



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 7, 2021 Agenda Item 5

Work Session

Continued Conversation on Committees

Recommended Council Action

Discuss suggested recruitment and appointment strategy, and schedule for code changes to implement recommendations.

Context with Key Issues

The Council has identified a priority of reviewing the existing structure, appointment processes, and practices for Council-appointed committees to increase efficiency and effectiveness, attract new members, and explore innovative ways to engage residents who tend to be harder to reach. The desired outcome is to enable more diverse, engaged, productive, and rewarding committee membership.

The Council is in the process of a series of work sessions that will continue over the next several months to finalize progress toward achieving these goals. In June 2021 the council extended existing committee appointments to Oct. 15, to allow time to implement changes as well as to recruit and appoint new members. Recent work sessions in Feb., April and May have focused on defining an overall purpose for committees, factors for considering whether to create or continue a committee on a particular issue, and applying this to existing committees, boards and commissions.

At this work session, a Council subgroup (Councilmembers Dyballa, Searcy, and Kostiuk) will summarize for council discussion a recruitment strategy to increase diversity on committees, and a schedule for recruitment, appointments and code changes.

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government: Improve and Formalize Systems for Council-Appointed Committees.

Goal: Improve and formalize systems for Council-appointed committees.

Strategy: Review existing structure, appointment processes, and practices for Council-appointed committees, and make changes to increase efficiency and effectiveness and attract new members; explore innovative ways to engage residents who tend to be harder to reach.

Desired outcome: Diverse, engaged, productive, and rewarding committee membership.

Environmental Considerations

There is no direct environmental impact from the review of the Council-appointed committees. A Council action related to the Committee on the Environment or other committees focused on climate-change or sustainability initiatives could have a positive or negative impact on environmental initiatives in the future, depending on final direction in this area and the future work of the committee.

Fiscal Considerations

Some of the recommendations related to recruitment activities and member supports, such as stipends or childcare/transportation reimbursement or services, have possible staff and budget impacts. Estimated costs will be considered in decisions about adopting changes.

Racial Equity Considerations

Existing Council-appointed committees do not generally reflect the diversity of the population of Takoma Park, as shown by the committee members survey and data collected. Improvements in recruitment, training, operations and support of committees and committee members have the potential to create more diverse and representative Council-appointed committees and bolster their capacity to incorporate racial equity considerations in all their committee work.

Links to Background Information

- June 16, 2021 [voting session](#)
- June 9, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- May 19, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- May 12, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#), [presentation on orientation/handbook](#)
- May 5, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- April 14, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- March 17, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- March 3, 2021 [work session](#) and [presentation](#)
- Feb. 17, 2021 work session [information](#) and [presentation](#)
- June 2020 Review and [Draft Recommendations](#) for Structure and Operations (prepared by the working group)
- [Link to](#) Board, Commission, and Committee Membership Information
- [Link to Committee Survey Results](#)