



**REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: October 21, 2008

SUBJECT: Process for Selection of Board and Commission Members

**Report in Brief**

Council member Marble has requested with Council concurrence to consider revisions to the current policy and process for selection and appointment of Board and Commission members. Portions of the current process are contained in the current Municipal Code, while others are in a study conducted by the League of Women Voters or are past practice. The information contained herein provides some specific steps to improve the process that the City Council could consider for direction to staff.

Staff recommends that the City Council direct staff to amend appropriate Code Sections, past practices and those sections of the study conducted by the League of Women Voters to more adequately address the concerns expressed by Council regarding the process of selection and appointment of Board and Commission members.

**Background**

Council has a set process in the Municipal Code which prescribes the process for interview and selection of Board and Commission members. This process has not been consistently applied at all times. As well, the League of Women Voters was asked by the Council to study the process and make recommendations for improvement. The Council accepted those recommendations and staff implemented them into the process. On a few occasions since acceptance, Council has considered amendments to the process and representatives from the League have strongly objected.

A more formal, complete and written process would provide guidelines for all Council members conducting interviews with consistent activities to include questions, reference checks and a recommendation for action in association with the appointment.

**Discussion**

Council members have suggested that a more formal interview process be held that would include the following activities:

- A date, time and place for the interview, including a private conference room in a City facility such as City Hall or the Community & Senior Center
- Attendance by both members of the City Council Subcommittee for the interview
- Development of formal questions that pertain to the specific Board or Commission that an applicant may be under consideration for appointment to
- Continue allowing applicants to list a first and second choice for the Council Subcommittee's consideration of their Board/Commission application
- Input from City staff, including department heads that are responsible for supporting the Board and Commission activities; this input could include specific questions that the Council Subcommittee would ask and attendance information of incumbent Board/Commission members seeking reappointment
- Identification of the applicants who the Subcommittee will recommend for consideration by the City Council and stating their names within the staff report for the Council agenda packet when the appointment will be considered
- Completion of reference checks by staff who will contact the individuals listed by the applicants on their applications

Another possible change would be the appointment a Council Subcommittee where the same two members would serve for a year and conduct the interviews on a specific date and time each month. At this time, Council members rotate each month with one carry over member in each rotation cycle. Many times it is difficult to find Council members who have a free evening to hold these interviews. If a set Subcommittee was in place with a specific schedule, it may alleviate cancelling interviews due to unavailability or changes in schedules.

Provision of applications and an interview packet to the Subcommittee several days or a week in advance of the interview for review would allow them more adequate time to prepare for those interviews rather than five to ten minutes prior to an applicant's interview presently in place. Staff also believes that annual work plans developed for Boards and Commissions should be utilized whenever possible. These work plans provide the Council Subcommittee and Board/Commission applicants with a framework for considering the appointments based on the specific needs of the Board or Commission. Previous attempts to provide the Annual Work Plan for each Board and Commission to the Subcommittee and the applicants have been inconsistent.

It is extremely difficult to recruit and maintain candidates for these important Boards and Commissions which serve the citizens and provide in-depth information, discussion and experience to assist the Council in specific areas of importance to the City. Staff concurs with expressed Council concerns that the process should be more formal and consistently applied.

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no direct fiscal impact or implications of concern before the City to enhance the process.

**Public Contact**

The public contact for the meeting has been the normal posting of the Agenda.

**Recommendation for Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council direct staff to amend appropriate Code Sections, past practices and those sections of the study conducted by the League of Women Voters to more adequately address the concerns expressed by Council regarding the process of selection and appointment of Board and Commission members.

Prepared by: Sue Vannucci, Director of  
Administrative Services

---

Mark G. Deven  
City Manager

Enclosures: Municipal Code Section  
League of Women Voters Study