



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – September 23, 2020 Agenda Item 4

Work Session

Discussion of Committee Appointments

Recommended Council Action

Discuss whether and how to proceed with filling vacancies on boards, commissions, and committees over the next few months.

Context with Key Issues

The City Council set as one of its priorities a review of the existing structure, appointment processes, and practices for Council-appointed committees to increase efficiency and effectiveness and attract new members, and to explore innovative ways to engage residents who tend to be harder to reach, with a desired outcome of enabling diverse, engaged, productive, and rewarding committee membership.

On June 3, 2020, the Council heard an update on the work of a small ad hoc committee that included a number of staff members, Mayor Stewart, and Councilmember Dyballa. The committee had put out preliminary draft recommendations that included, among other things, establishing a new process for selecting and appointing committee members. The complete draft recommendations are attached.

The specific recommendations related to the committee appointment process are listed here:

- Develop job descriptions for committee members and criteria matrix for selection (jointly developed by committees and Council).
- Have an annual open application period with a common deadline of May 1 with appointments scheduled to be effective July 1.
- Publicize vacancies through newsletter, media, local organizations.
- Include question on application regarding the need for specific accommodations.
- Develop a recruitment/nominating committee of two or three Councilmembers.
- Council members on committee to meet with potential committee members before they come before council for appointment.
- When possible, require applicants attend a committee meeting before appointment.
- Invite committee input on potential applicants using established criteria.
- Council makes final selection of applicants and adopts appointment resolutions.

Because these and other preliminary draft recommendations had not been shared with committees and the public for comment and feedback, and, recognizing that the review process will extend into early 2021, the committee recommended 1) that Council consider delaying appointments to fill committee vacancies unless needed to keep the committee functioning, and 2) that Council extend the terms of eligible committee members to June 30, 2021.

On July 29, 2020, the Council adopted an emergency ordinance (Ordinance 2020-25) to extend committee terms for eligible members. No final decision was made on whether to delay filling vacancies. The Council agreed to revisit the question in September. This work session is intended

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Approved by: Suzanne R. Ludlow, City Manager

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to discuss how to handle committee vacancies in the interim period until the committee review process is completed.

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive and Service-Oriented Government. Review existing structure, appointment processes, and practices for Council-appointed committees to increase efficiency and effectiveness and attract new members, and to explore innovative ways to engage residents who tend to be harder to reach, with a desired outcome of enabling diverse, engaged, productive, and rewarding committee membership.

Environmental Considerations

N/A

Fiscal Considerations

N/A

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

- Ordinance 2020-25 Extending Committee Member Terms to June 30, 2021
- [Preliminary Draft Recommendations prepared by the ad hoc review committee \(presented to Council on June 3, 2020\)](#)
- Current Membership of Boards, Commissions and Committees

1 Introduced by: Councilmember Seamens
2
3

4 **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

5
6 **UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE**

7
8 **2020–25**
9

10 **An uncodified Ordinance whereby the City of Takoma Park extends**
11 **the terms of office of its Boards, Committees, and Commissions to June**
12 **30, 2021.**
13

14 **WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park Code, section 2.16.010(A) Boards and Commissions,
15 Membership of statutory Council-appointed committees, states that the “Council
16 shall appoint all members of the committees identified in this section,” which
17 includes: the Arts and Humanities Commission, the Board of Elections, the
18 Commemoration Commission, the Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs, the
19 Committee on the Environment, the Complete Safe Streets Committee, the
20 Emergency Preparedness Committee, the Ethics Commission, the Facade
21 Advisory Board, the Noise Control Board, the Nuclear-Free Committee, the
22 Personnel Appeal Board, the Recreation Committee, the Safe Roadways
23 Committee, and the Tree Commission; and
24

25 **WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park Code, section 2.16.010(C) Membership of statutory
26 Council-appointed committees sets forth a Term Expiration Chart for
27 appointments to the aforementioned Boards, Committees, and Commissions,
28 which identifies varying term lengths and varying dates of expiration; and
29

30 **WHEREAS,** the provisions of this ordinance shall apply to the Grants Review Committee
31 which was established by resolution and is not codified; and
32

33 **WHEREAS,** various aspects of the aforementioned Boards, Committees, and Commissions are
34 presently undergoing a general review and it is anticipated that revisions to this
35 Chapter will be made; and
36

37 **WHEREAS,** the City was unable to complete its review prior to the expiration of the current
38 fiscal year for a variety of reasons, to include the state of emergency and public
39 health catastrophe caused by the outbreak of disease known as COVID–19, also
40 referred to as the novel coronavirus; and
41

42 **WHEREAS,** appointments to certain of the aforementioned Boards, Committees, and
43 Commissions expired on March 31 and June 30, 2020, pursuant to the Term
44 Expiration Chart; and
45

1 **WHEREAS,** certain members of the Boards, Committees, and Commissions are not eligible
2 for term extensions due to term limits and others do not wish to have their terms
3 extended.
4

5 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF**
6 **TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND, THAT** the City Council hereby extend appointments to the
7 City's Boards, Committees, and Commissions to June 30, 2021, and enact this uncodified
8 emergency Ordinance as follows:
9

10 **Section 1.** All appointments to the City's Boards, Committees, and Commissions that
11 expired on March 31 and June 30, 2020, shall be extended to June 30, 2021.

12 **Section 2.** Any appointment to the City's Boards, Committees, and Commissions that
13 expires between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021, shall be extended to June 30,
14 2021.
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16 **Section 3.** This uncodified emergency Ordinance shall be retroactive to March 31, 2020.
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18 **Section 4.** This uncodified emergency Ordinance applies to members whose terms are
19 expired or will be expiring, and who are not subject to term limits and wish to
20 continue to serve.
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22 **Section 5.** The City Council may rescind, modify, or extend this uncodified emergency
23 Ordinance.
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25 THIS ORDINANCE, WHICH IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, IS ADOPTED BY THE
26 COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARLYAND, THIS 29TH DAY OF JULY,
27 2020, BY ROLL-CALL VOTE AS FOLLOWS:
28

- 29 AYE: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuk, Seamens, Smith, Searcy
- 30 NAY: None
- 31 ABSTAIN: None
- 32 ABSENT: None