

Takoma Park City Council Meeting – January 15, 2020 Agenda Item 3

**Work Session** Update on Review of Committees

#### **Recommended Council Action**

Discuss and provide direction to staff

#### **Context with Key Issues**

In an effort to increase community engagement through the Council-appointed committees, a small working group is focusing on how the committees function and identifying opportunities for improvement. The City has 143 current committee members serving on its 16 active standing committees and two limited duration task forces.

In Fall 2019, the City surveyed residents, who either serve or had served on a City committee within the last few years, about their experiences. A total of 164 people received the link, and 100 people answered the 52-question survey. Survey results and a summary are attached. Four general topics emerge from the responses: membership, committee relations with Council, staffing and resources, and operations and training.

Overall, the committees are not representative of the demographics of the City. Almost 80% of the survey respondents are white; 84% are home-owners, 70% have achieved master's, professional or Ph.D. degrees; and over 65% have a household income over \$100,000.

Survey participants report a wide range of experiences regarding the functionality of committees, the obstacles to participating, and the adequacy of support. Generally, participants indicate they find the experience rewarding (76%), that they learn a great deal (75%); and that they would recommend volunteering on their committee to others (73%). The survey also identifies areas for improvement with operations of the committee.

Next steps are to develop recommendations for standardizing, systematizing and improving committee operations and training, and to consider a range of options for recruitment, selection, and support.

#### **Council Priority**

A Livable Community for All Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government

#### **Environmental Considerations**

There is no environmental impact from the review of the Council-appointed committees.

#### **Fiscal Considerations**

There is no fiscal impact from the review of the Council-appointed committees.

#### **Racial Equity Considerations**

Council-appointed committees do not generally reflect the diversity of the population of Takoma Park. Improvements of the recruitment, training, functionality and support of committees may encourage more people from all backgrounds in the City to participate in the Council-appointed committees.

#### Attachments and Links

- Summary of Survey Results
- Charts showing results of survey questions

#### Takoma Park Committee Survey Report Summary

In Fall 2019, the City of Takoma Park surveyed residents who either serve or had served on one or more City committee within the last few years about their experiences. Of the 164 people who received the survey link, a total of 100 completed the 52-question survey. Four general themes emerge from the responses.

#### Membership:

Most participants heard about the opportunity to serve on a committee through the Takoma Park Newsletter (42%). A larger percentage of others (29%) were recruited by another committee member, staff, the mayor or a councilmember. Roughly 15% of participants heard of the opportunity through the City website.

Most participants stated that they decided to volunteer because they want(ed) to serve the community and/or because they had interest in the subject matter. Just under half of the participants spent an average of 3-5 hours a month involved in committee related activities. Over 75% of the participants either strongly agreed or agreed that serving on a committee was a rewarding experience. Over half of the participants stated that they learned a great deal from serving on a committee, that they would recommend volunteering on their committee to others, and that they could effectively contribute their knowledge, expertise, and perspective to the work of the committee.

#### **Committee relationship with Council:**

Almost 90% of participants indicated that they understood the goals and purpose of their committee. Roughly 75% stated that the actions of the committee reflected the goals and purpose of the committee, and that they understood how the goals and purpose supported the priorities and goals of the City Council. The majority of survey participants (62%) felt that their committee had the support and respect of City Council and 26% neither agree nor disagree.

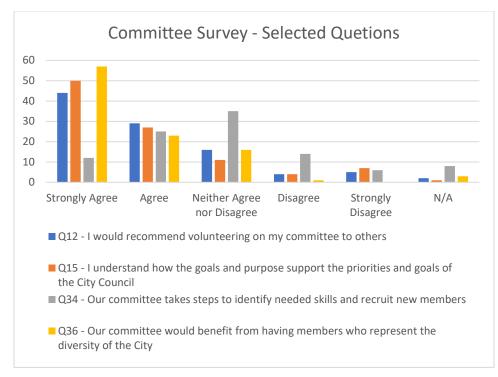
#### Staffing and resources:

The participants largely agreed that their committees had adequate staff assistance. Over 80% of participants indicated that they receive data/reports as needed or neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Of those who felt the question was applicable, 87% felt their committee received adequate legal counsel when needed and almost 83% felt their committee budget was adequate, or they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements.

#### **Operations and training:**

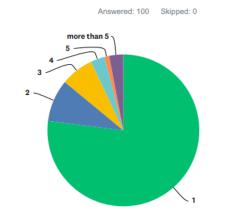
Results on whether the committees received adequate training on meeting procedures were mixed with 44% agreeing, 26% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 21% disagreeing. Almost 75% agree that meetings were held with appropriate frequency and 70% feel that their respective committee should meet on a monthly basis. Roughly 75% stated that they received the meeting agenda and materials in advance of the meeting; 62% state that meeting time is used effectively; over 75% of participants stated that they consistently had a quorum in attendance; over 80% stated that the committee consistently follows the agenda. Almost 90% agreed that all committee

members were given an opportunity to participate and almost all agreed that votes were taken when needed. About 65% of participants agree that their committee membership represented the talent and skill set required to fulfill the goals and purpose of the committee. Participants agreed that their committee would benefit from having members who represent the diversity of the City in terms of race, age, ward, ethnicity, economic status, etc. (80%).



#### **Demographics:**

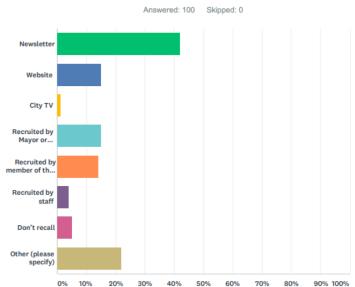
- 75% of participants were over the age of 40 with the "41-60" age range having the largest number of participants at 36%; 6% of participants were 25 and younger.
- Wards 1, 2, and 3 had the largest percentage of participants at around 20% each; Participants in Wards 4, 5, and 6 had less representation at around 10% each.
- 84% of participants stated that they own a home and 15% stated that they rent.
- 79% of participants were White, 7% were Black or African-American, 1% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3% were Asian, 7% were from multiple races with 3% writing in Latino/Latina.
- Roughly 46% of participants had a Master's degree, 15% had a Bachelor's, 13% had a Professional degree, 10% had a Doctorate, 4% had an Associate degree, 4% had some college but no degree, 4% had less than a high school diploma, and 2% had a high school degree or equivalent.
- Roughly 2% of participants had an annual household income of less than \$20,000; 2% had an annual household income of \$20,000 to \$34,999; almost 6% had an annual household income of \$35,000 to \$49,999; 14% had an annual household income of \$50,000 to \$74,999; 9% had an annual household income of \$75,000 to \$99,999; 66% had an annual household income over \$100,000 and. 15% chose not to state their income range.



#### Q1 On how many committees have you served?

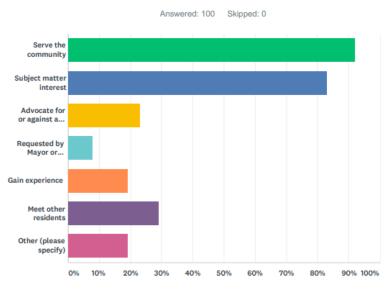
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	77.00%	77
2	9.00%	9
3	7.00%	7
4	3.00%	3
5	1.00%	1
more than 5	3.00%	3
TOTAL		100

# Q4 How did you hear about the opportunity to apply to serve on the committee? Check all that apply.



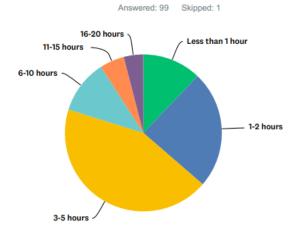
RESPONSES ANSWER CHOICES 42.00% 42 Newsletter 15.00% 15 Website 1 1.00% City TV 15.00% 15 Recruited by Mayor or Councilmember 14.00% 14 Recruited by member of the committee 4.00% 4 Recruited by staff 5.00% 5 Don't recall 22 22.00% Other (please specify) Total Respondents: 100

#### Q5 Why did you decide to serve? Check all that apply.



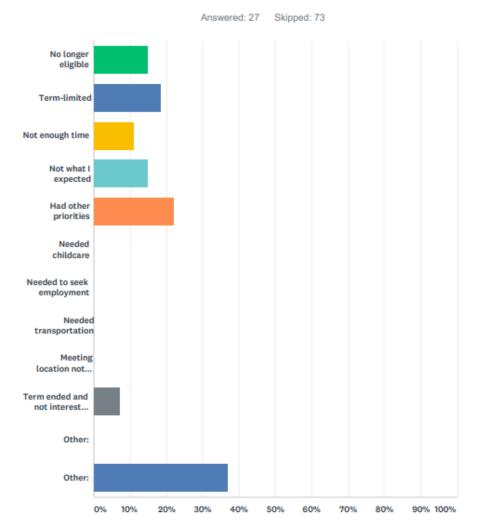
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Serve the community	92.00%	92
Subject matter interest	83.00%	83
Advocate for or against an issue	23.00%	23
Requested by Mayor or Councilmember	8.00%	8
Gain experience	19.00%	19
Meet other residents	29.00%	29
Other (please specify)	19.00%	19
Total Respondents: 100		

# Q6 In the most recent year on the committee, on average, how many hours a month did you spend on committee business, including in committee meetings?

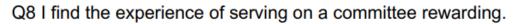


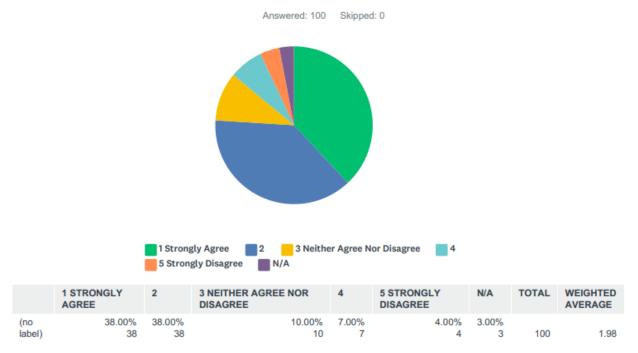
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 hour	12.12%	12
1-2 hours	24.24%	24
3-5 hours	43.43%	43
6-10 hours	11.11%	11
11-15 hours	5.05%	5
16-20 hours	4.04%	4
More than 20 hours	0.00%	0
TOTAL		99

# Q7 If you no longer serve on the committee, why did you leave? Check all that apply.

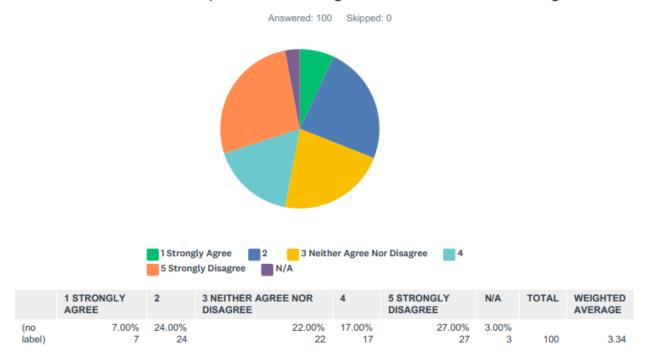


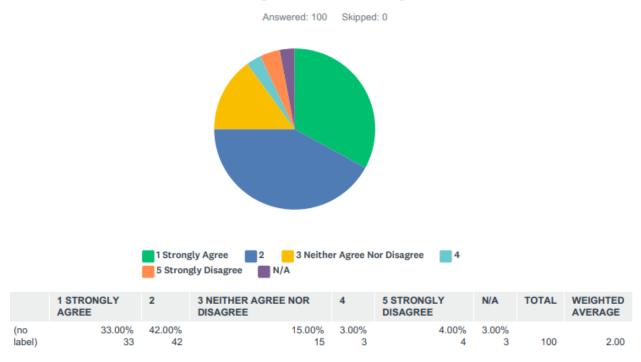
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No longer eligible	14.81%	4
Term-limited	18.52%	5
Not enough time	11.11%	3
Not what I expected	14.81%	4
Had other priorities	22.22%	6
Needed childcare	0.00%	0
Needed transportation	0.00%	0
Meeting location not accessible	0.00%	0
Term ended and not interested in renewing	7.41%	2
Other:	0.00%	0
Other:	37.04%	10
Total Respondents: 27		





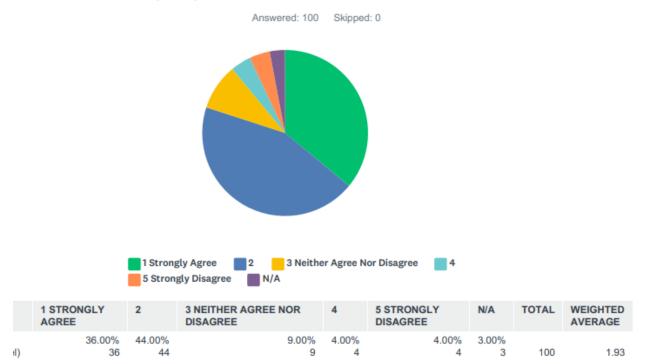
#### Q9 I find the experience serving on a committee frustrating.

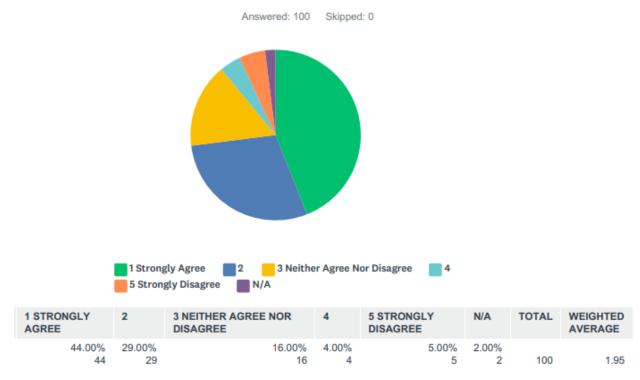




### Q10 I have learned a great deal serving on the committee.

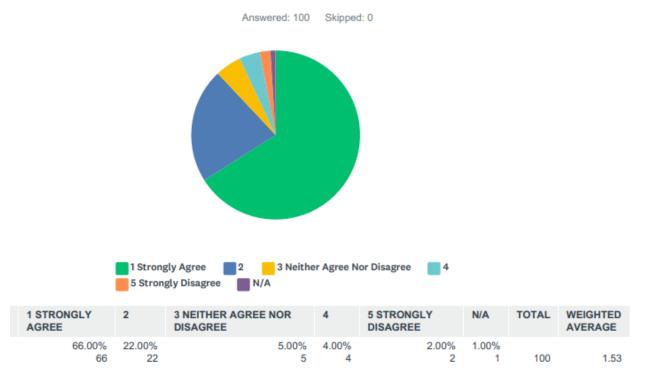
# Q11 I find that I can effectively to contribute my knowledge, expertise, and perspective to the work of the committee.



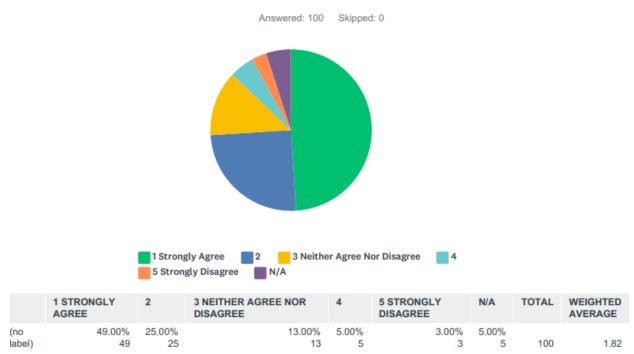


# Q12 I would recommend volunteering on my committee to others.

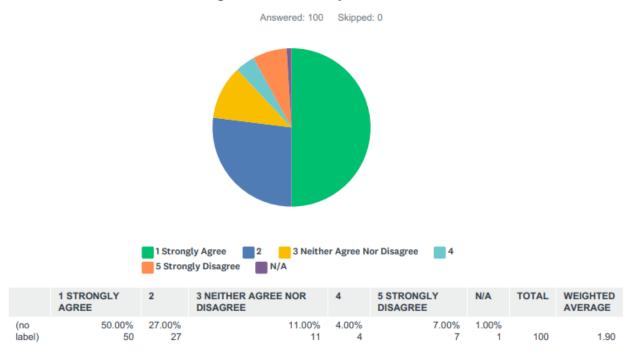
### Q13 I understand the goals and purpose of the committee.

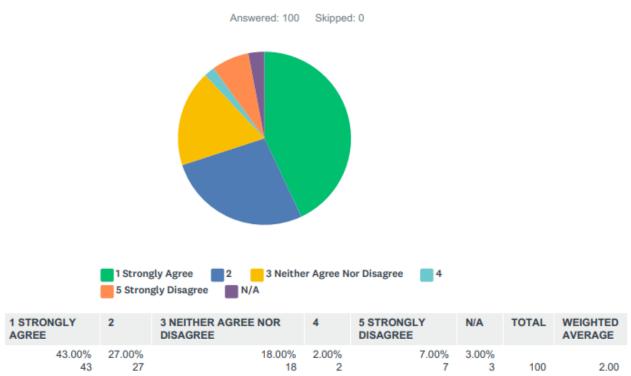


# Q14 The actions the committee takes reflect the goals and purpose of the committee.



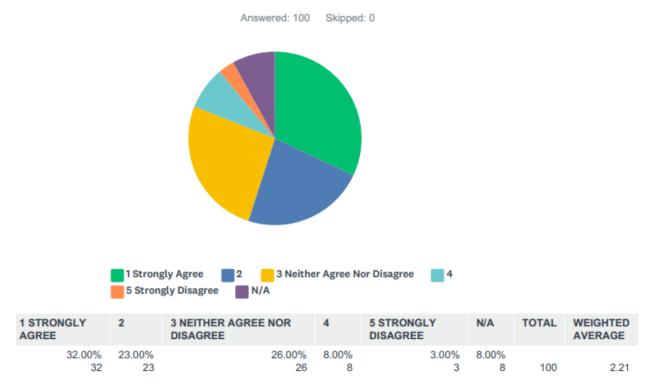
# Q15 I understand how the goals and purpose support the priorities and goals of the City Council.

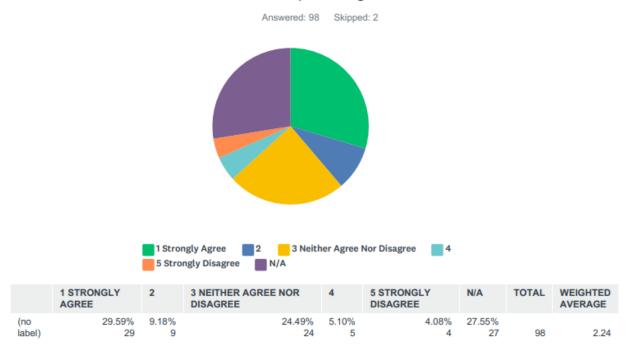




# Q16 Our committee has adequate staff assistance.

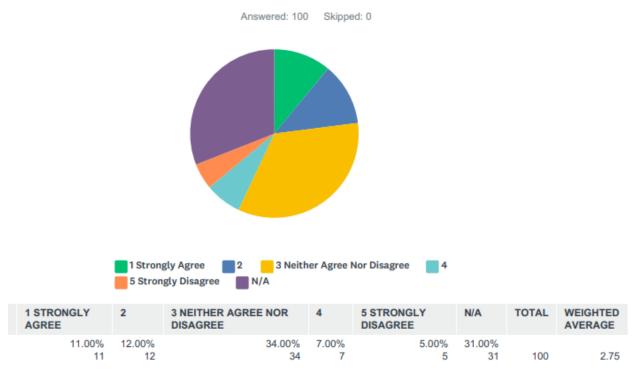
# Q17 Our committee receives data/reports as needed.

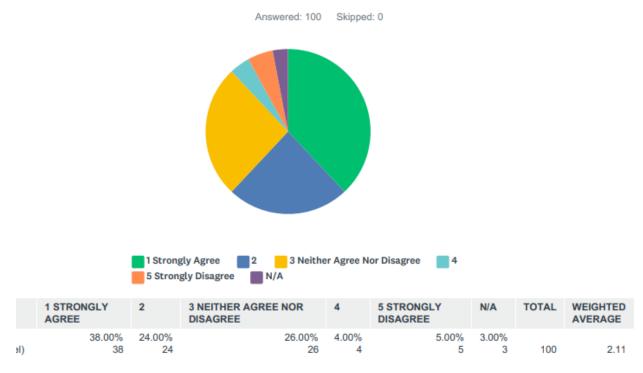




#### Q18 Our committee has adequate legal counsel when needed.

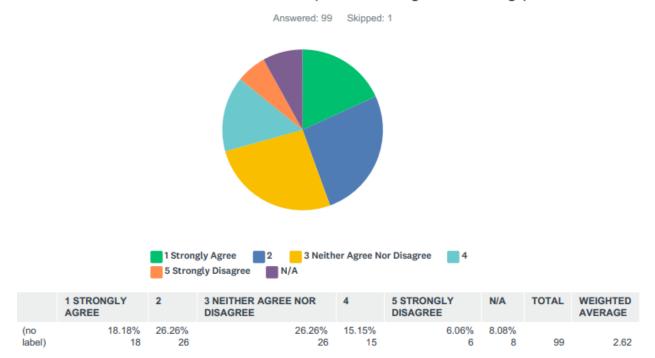
# Q19 Our committee budget is adequate.

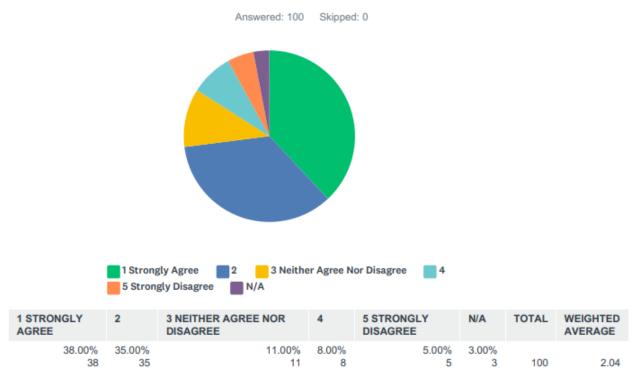




### Q20 Our committee has the support and respect of the City Council.

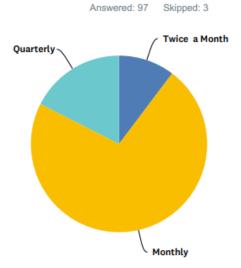
### Q21 Our committee received adequate training on meeting procedures.



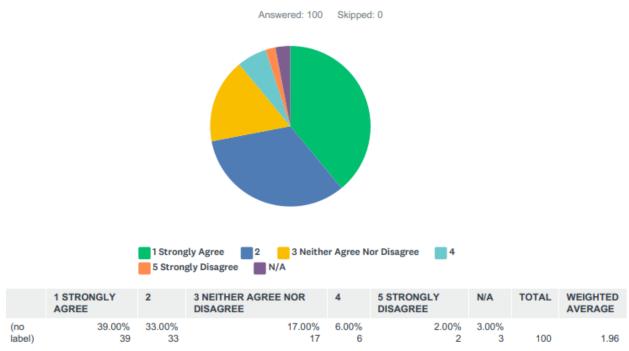


# Q22 Meetings are held with appropriate frequency.

#### Q23 How often do you think the committee should meet?

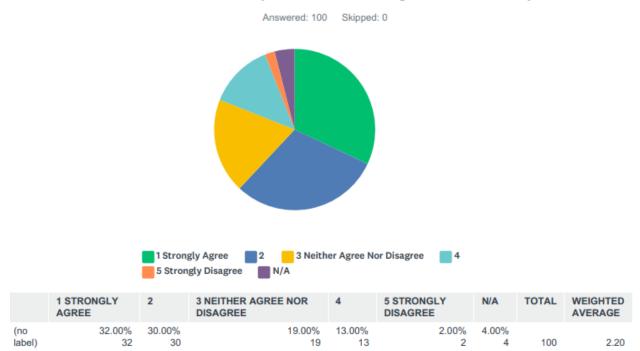


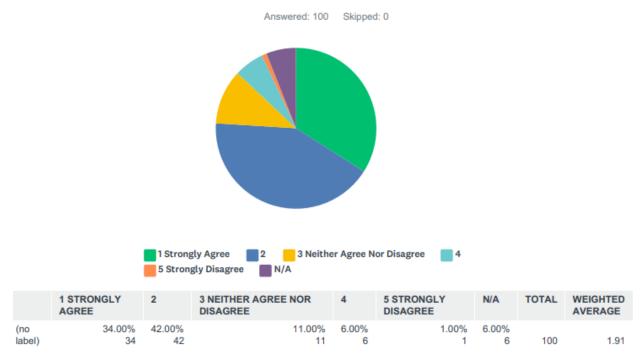
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Weekly	0.00%	0
Twice a Month	10.31%	10
Monthly	72.16%	70
Quarterly	17.53%	17
TOTAL		97



# Q24 We receive the meeting agenda and materials in advance of the meeting to allow for appropriate review and preparation.

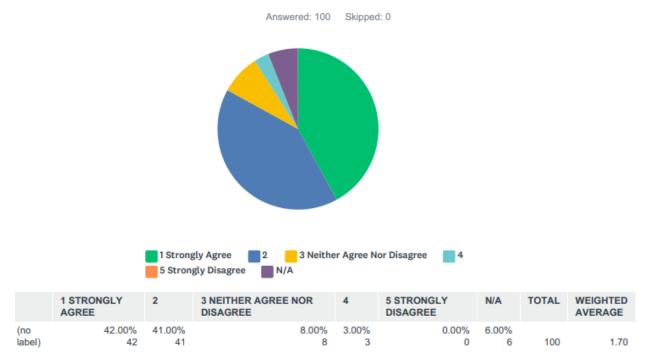
### Q25 We consistently use our meeting time effectively.

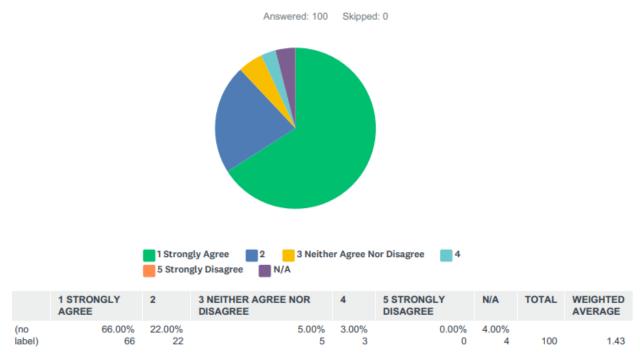




### Q26 We consistently have a quorum in attendance.

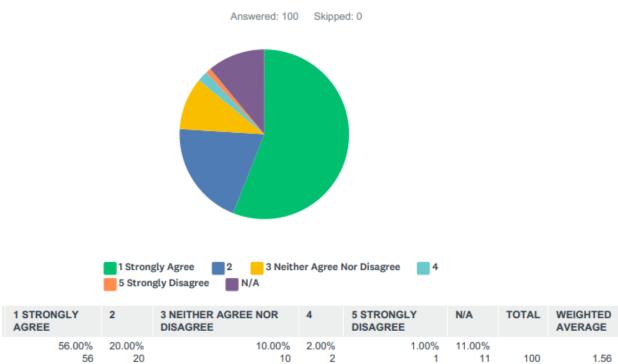
### Q27 We consistently follow the agenda.

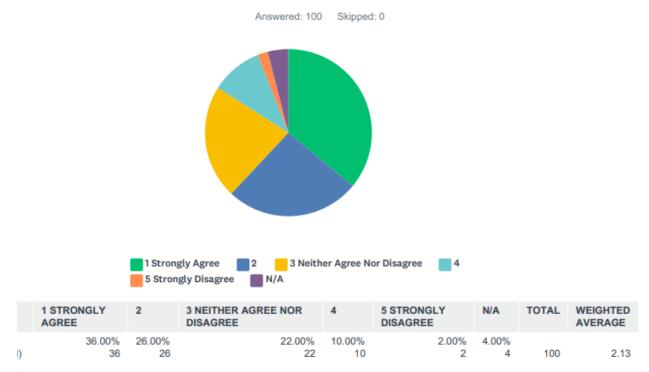




### Q28 All members are given an opportunity to participate.

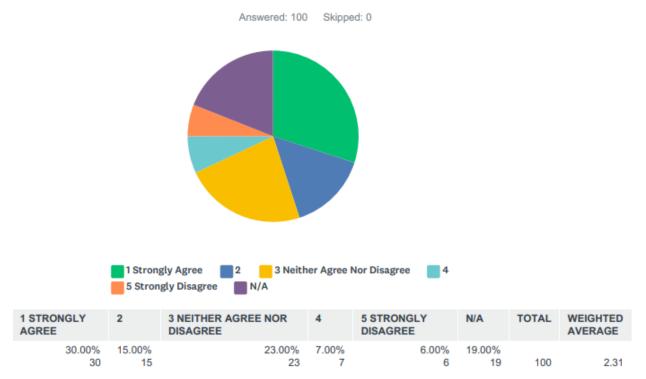
# Q29 Votes are taken when needed.



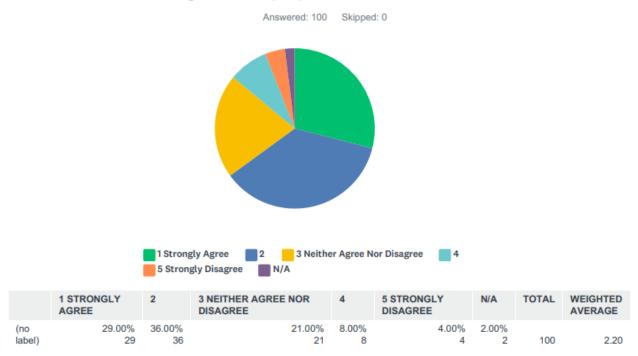


# Q30 Issues get time and attention proportionate to their importance.

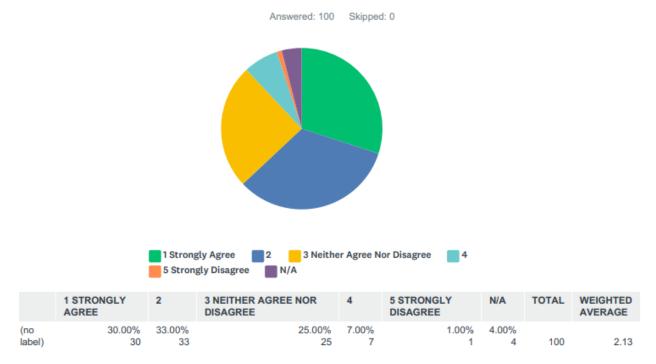
# Q31 The committee votes to elect officers annually.



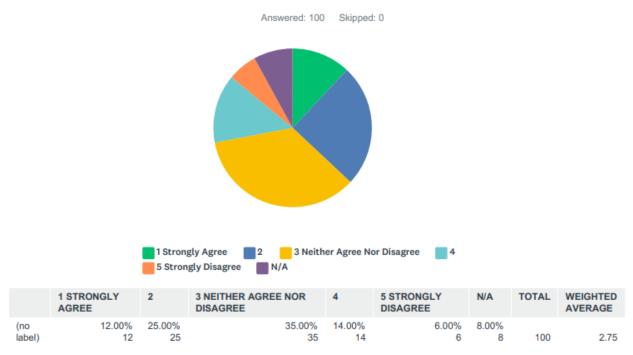
# Q32 Our membership represents the talent and skill set required to fulfill the goals and purpose of the committee.



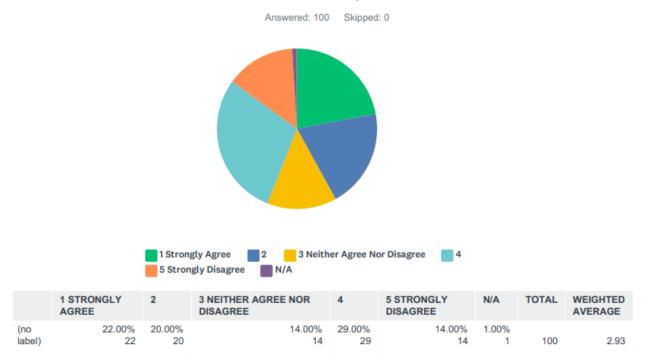
#### Q33 Members come to meetings prepared and ready to contribute.



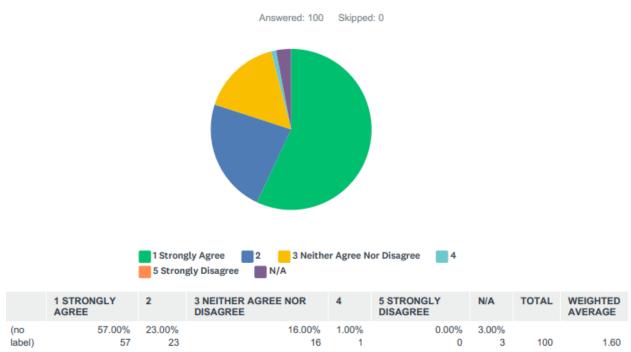
# Q34 Our committee takes steps to identify needed skills and recruit new members.



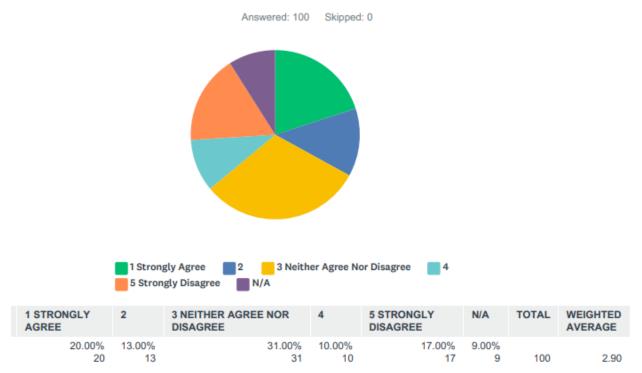
# Q35 Our committee membership is representative of the Takoma Park community.



### Q36 Our committee would benefit from having members who represent the diversity of the City in terms of race, age, ward, ethnicity, economic status, etc.

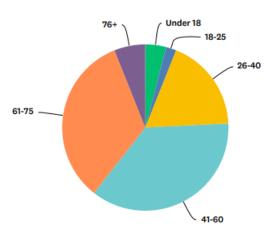


# Q37 Our committee should have term limits.



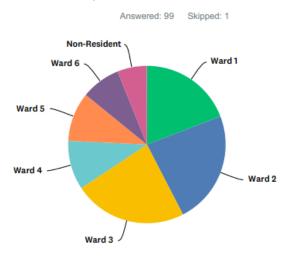
#### Q43 How old are you?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	4.04%	4
18-25	2.02%	2
26-40	18.18%	18
41-60	36.36%	36
61-75	33.33%	33
76+	6.06%	6
TOTAL		99

# Q44 Where do you live in the City (or where did you live when serving on the committee)? Not sure? Check the ward map.

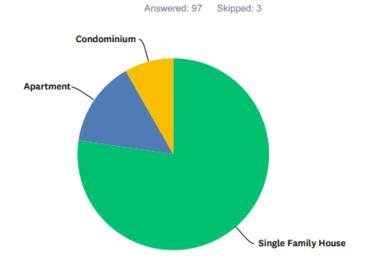


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ward 1	19.19%	19
Ward 2	23.23%	23
Ward 3	23.23%	23
Ward 4	10.10%	10
Ward 5	10.10%	10
Ward 6	8.08%	8
Non-Resident	6.06%	6
TOTAL		99

# Q45 Do you own or rent your home?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own	84.38%	81
Rent	15.63%	15
TOTAL		96



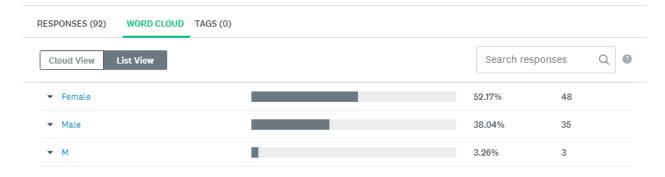
Q46 Do you live in a

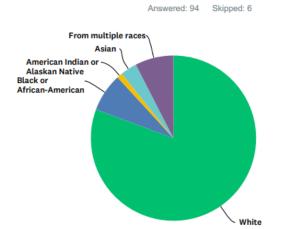
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single Family House	77.32%	75
Apartment	14.43%	14
Condominium	8.25%	8
TOTAL		97



# To which gender do you most identify?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 8



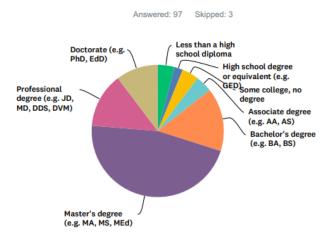


Q48 Please identify your race.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White	79.79%	75
Black or African-American	7.45%	7
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.06%	1
Asian	3.19%	3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
From multiple races	7.45%	7
TOTAL		94

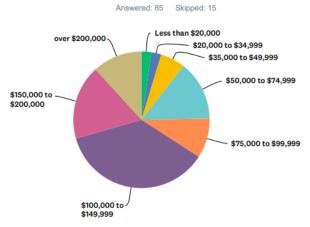
Q47

#### Q51 What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If you're currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received.)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than a high school diploma	4.12%	4
High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)	2.06%	2
Some college, no degree	4.12%	4
Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)	4.12%	4
Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)	15.46%	15
Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)	46.39%	45
Professional degree (e.g. JD, MD, DDS, DVM)	13.40%	13
Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)	10.31%	10
Other:	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		97

#### Q52 What is your annual household income?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$20,000	2.35%	2
\$20,000 to \$34,999	2.35%	2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	5.88%	5
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14.12%	12
\$75,000 to \$99,999	9.41%	8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	36.47%	31
\$150,000 to \$200,000	17.65%	15
over \$200,000	11.76%	10
TOTAL		85