



City of Woodland

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: February 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Selection Process for Boards And Commissions

Report in Brief

The City Council has requested staff to provide information to facilitate consideration of revisions to the current process for selection and appointment of Board and Commission members. Portions of the current process are contained in the Municipal Code while other elements were incorporated in a study conducted by the League of Women Voters or are past practice.

The City Council's request focused on developing a more structured process that should not require any changes to the Municipal Code or conflict with the process developed by the League of Women Voters. Staff has developed a process for consideration by the City Council. If this process is approved, staff would begin the work associated with filling Board and Commission appointments.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the appointment of two Council members as an Ad-Hoc Committee to interview prospective Board and Commission members and present recommendations to the entire Council and utilize, for information purposes, a Board/Commission assessment form to support the appointment process as described herein.

Background

The City Council has established guidelines in the Municipal Code which prescribes the process for interview and selection of Board and Commission members. These guidelines include selection of Council members to conduct the interviews, holding the interview on a regular basis and affirmation by the Council as a whole based upon the recommendations of the interviewers.

In 1976, the League of Women Voters was asked by the Council to study the process and make recommendations for improvement. The League of Women Voters' recommendations included maintaining the process of interviewing and selection by two Council members with approval by the entire Council. The Council accepted those recommendations and staff implemented them into the process. In 1994-95, the League of Women Voters reviewed the process again and provided additional recommendations, including advertisement process and qualifications for the various

Boards and Commissions. On a few occasions since acceptance, Council has considered amendments to the process and representatives from the League have expressed their objections.

While the current process has worked, members of the City Council have expressed concerns regarding the somewhat informal process associated with the review of applications and interview of candidates. Council members have expressed a desire to modify the current process so that it includes more formal guidelines and provides additional background information in order to support the evaluation and selection of Board/Commission candidates. Last year staff modified the Board/Commission application form to include the names of a candidate's personal references. In further response to Council concerns, staff has developed some proposed modifications that include the appointment on a rotating basis of Council members as an interview panel, standards for conducting the interviews, a process for assessing Boards and Commissions and providing suggested questions. These modifications are intended to provide a consistent process for evaluating and selecting candidates for Boards and Commissions.

Discussion

The desire to update the evaluation, selection and appointment process for Boards and Commissions is intended to build on the current process defined in the Municipal Code and the previous contributions from the League of Women Voters. Staff believes the process described herein should not require changes to the Municipal Code or generate conflicts with the recommendations from the League of Women Voters. The following elements describe the modifications to the current process developed by staff for the City Council's consideration.

Rotating Appointment of an Interview Panel

Currently Council members are informally selected to conduct interviews for openings on Boards and Commissions. The proposed modification would be for the City Council to formally appoint an Ad-Hoc Committee of two Council members to conduct the interviews. The Ad-Hoc Committee could establish scheduled dates and times when interviews would be conducted and staff within the City Manager's office would schedule candidates for interviews during those periods. The rotating appointment is proposed for six months beginning with January – June and July – December.

The Ad-Hoc Committee would conduct the interviews and present recommendations for appointments to the entire City Council. The City Council would take a formal action to appoint candidates to Boards and Commissions. The Council would receive the entire list of candidates and could offer alternative candidates to the individual(s) recommended by the Ad-Hoc Committee. It is also possible for the Ad-Hoc Committee to recommend different candidates as well. In any case, the Ad-Hoc Committee would be the last step of the selection process prior to consideration by the entire City Council.

Council members could remain on the interview panel for consecutive six month periods based on the interest and availability of all Council members. However, the purpose of the rotating

appointments to the Ad-Hoc Committee is to provide all Council members with the opportunity to interview candidates at some point during their term of office.

Staff has identified three alternative approaches to the appointment of an Ad-Hoc Committee as the interview panel. One approach would be to appoint a standing Council Subcommittee with staggered terms that would conduct the interviews. The second approach would be to establish multiple standing Subcommittees with responsibility to conduct interviews for specific Boards and Commissions. Both of these alternatives would require recommendations to be forwarded to the entire City Council for action on the appointment.

The third alternative would have the entire City Council meet in a Study Session and interview candidates for all Boards and Commissions. This alternative could also be merged with the Ad-Hoc Committee or Subcommittee approach wherein the entire Council would meet to interview candidates for a specific Board or Commission and have the Ad-Hoc or Subcommittee interview the candidates for the other Boards and Commissions. As an example, the Council may want to convene to interview Planning Commission candidates and have the remaining Board/Commission candidates interviewed by the Committee(s). It should be noted that this alternative would be in conflict with the past recommendation from the League of Women Voters that two Council members be selected to conduct the interviews.

Environment for Formal Interviews

Board and Commission interviews have sometimes been held in an informal environment such as the second floor lobby at City Hall. Staff has received comments from Council members that conducting an interview in such an informal environment is not conducive to the evaluation process for the Council members or comfortable for the candidates. Staff proposes to schedule interviews in conference rooms at either City Hall or the Community & Senior Center. The use of a conference room provides a more formal place for candidates to respond to questions and for Council members to interview and evaluate the candidates.

Boards and Commissions Assessment

Members of the Council have suggested that an assessment of each Board and Commission may be valuable to the Council members appointed to the Ad-Hoc interview panel as well as the entire Council when the Ad-Hoc Committee's recommendations are considered. The assessment would be completed by City staff that support the Board or Commission and approved by the Department Head. Information generated by the assessment includes a list of challenges faced by the Board or Commission, background of the current Board/Commission members and characteristics that new Board/Commission members could have that would compliment the knowledge, skills and abilities of the current members. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the Ad-Hoc Committee and the entire Council with a framework to facilitate the evaluation of the candidates. The draft Board/Commission Assessment form is attached.

Development of an Administrative Guidelines Handbook

If the process described herein or modifications to this process are eventually approved by the City Council, staff would propose the development of an administrative guideline document in the form of a handbook for the implementation of the process. The City Council could use the handbook to help guide the process and to review the status and assessment of each Board and Commission. This handbook will also be provided to the Board and Commission members and candidates to outline their duties and responsibilities and inform them of the approved selection process.

Current Status of City Boards and Commissions

It is important to acknowledge that the need to consider appointments to Boards and Commissions is critical at this time. Unfortunately, with the downsizing of administrative staff and the need to complete higher priorities such as negotiations, implementation of retirement incentive programs and constant evaluation of the City's fiscal situation, the appointment process for City Boards and Commissions has been delayed.

Current Board/Commission vacancies include:

Board of Building Appeals	- 1 vacancy
Commission on Aging	- 1 vacancy
Historical Preservation Commission	- 1 vacancy
Manufactured Homes Fair Practices Commission (Mayoral Appointment)	- 1 vacancy
Parks and Recreation Commission	- 2 vacancies
Personnel Board	- 1 vacancy
Planning Commission	- 1 vacancy
Traffic Safety Commission	- 1 vacancy

There are also currently ten expired terms of incumbents. The incumbents have been asked to indicate their desire to remain for another term. Those who desire to remain serving on a Board or Commission would be interviewed under the process selected by the City Council.

Prior to preparing this report, the City Manager asked each department to assess the Boards and Commission they provide liaison and support work for in order to provide the City Council with a sense of the current membership and the knowledge, skills and abilities that could be considered for future members. The following information summarizes the staff assessments.

The **Board of Building Appeals** acts upon recommendations and a determination made by the City's building officials and therefore is required to include members with technical knowledge in development/construction categories. These categories include: (1) a registered design professional with architectural experience, or building or superintendent of a building construction operation with at least ten years of experience, five of which shall have been as the responsible party in charge of the work to be performed; (2) registered design professional with structural engineering experience; (3) a registered design professional with mechanical and plumbing engineering experience or a mechanical contractor with at least ten years of experience, five of which shall have been the

responsible party in charge of the work; (4) a registered design professional with electrical engineering experience or an electrical contractor with at least ten years of experience, five of which shall have been in charge of the work product; and (5) a registered design professional with fire protection engineering experience or a fire protection contractor with at least ten years of experience, five of which shall have been in charge of the work product.

The current vacancy for the Board of Appeals is in the electrical field.

The **Commission on Aging** describes their current membership with educational background in gerontology, recreation programs for seniors and senior advocacy. Current members have experience in children and health programs, intergenerational programs, senior programs, adult education and community based service organizations.

The **Historical Preservation Commission** has four active members, of which have Bachelor's Degrees, with three holding Master's Degrees in History, Law and/or Historic Preservation. Two are working professionals and all four have served community organizations such as tree foundations, historical societies and local, county and state museums. In order for Woodland to be a Certified Local Government designation for historical landmark purposes, it is stipulated that membership should include a registered architect; a registered landscape architect, architect or building designer; a state licensed general building contractor; and two members shall be citizens of the City at large with an interest in community design.

All five members of the **Library Board of Trustees** have earned bachelor degrees and several possess advanced degrees. Education is a highly desirable quality for the Board as education and lifelong learning values are consistent with the mission of a public library. The members are from the medical, human resources, social services, veterinary research and technology field. Future member service on the Board is encouraged to have a more diverse representation of age and ethnicity that would reflect the City's changing demographics. Experience in parenting and children's advocacy would be an asset. The Board is active and supportive in a wide range of community organizations and activities including service clubs, book clubs and professional groups. Desired background, skill or knowledge areas could include proactive advocacy and fund-raising methods since long term funding for the library is critical.

The **Parks and Recreation Commission** current membership consists primarily of those with advanced degrees and a range of professions. This Commission includes a recycling coordinator, a retired parks and recreation director, a veterinary technician, a SEIU Union representative and a non-profit manager. It would be helpful to have a member of the teaching profession, a landscape professional, a youth sports coach, non-profit volunteer, a parent or a business person as part of the Commission.

Current members of the **Personnel Board** are in the fields of Human Resources, Personnel or Supervisory areas. There is no desired educational background for service on this Board. A more diverse makeup and experience in human resources management would be assets to the Board.

Five of the current six members of the **Planning Commission** hold college and/or advanced degrees. Current employment status and experience includes an attorney, an economist, a University of California administrative employee, a small business owner, a retired medical professional and a property manager. Individuals to help enhance the current membership could include a demonstrated interest not limited to, planning, architecture, land use, development or the building industry with a desirable background, skill or knowledge area and a demonstrated passion and interest in developing community vision, recognizing that Woodland values its small town feel, while at the same time recognizing that the City is also a growing medium size community with key attributes as a potential leader in the region.

Current **Traffic Safety Commission** members are a Traffic Engineer who works for a private engineering company, a civil engineer for a private engineering company and a member who performs public works type maintenance for a neighboring agency. It would be desirable to have members with a college education, a resident or business owner from the downtown area or involvement with children or school issues.

Fiscal Impact

Consideration of the recommended action described herein would have no fiscal impact to the City.

Public Contact

Posting of the City Council agenda.

Alternative Courses of Action

1. Approve the appointment of two Council members as an Ad-Hoc Committee to interview prospective Board and Commission members and present recommendations to the entire Council and utilize for information purposes a Board/Commission assessment form to support the appointment process as described herein.
2. Approve the appointment of two Council members as a standing Council Subcommittee to interview prospective Board and Commission members and present recommendations to the entire Council and utilize for information purposes a Board/Commission assessment form to support the appointment process as described herein.
3. Direct staff to modify the process by developing multiple Council Subcommittees responsible for interviewing candidates for specific Boards or Commissions and present recommendations to the entire Council and utilize for information purposes a Board/Commission assessment form to support the appointment process as described herein.

4. Direct staff to modify the process by having the entire City Council interview candidates for Boards and Commissions and utilize for information purposes a Board/Commission assessment form to support the appointment process as described herein.

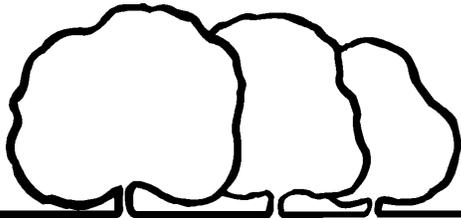
Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1.

Prepared by: Sue Vannucci, Director of
Administrative Services

Mark G. Deven
City Manager

Attachment: Board/Commission Assessment Form



City of Woodland

City Clerk

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Woodland, California 95695

FAX

(530) 661-5806

(530) 661-5813

CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ASSESSMENT

Name of Commission/Board:

Describe the current challenges and issues facing the Board or Commission:

Describe the current educational background and other training of current Board or Commission members:

Describe the desired educational background for new members of the Board or Commission:

Describe the current employment experience of the Board/Commission:

Is there a particular background or need to help balance the Board or Commission?

Describe the current organizations and community activity experience of the current Board or Commission members:

Describe other background and/or skill/knowledge areas that would strengthen the Board/Commission:

Signature of Department Head

Date

Please return information to: Ana Gonzalez