



## Minutes

### Ad Hoc Committee for Boards and Commissions

April 05, 2023 – 4:00 PM

CIC Conference Room, City Hall, 300 Laporte Ave & via Zoom at

<https://fcgov.zoom.us/j/95850905777>

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, Jenny Lopez-Filkins, Teresa Roche, Claudia Menendez
- Members of the Public: Kelly Ohlson, Emily Gallichotte, Kevin Jones, Jessica Jones, Amani Chamberlin, Ann Marie Sharratt

#### C) Approval of Minutes

##### 1. Consideration and approval of the minutes of March 1, 2023.

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

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

#### D) Discussion / Informational Items

##### 2. Review and discuss the progress of the Ad Hoc Committee so far, review what requires Council approval, discuss the evaluation of boards, and discuss board member composition options.

The purpose of this item is to review and discuss what the Ad Hoc Committee has accomplished up until this point, as well as to review items that require Council approval, discuss the evaluation of boards, and to consider options for board member composition.

- *Discussion Highlights:* Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant City Manager, provided an overview of the accomplishments of the Committee, reviewed items that will require full Council consideration as well as a timeline for that, and outlined board evaluation and board member composition information.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh outlined the possible ways a board could be formed or eliminated and discussed the new piece which will provide for the Public Engagement Specialist, Davina Lau, to provide an annual work session update on Boards and Commissions to Council which would include information from pulse check surveys, feedback from members, feedback from staff liaisons, and looking through the annual work plans. Committee members discussed the items that should be discussed at those

annual work sessions and how evaluations of Boards should occur. Assistant City Manager Venkatesh discussed questions Council should consider when adding a Board. Committee members concurred there should be two separate question processes for adding or eliminating a Board.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh outlined the questions related to board member composition: how to transition the one-year term seats and why some boards have seven members and others have nine. She outlined the current Code language related to one-year terms and discussed options for allocating those seats for seven and nine member boards. Committee members determined the best option.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh outlined the options for addressing the number of members on boards. Staff Member Lau noted type 2 boards make decisions on the allocation of funds; therefore, having nine members does allow for evening out the decision-making power among the board. Committee members opted to not make a decision on changing the number of members. Committee Member Pignataro suggested the possibility of allowing for a nine member board to come down to seven members if there are quorum issues. Similarly, Chair Francis suggested seven member boards could be increased to nine during review if there are many qualified candidates.

### **3. Review and discuss the updated Respectful Workplace Policy.**

The purpose of this item is to review and discuss changes that have been made to the Respectful Workplace Policy.

- *Discussion Highlights:* Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant City Manager, stated the Respectful Workplace Policy governs illegal activities.

Teresa Roche, Human Resources Executive, outlined the process that led to the Respectful Workplace Policy and discussed some of the recent updates, noting none of the changes are substantive.

Committee Member Pignataro questioned whether the title of the policy should be narrowed. Roche replied staff realized 'workplace' was a bit of a misconception after the policy was published and stated altering the title could occur per the direction of the Committee. She also clarified this Policy governs illegal activities only and therefore would not address things such as bullying, a word which has been used by some Boards and Commissions members.

Committee Member Pignataro encouraged staff to look at possibilities for a title change to the policy.

### **4. Review and discuss the Draft Code of Conduct and formal Complaint Process.**

The purpose of this item is to review and discuss the draft Code of Conduct as well as the formal Complaint process that accompanies it.

- *Discussion Highlights:* Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant City Manager, stated the Code of Conduct governs behavior. She discussed the examples of harassment in the Code of Conduct noting some of those could be considered bullying.

Staff Member Davina Lau commented on wording in the Code of Conduct which focuses on making it clear that everyone has the right to express their thoughts without feeling threatened or judged. She stated an avenue to report behavior and express concerns is present and if an individual on a Board or Commission is found to have violated the Code of Conduct, that person can be removed from the Board.

Committee members concurred the Code of Conduct should apply to all Council members, not just the liaisons.

Chair Francis commented on the need to include rules of procedure for meetings attended by Council members given Council members are not to influence Boards. Staff Member Lau replied she did include some of that information in the onboarding materials.

Staff Member Lau noted every Board and Commission member will be required to sign the Code of Conduct.

Committee members made suggestions to wording of specific items in the draft language.

Kelly Ohlson commented on the importance of not limiting discussion and debate and stated he might not support this language as is given everyone has differing acceptance levels of conflict. He asked about the inclusion of language stating 'to respect and support the legitimacy and authority of all decisions regardless of personal position on the matter.' Staff Member Lau replied that item is addressing action being taken through a motion and a vote and, once that occurs, the decision is set.

Committee Member Pignataro supported the inclusion of the language.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh discussed the complaint process noting there is still a question as to whether the member who is the subject of the complaint should be notified right away. She stated the City Attorney's Office will determine whether an investigation is warranted, and if so, that Office is responsible for conducting the investigation and issuing the written findings of fact and conclusions to Council.

Chair Francis asked if an individual who files a complaint must cite a specific document related to the complaint or if that individual can just explain a situation. Claudia Menendez, Diversity Equity Inclusion Office, replied her office can help to provide information related to any applicable citation.

Committee Members commented on the Ethics Committee process and its relationship to this process.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh discussed the options held by Council should a Code of Conduct violation be sustained, including verbal or written warnings, corrective training, requiring the violator to issue a written or verbal apology, or removing the violator from the Board or Commission depending on severity of the violation. It was clarified the removal would need to be considered by the full Council.

Committee Member Pignataro asked if violations against staff liaisons take a different track. Staff Member Lopez-Filkins replied staff liaisons would be covered by personnel policies if they are accused of a violation; however, the Code of Conduct could apply if a staff liaison is being bullied by a Board member, for example.

## **5. Review and approve updates to the duties of Council Liaisons.**

The purpose of this item is to review and approve updates to Resolution 2016-039 regarding the duties of Council Liaisons.

- *Discussion Highlights:* Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant City Manager, discussed the Resolution that outlines the Council liaison role. She noted the Committee discussion led to the removal of references to periodic reviews, the addition of a clarification that the role of the Council liaison is

to identify and help resolve any problems, but with the support of the Clerk's Office, City Manager's Office, and staff liaison, the removal of a reference to the Council liaison providing training, and an update to the joint meeting Code language to require the Council liaison to approve any joint meetings, not the full Council. She outlined additional questions to consider, including a possible diversity consideration and standardized questions for interviews.

Chair Francis suggested having a 'suggested questions for interviews' document could be helpful; however, she questioned whether that should be added to the resolution language.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh commented on making the Council liaison language part of the Code rather than in a resolution. She stated staff would return with pros and cons of each approach.

## **E) Review of Upcoming Calendar**

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh outlined topics for discussion at the May meeting, including following up on outstanding items, recruitment efforts to expand diversity, and reviewing the scope of work for the Youth Advisory Board.

Committee members discussed other topics of discussion.

Assistant City Manager Venkatesh and Committee Members discussed options for June and July meeting dates.

## **F) Adjournment**

- 5:56 PM

Next Scheduled Committee Meeting: 4:00 PM, May 3, 2023

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Approved by a vote of the committee on: May 3, 2023