

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. (3)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: February 12, 2008

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENT AND TRAINING PROCESSES

DEPARTMENT: MANAGER'S OFFICE	PUBLIC HEARING: NO
ATTACHMENTS: A – Resolution B - Advisory Board Appointment Guidelines C - Advisory Board Appointment Process Discussion D – Advisory Board Training Discussion E – Advisory Board Starter Guide F – List of Defunct Advisory Boards to Consider Dissolving	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Williamson (918-7309) Steve Stewart (918-7315) Drew Cummings (918-7314)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board of Aldermen to review and make any desired changes to the current advisory board appointment and training processes.

INFORMATION

Questions have periodically arisen regarding the process by which vacancies on Town advisory boards are filled. This process generally follows the following process: application → vacancy occurs (at expiration or after a resignation) → board chair follow-up with applicants → recommendation by the board chair to the Aldermen → appointment by majority vote of the Board of Aldermen generally in February or March (after advisory board terms expire on Feb. 1st) or as needed when advisory board members step down. The goals, presumably, are to effectively solicit, welcome, and use all the volunteer advisory board members we can get and keep both all parties satisfied with the process.

See ATTACHMENT B for current Advisory Board Appointment Guidelines and ATTACHMENT C for further discussion of the perceived issues involving the appointment process as well as possible ways to address them.

Questions have also periodically arisen regarding the training that advisory board members receive to help them ensure that they carry out their duties according to local policy and state laws covering open meetings, public records, and fiduciary trust / financial transactions.

See ATTACHMENT D for some history on the amount and kind of training and education that advisory board members have received in the past and receive currently (as well as other options which have been or could be considered). See ATTACHMENT E for the current Advisory Board Starter Guide.

A related question which has also surfaced from time to time is the degree to which advisory board recommendations ought to reflect adopted Board of Aldermen goals and priorities or whether their advisory role ought to be entirely independent.

Questions have also periodically arisen about whether the “answers” to the previous two issues might be different for advisory board chairs than they are for the other members of an advisory board.

The Board may also wish to discuss high advisory board turnover rates and vacancy rates (not the same for all advisory boards).

Another advisory board issue before the Board tonight is a list of advisory boards that are for all intents and purposes are defunct, many of which have few or no known members, and which it might be most helpful at this point to simply dissolve.

See ATTACHMENT F for further discussion of this matter.

FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT

No direct fiscal impact would be anticipated along with any changes to the current advisory board appointment and training processes.

Staff already serve as liaisons to all advisory boards. Whether staff and/or board chairs were to take a lead role in any more involved appointment and/or training process, communicating these new needs, training the trainers, doing the actual trainings, and following-up more rigorously would take considerable staff time and resources. The exact amount would depend on what any new processes looked like. Reducing the complexity of the current system (and/or the number of existing advisory boards) would *save* staff time and resources.

Staff continues to encourage the Board to consider other options besides creating new committees, task forces, etc. when addressing issues. Many times, existing committees or other means are available to address the issue.

RECOMMENDATION

Town staff recommend the Board consider whether there are problems in any of the areas described above that a) need to be solved *and* b) can be solved in a way that is less burdensome overall (for volunteers, staff, and the Board of Aldermen) than the problems themselves. Town staff also recommend that the Board dissolve the Cable Television Committee as well as the Cemetery Commission.