



City of Greensboro

Melvin Municipal Building
300 W. Washington Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Meeting Minutes - Final Boards and Commission Study Committee

Monday, February 8, 2016

3:30 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call To Order

This Boards and Commissions Study Committee meeting of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 3:30 p.m. on the above date in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building with the following members present: Chairman Mike Barber, Councilmember Marikay Abuzuaite, Councilmember Jamal Fox, and Councilmember Sharon Hightower.

Also present were City Attorney Tom Carruthers, Associate City Attorney Jennifer Schneier and City Clerk Elizabeth H. Richardson.

1. [ID 16-0131](#) Welcome, Introduction of Committee Members, and Purpose of Study Committee - Chairman Barber

Councilmember Barber welcomed everyone to the meeting; and recognized members of the committee.

2. Committee Discussion

2. [ID 16-0132](#) Committee Discussion on Ideas for Changes - Chairman Barber and Committee Members

Associate City Attorney Jennifer Schneier reviewed Article V, Section 2-136 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances with regard to the intent of board appointments; stated Council was in violation of the intent of the Code; spoke to starting a conversation regarding what changes were needed; and provided a spreadsheet for review by the Committee.

Councilmember Hightower left the meeting at 3:35 p.m. and returned at 3:42 p.m.

Discussion took place around the makeup of the spreadsheet; creation of nine slots per board or committee; the need to keep the three-year term limits to maintain seniority and overlap of knowledge; and equitable appointments.

City Attorney Tom Carruthers recommended that the three-year term limit remain; stated that all Councilmembers would still have appointments during their terms as they would be going to four year terms; spoke to the logistical challenges of all reappointments being in 2017 and 2018; and voiced the need for a rolling basis.

Associate City Attorney Schneier provided a handout; used the Planning Board as an example; and reviewed the changes regarding nine appointments for five district slots.

Councilmember Abuzuaite suggested if the Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem did not have candidates that the slot be given to one of the at-large members.

Discussion ensued regarding the changes to the roster; and allotment of vacant slots to at-large members.

Councilmember Barber reminded the Committee of what was recommended; reviewed how selections would be made; stated each Councilmember would receive one appointment; explained why they had selected January 1, 2017 to allow Councilmembers to evaluate members as well as have a date certain where board and commission appointments would become equitable; and stated he would reappoint his person should experience be needed

on the board but that a date certain would mark the moment when each Councilmember had an appointment to ensure equitable distribution and experience among the boards.

Discussion took place regarding all terms ending at the same time; continuing the terms as currently listed; maintaining the existing expiration dates; reappointment eligibility; and ensuring appointments were equitable.

City Attorney Carruthers stated the question for the committee was whether to recommend extension of the staggered terms or have a date certain; stated that this would allow for keeping the terms the same; and would clearly establish nine seats.

Councilmember Barber stated City Attorney Carruthers suggestion sounded like a good compromise; that if the court found there were no at-large positions should eight districts be created, then the at-large positions would be assigned to a new district seat; and verified that the Committee goal would be to give any new Councilmembers the option to select board members when they took over the new district position.

City Attorney Carruthers verified that some of the commissions were regulated by statute and had two and three year terms; reminded the Committee that Council terms would be changing to four year terms with the next election; and stated that the proposal would ensure each Councilmember would get an appointment within their four year term.

Councilmember Fox left the meeting at 3:50 p.m. and returned at 3:55 p.m.

Discussion ensued regarding term limits of Council; moving the process forward in the next couple of weeks to assign a seat for each Councilmember; eligibility of re-appointments; allowance of members to serve until a reappointment was made; process for changing the slots; giving the first district position to the district Councilmember with remaining slots assigned to at-large members; and determination that the order would identify Mayor Vaughan, at-large 1, Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, at-large 2, Councilmember Abuzuaiter, at-large 3, and Councilmember Barber, at-large 4.

City Attorney Carruthers added that the recommendation would be for no more than two district appointments to a nine member board unless specific requirements/qualifications were needed for that board; and spoke to appointments to rebalance commissions.

Councilmember Hightower voiced concern with one district being short a slot on a nine member board; explanations to those members not reappointed when eligible; and ensuring equitable distribution on all boards.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter asked how people would rotate off boards with more than nine members that were being reduced.

Associate City Attorney Schneier provided additional handouts that outlined which boards/commissions could and could not be changed; referenced the increase in the Human Relations Commission from 15 to 18 members; and spoke to other changes.

Discussion took place regarding number of members, vacancies and attendance record of the Commission on the Status of Women; reducing the membership of the Commission on the Status of Women and Community Sustainability Council to nine positions; review of the membership numbers on other boards; and adding alternates to the Redevelopment Commission and Minimum Housing Commission. Discussion continued regarding cutting the Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem appointments when there were less than nine slots as the position of Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem had benefits that the at-large members did not have.

Councilmember Hightower voiced agreement with adding alternates as sometimes boards did not have a quorum; added that alternates should be required to go through training; and reminded the Committee that Council needed to make sure the boards did a good job.

City Attorney Carruthers reminded the Committee of the overall requirement that boards be as equitable as possible.

Councilmember Barber explained the work of the Bryan Park Commission.

City Clerk Betsey Richardson spoke to the number of Council appointments to the Tourism Board being five; outlined what the qualifications were for said members; the process for information provided in the agenda packets; emphasized the importance of persons being placed in the databank at one meeting and appointed at the next to ensure correct equitable distribution; spoke to the distribution of interest forms to at-large members; and clarified that appointments were made at the first Council meeting of the month with placement into the databank at the second Council meeting of the month.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to how the process and increase in membership to the Human Relations Commission would impact the Community Police Review Board; and stated that a resolution could be brought at the March 1 meeting of Council.

Councilmember Barber voiced that the Committee had a good framework.

The Committee discussed the attendance policy; spoke to the elimination of the words 'excused' and 'unexcused'; importance in members attending the meetings; and how many absences would be allowed during the calendar year. Additional discussion took place regarding confirmation that three absences would be allowed in a twelve month period.

City Clerk Richardson outlined the current process when members missed three meetings for sending soft attendance letters; and emphasized the importance for members' commitments to serve on boards.

Discussion took place regarding the number of boards one person could serve on; and it was determined that a person could be appointed to two boards at one time according to State Statute.

Councilmember Hightower voiced that members should only be allowed to serve on one board at a time.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter referenced past situations where a member was appointed according to the district in which they worked, not where they resided.

City Clerk Richardson advised that staff checked the district according to the residential address provided on the interest forms; and outlined the process for staff members to notify her when persons were absent.

Discussion took place regarding the length of time names remained in the databank list.

Councilmember Barber advised City Clerk Richardson to work with the Legal Department to determine a process for members rolling off boards where position slots would be reduced.

3. Presentations and Updates

Presentations were provided during the Committee discussion.

3. [ID 16-0133](#) Staff Review of Existing Boards/Commissions and Overview of Proposed Change Options - Jennifer Schneier

City Attorney Carruthers and Associate City Attorney Schneier provided updates during the Committee discussion.

(A copy of the handouts are filed in Exhibit Drawer Y, Exhibit No. 7, which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes.)

4. Committee Recommendation

4. [ID 16-0134](#) Committee Recommendation for Council Consideration - Chairman Barber

Moved by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Abuzuaiter to have a resolution with the Committee

recommendations brought before Council at the March 1 meeting of Council. The motion carried by voice vote.

5. Adjournment

Moved by Councilmember Hightower, seconded by Councilmember Fox, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

THE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS STUDY COMMITTEE ADJOURNED AT 4:16 P.M.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

MIKE BARBER
CHAIR