishes policy direction for the City for the next several years, as been adopted the advisory role on sustainability can be incorporated into the Social & Economic Justice Commission, creating a “Social & Economic Justice and Sustainability Commission” or comparable name. To advance the goals of the Climate Action Plan (CAP), endorse the creation of a Sustainability task force/working group to support City efforts in implementing the CAP.

Traffic & Safety Commission: Establish subcommittees to explore issues in depth

Waterfront Committee:

- . With the completion of the *Voices to Vision* waterfront planning process, the City has recommended policy guidelines from the community about the future of the waterfront. The guidelines can advise and inform the Council and its various advisory bodies as issues arise concerning the waterfront. Consequently, the Waterfront Committee can transition away from being a separate body and have its roles assigned to other standing bodies; specifically:
 - . Assign the advisory role on public park/open space to the Parks & Recreation Commission; this will serve to advance the waterfront as in integrated part of the city and its role as a community park area
 - . Assign the advisory role on private property to the Planning & Zoning Commission; the *Voices to Vision* recommendations provide guidelines to the Commission for future land use issues.
- . Transition the remaining aspects of the Waterfront Committee into a Stewardship Working Group to educate, maintain and enhance the public experience in the waterfront park, similar to the transition of the Sustainability Committee