



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – January 24, 2024 Agenda Item 2

Voting Session

Ordinance Amending the City Code to Remove Provisions Regarding the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee

Recommended Council Action

Approve the ordinance.

Context with Key Issues

The City Council made new and renewed appointments to many council-appointed boards, commissions and committees on Aug. 2, 2023, after discussing these issues on July 26, 2023. At that time, the City Council affirmed the City's continuing commitment to a nuclear-free city, declined to make appointments or reappointments to the Nuclear-Free Committee, and asked the City Attorney to draft language amending the City Code concerning the Nuclear-Free Committee. The language in the draft ordinance responds to that request.

The City Council was briefed on Feb. 1, 2023 and June 23, 2023 on city committees, the appointment process, and 2021 changes to city committee scope, charges, and membership. The 2021 changes, which included consolidation of all established committees into one section of code, were designed to increase efficiency and effectiveness, attract new members, and employ innovative ways to engage residents who tend to be harder to reach.

The draft ordinance was reviewed and revised by the City Council at the work session on January 10, 2024. The Council approved the ordinance at first reading on January 17.

Council Priority

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

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

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

Environmental Considerations

There is no direct environmental impact from this update on Council-appointed committees.

Fiscal Considerations

Providing stipends to committee members, and some of the updated recruitment, administrative and operational procedures, have modest staff and budget impacts. Estimated costs were considered in decisions about adopting changes.

Racial Equity Considerations

The changes to the appointment process and City Code provisions that became effective in 2021, along with the membership stipends, were intended as steps to make committee membership more reflective of the Takoma Park community.

Attachments and Links

- Second Reading Ordinance Amending the City Code to Remove Provisions Regarding the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee
- [Takoma Park Code, Chapter 2.16 Advisory Committees](#)
- [Takoma Park Code, Chapter 14.04 Nuclear-Free Zone](#)

1 Introduced by: Councilmember Gibson

2
3 First Reading: January 17, 2024

4 Second Reading:

5 Effective Date:
6

7 **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**
8 **ORDINANCE 2024-01**
9

10 **AMENDING THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK CODE IN ORDER TO**
11 **REMOVE PROVISIONS REGARDING THE NUCLEAR-FREE**
12 **COMMITTEE**
13

14 **WHEREAS,** since 1983 the City of Takoma Park has been **committed to its status as a**
15 **nuclear-free zone**, and will maintain that status as outlined in Chapter 14.04 of
16 the City Code which is more commonly known as the Takoma Park Nuclear-Free
17 Zone Act; and
18

19 **WHEREAS,** Maryland Code, Local Government Article, Section 5–202, as amended,
20 authorizes the legislative body of each municipal corporation in the State of
21 Maryland to pass ordinances that such legislative body deems necessary to assure
22 the good government of the municipality, to protect and preserve the
23 municipality’s rights, property and privileges, to preserve peace and good order,
24 to secure persons and property from danger and destruction, and to protect the
25 health, comfort, and convenience of the citizens of the municipality; and
26

27 **WHEREAS,** Section 401(a) of the City Charter states that the Council has the power to pass
28 all such ordinances not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the State of
29 Maryland as it may deem necessary for the good government of the City, for the
30 protection and preservation of the City’s property, rights, and privileges, for the
31 preservation of peace and good order, for securing persons and property from
32 violence, danger or destruction, and for the protection and promotion of the
33 health, safety, comfort, convenience, welfare, and happiness of the residents of
34 and visitors in the City; and
35

36 **WHEREAS,** Section 401(b)(1) of the City Charter states that the Council has the power to
37 establish any administrative agencies, boards, and commissions that may be
38 deemed necessary to further the purposes of the City; and
39

40 **WHEREAS,** the original Nuclear-Free Act had two purposes: (1) to establish the City as a
41 nuclear-free zone where work on nuclear weapons is prohibited and harmful
42 exposure to high-level nuclear waste is limited, and (2) to redirect resources
43 previously used for nuclear weapons and nuclear power generation towards
44 endeavors which promote and enhance life; and
45

1 **WHEREAS,** the original Nuclear-Free Act: (1) prohibited the production of nuclear weapons
2 within the City, (2) contemplated a socially responsible investment policy,
3 specifically limiting City investments in nuclear weapons producers, (3)
4 generally prohibited City purchases from nuclear weapons producers, and (4)
5 included a city council-appointed resident committee, the Nuclear-Free Takoma
6 Park Committee to assist in implementing these provisions; and
7

8 **WHEREAS,** a 2021 city council review of all city council-appointed commissions, boards &
9 committees, undertaken to strengthen committee effectiveness and be more
10 representative of the community as a whole, recommended, based on a set of
11 common factors applied to all such groups, restructuring or discontinuing several
12 groups including the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee; and
13

14 **WHEREAS,** many specific functions originally assigned to the committee are now performed
15 by city staff, or have very infrequently been exercised; and
16

17 **WHEREAS,** the City Council is committed to building council-appointed committees that
18 closely reflect the diversity of our residents; and
19

20 **WHEREAS,** the City Council has concluded that ongoing attention from a standing city
21 council-appointed committee is no longer necessary to fulfill this policy priority;
22 and
23

24 **WHEREAS,** the City Council is grateful for the years of service rendered by the residents
25 serving on the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee in the past four decades,
26 and expresses deep appreciation for their dedication; and
27

28 **WHEREAS,** the educational activities originally assigned to the Committee have important
29 civic value and City implementation of the Act will include support for resident-
30 led educational efforts.
31

32 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF**
33 **TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND, THAT**
34

35 Section 1. Title 2, Chapter 2.16 be amended as follows:
36

1 **Title 2**
2 **ADMINISTRATION**

3 **Chapters:**

- 4 **2.04 Meetings and Procedures of the Council**
- 5 **2.08 City Management**
- 6 **2.12 Administrative Regulations**
- 7 **2.16 Advisory Committees**
- 8 **2.17 Boards and Commissions**
- 9 **2.20 Police Department**

10 * * *

11 **Chapter 2.16**
12 **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

13 **Sections:**

14 **Article 1. General Provisions**

- 15 2.16.010 Advisory Committees.
- 16 2.16.020 Terms of advisory committees.

17 **Article 2. Arts and Humanities Committee**

- 18 2.16.030 Committee established.
- 19 2.16.040 Statement of purpose.
- 20 2.16.050 Duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

21 **Article 3. Sustainable Maryland Committee**

- 22 2.16.060 Committee established.
- 23 2.16.070 Statement of purpose.
- 24 2.16.080 Duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

25 **Article 4. Emergency Preparedness Committee**

- 26 2.16.090 Committee established.
- 27 2.16.100 Statement of purpose.
- 28 2.16.110 Duties and responsibilities of the Committee.
- 29 2.16.120 Membership.

30 **Article 5. Recreation and Community Engagement Committee**

- 31 2.16.130 Committee established.
- 32 2.16.140 Statement of purpose.
- 33 2.16.150 Duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

34 **Article 6. Grants Review Committee**

- 35 2.16.160 Committee established.
- 36 2.16.170 Statement of purpose.
- 37 2.16.180 Duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

38 **Article 7. Youth Council**

- 39 2.16.190 Council established.

- 1 2.16.200 Statement of purpose.
- 2 2.16.210 Duties and responsibilities of the Council.
- 3 2.16.220 Membership.

4
5 ~~Article 8. Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee~~

- 6
- 7 ~~2.16.230 Committee established.~~
- 8 ~~2.16.040 Statement of Purpose.~~
- 9 ~~2.16.050 Duties and responsibilities.~~

10

1 2. Each committee shall operate under a common set of procedural rules, which shall
2 be prepared by the City Attorney’s office and be approved by Council.
3

4 3. Each committee shall elect from its members the following officers: chairperson,
5 vice chairperson, and secretary. Officers shall serve for a period of one year at which time
6 each committee shall elect again the officers. The chairperson shall be elected annually,
7 but may only serve in that capacity for two consecutive years. The Chairperson may not
8 hold two offices simultaneously.
9

10 F. Meetings.

11 1. Committees shall meet at least quarterly or as often as required to fulfill their
12 purposes.
13

14 2. All meetings shall be open to the public and are subject to Maryland’s Open
15 Meetings Act. Meeting notices and agendas shall be prepared and submitted to the City
16 Clerk and posted in advance of any committee meeting in accordance with State law.
17 Written records of proceedings and attendance shall be maintained by the committee and
18 provided to the City Clerk for safe keeping. A report on the activities of each committee
19 shall be submitted to the City Clerk and Council once per year.
20

21 3. Meetings shall be held at times that facilitate and allow for committee member
22 attendance and ease of public attendance.
23

24 4. A majority of a committee shall constitute a quorum.
25

26 5. Meetings shall take place at a City government building or other publicly accessible
27 location approved by the City Manager. The meetings may occur in person or virtually, so
28 long as such is announced in advance. Meetings may include a virtual attendance option
29 for members and for the public.
30

31 6. At least three members of every committee must maintain current Open Meetings
32 Act certification and provide a copy of the certification to the City Clerk.
33

34 G. Each committee shall designate an individual who shall be responsible for preparing meeting
35 agendas and minutes, and coordinate publishing and storage of the same with the City Clerk.
36

37 H. Staff liaison. The City Manager shall assign a member of the City staff to act as a staff liaison
38 to each committee, who shall provide general support to the committee.
39

40 I. Member Conduct.

41 1. Members are expected to attend each meeting of the committee on which they
42 serve. Members may miss a scheduled meeting for cause.
43
44
45

1 2. Members are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct established by the Code
2 of Conduct for Council-Appointed Members of Boards, Committees, Commissions, and
3 Task Forces (Resolution 2020-22, Oct. 7, 2020).
4

5 3. Council, by resolution, may remove a member from their position upon finding a
6 violation of the Code of Conduct, no longer meeting the requirements for membership, or
7 otherwise not fulfilling the duties of a member.
8

9 **2.16.020 Terms of advisory committees.**

10
11 A. Except as noted elsewhere in this Chapter, beginning in 2021, the initial term for half of a
12 committee's members will end on June 30, 2022. The initial term for the other half of a
13 committee's members' terms will begin in 2021 and end June 30, 2023. If there are an odd number
14 of appointees, the odd number appointee shall be considered part of the term having the later
15 expiration date.
16

17 B. Except as noted elsewhere in this Chapter, after the initial terms have expired, all terms of
18 office will be staggered terms of two years. Said terms shall begin on July 1st and end June 30th.
19

20 C. The total terms of office for members of a committee shall be no more than six continuous
21 years unless otherwise provided in this Chapter.
22

23 D. A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the term of office that
24 became vacant.
25

26 E. Below is a table containing each advisory committee, the term length, and the expiration
27 date of the term.
28

Advisory Committee	Term Length (Years)	Expiration
Arts and Humanities Committee (Article 2)	2	June 30
Sustainable Maryland Committee (Article 3)	2	June 30
Emergency Preparedness Committee (Article 4)	2	June 30
Recreation and Community Engagement Committee (Article 5)	2	June 30
Grants Review Committee (Article 6)	2	June 30
Youth Council (Article 7)	1	June 30
Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee (Article 8)	2	June 30

1
2
3 * * *
4

5 **Article 8. Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee**
6

7 **2.16.230 — Committee established.**

8 There is established a Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee. Committee members shall have
9 collective experience in the areas of science, research, finance, law, peace and ethics.
10

11 **2.16.240 — Statement of purpose.**

12 The purpose of the Nuclear-Free Takoma Park Committee is to fulfill the duties and
13 responsibilities assigned to it by the City Code and to perform such other tasks as Council may
14 direct from time to time.
15

16 **2.16.250 — Duties and responsibilities.**

17 The Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

18 A. The Committee may review any work within the City which it has reason to believe is not in
19 compliance with Section 14.04.040 of the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act. The Committee
20 shall notify the City Council and the City Manager of a suspected violation of this the Takoma
21 Park Nuclear Free Zone Act.

22 B. The Committee shall review existing City contracts, awards, purchase orders and investments
23 and may review proposed contracts, awards, purchase orders and investments to assure compliance
24 with Sections 14.04.050 and 14.04.060 of the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act. If the
25 Committee finds any contracts, awards, purchase orders or investments in violation of this the
26 Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act, it shall, in conjunction with the City Manager, make
27 recommendations to the Mayor and Council regarding the existence of reasonable alternatives.

28 C. The Committee, in conjunction with the City Manager, shall propose a socially responsible
29 investment policy and implementation plan as specified in Section 14.04.050 and, upon the
30 adoption of the policy and plan, shall annually thereafter review the investment policy to ensure
31 its conformity to this the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act.

32 D. The Committee shall, through the collection of materials, newsletter articles, cable television
33 programming, public forums and other means, provide public education and information on issues
34 related to the intent and purpose of the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act. In performing this
35 task, the Committee shall cooperate with City staff, the Nuclear Freeze Task Force and other
36 interested community groups and individuals.

37 E. The Committee shall maintain a collection of current materials concerning the production of
38 nuclear weapons and the components thereof and the transportation of high level nuclear waste
39 resulting from the production of nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. From this information and
40 from consultations with individuals and organizations involved in the nuclear weapons and nuclear
41 energy debate, the Committee shall annually prepare and report to the City Council a list of nuclear
42 weapons producers to guide the City, its officials, staff and agents in the implementation of
43 Sections 14.04.050 and 14.04.060 of the Takoma Park Nuclear Free Zone Act. The Committee
44 shall also make recommendations to the City Council from this information and from consultations
45 with individuals and organizations involved in the transportation of high level nuclear waste on
46 how best to promote the safety and welfare of the City from harmful exposure to high level nuclear

1 waste.
2 ~~F. Before a waiver of the provisions of Sections 14.04.060(A), (B) or (C) pursuant to Section~~
3 ~~14.04.060(F) may be sought, the Committee, in conjunction with the City Manager or his or her~~
4 ~~designee, shall conduct a diligent search to determine the availability of reasonable alternative~~
5 ~~sources for a necessary product or service, except, however, the City Manager or his or her~~
6 ~~designee and/or the Committee's unwillingness or inability to conduct such a search shall not~~
7 ~~preclude actions by the Mayor and Council pursuant to Section 14.04.060(F). (Ord. 2005-29 (part),~~
8 ~~2005/prior code § 8A-12)~~

9
10 * * *
11 THIS ORDINANCE IS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK,
12 MARYLAND, THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2024, AND SHALL BE EFFECTIVE
13 BEGINNING ON THE 20TH DAY FOLLOWING ITS ENACTMENT, BY ROLL-CALL VOTE
14 AS FOLLOWS:

- 15
16 AYE:
17 NAY:
18 ABSTAIN:
19 ABSENT:

20
21
22 **Explanatory Note:**

- 23
24 1. Underlining indicates language being added to the Code.
25 2. ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates language being deleted from the Code.