



Meeting Date: June 23, 2020

To: President Bielinski and Board of Trustees

From: Michael Braiman, Village Manager

Subject: Boards and Commissions Review

The Administration Committee was scheduled to meet on March 2, 2020 to initiate a review of boards and commissions. That meeting was postponed due to the Board's workload regarding the Optima PUD and Neighborhood Storage Project review and subsequently delayed further due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following Governor Pritzker's signature of the revised Open Meetings Act on June 12, 2020 which permits the Village to hold remote meetings on any topic, the Administration Committee's meeting will be rescheduled for July. This memorandum is submitted to the Village Board for information purposes and will be discussed in greater detail at the upcoming Administration Committee meeting.

Background

The Village Board has periodically reviewed its boards and commissions to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of said bodies. The Board last completed a comprehensive review of boards and commissions in 2010 - 2011. The review resulted in the following changes:

- Consolidation of the Community Relations Commission, Youth Commission, Fine Arts Commission, Board of Health, and Commission for Persons with Disabilities into the Human Relations Commission (HRC)
- Consolidation of the Bicycle Task Force and Environmental & Energy Commission (increased EEC membership from 7 to 9 as a result)

As that was the last review of the Village's boards and commissions, staff recommends reviewing the following:

- Efficiency and effectiveness of existing boards and commissions
- Recognition of resident volunteers who dedicate their time to serve
- Recruitment of resident volunteers to serve on boards and commissions

The following is to serve as an introduction to these topics for the Administration Committee

and the Committee will have the opportunity to provide direction or request additional information at the July meeting.

Discussion

Efficiency & Effectiveness

There are four areas that staff is seeking to address as part of this review:

1. Training and orientation of board and commission volunteers
2. Consolidation opportunities
3. Areas of focus
4. Composition of boards and commissions

Training and Orientation

While newly elected Village Trustees receive a detailed orientation training, our volunteer board and commission members do not receive similar training. Staff recommends implementing an orientation program so all newly (and recently) appointed volunteers receive the training and information they need to be successful in their roles. In addition to creating a new orientation program moving forward, staff recommends the following trainings to take place:

1. Open Meetings Act
2. Freedom of Information Act and Village email policy
3. Roles and responsibilities of a board or commission member

In addition to legal compliance training, the Village has numerous land use documents and guidelines that interact with and complement one another. Our land use related boards and commissions would benefit from having a more macro-level understanding of the Village's policies and strategic goals. As such, staff recommends the following overview for land use boards and commissions:

4. Comprehensive Plan, Village Center Master Plan, Affordable Housing Plan, Environmental Efforts, Zoning Ordinance and the like

Consolidation Opportunities

The Village Board has in the past reviewed boards and commissions for potential consolidations. While Staff is not necessarily recommending any consolidations, it has been 10 years since the last consolidation discussion, and it would be appropriate for the Administration Committee to consider whether further consolidations are warranted. The most logical consolidations exist amongst the Village's land use related bodies:

- Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals
- Plan and Housing Commissions

- Plan and Appearance Review Commissions
- Historic Preservation and Appearance Review Commissions
- Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Historic Preservation Commission

If the Committee is interested in further discussing any of the above consolidation options, or others that are not explicitly stated, staff can provide additional information at a future meeting.

For reference, staff reviewed boards and commissions amongst North Shore communities and found the following:

Municipality	Housing Commission	Human Relations Commission	Separate Plan/ZBA	Historic Pres.
Deerfield	No	Yes	Yes	No
Evanston	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Glencoe	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Glenview	No	No	Yes	Yes
Highland Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake Bluff	No	No	No	Yes
Lake Forest	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Northbrook	No	Yes	Yes	No
Winnetka	No	No	Yes	Yes

Note: While municipalities above may have boards/commissions by their Code, some of the bodies do not appear to be active. For Example, since 2017 the Deerfield Community Relations Commission and Glenview Historic Preservation Commission have not met.

Areas of Focus

As part of this review, the Administration Committee is encouraged to review the missions and responsibilities of the Village's boards and commissions whose functions are not provided for in State statutes. These include:

- Environmental & Energy Commission (EEC)
- Housing Commission
- Human Relations Commission (HRC)
- Transportation Commission

Environmental & Energy Commission

The EEC is currently working on the Greenest Region Compact which will be forwarded to the Administration Committee upon its completion. Upon completion of the Compact, the Administration Committee may wish to revisit the EEC's areas of focus moving forward to ensure their continued effectiveness.

Housing Commission

For more than a decade, the Housing Commission's primary responsibility was to administer the Housing Assistance Program (HAP). Following the transition of HAP from the Village to the privately funded not-for-profit Housing Our Own- Wilmette, the Commission did not have any active projects. The Administration Committee may wish to identify the appropriate areas of focus for the Housing Commission on an ongoing basis.

Human Relations Commission

In 2010, the HRC was created from the consolidation of several boards and commissions which included: Board of Health, Community Relations, Fine Arts, Persons with Disabilities and Youth Commissions. A review of the HRC's most recent minutes and agenda found that the two primary projects for the HRC were the Wilmette Person of the Year Award and the Black History Month contest. Previously, the Commission was also responsible for administering the Village's youth grants program. However, those grants were funded by a dedicated charitable contribution made by the Clampitt Estate and when the funds were exhausted in 2013-14, the grant program was discontinued. The Administration Committee may wish to identify the appropriate areas of focus for the Human Relations Commission on an ongoing basis.

Transportation Commission

Each year, the Transportation Commission reviews the Village's Crossing Guard program, traffic calming requests, requests for parking restrictions and special projects such as the Active Transportation Plan. While not a land use related Commission, this body is similar in nature to most of the land use bodies which meet to review resident requests and petitions.

Composition of Board and Commissions

The number of members on the Village's boards and commissions varies as follows:

Number of Members	Board or Commission
Three members	Board of Fire and Police Commissioners*
Five members	Building Code Board of Appeals, Electrical, Housing, Police and Fire Pension Boards*
Seven members	Appearance Review, Plan, Transportation, Zoning Board of Appeals
Nine members	Environment & Energy, Historic Preservation, Human Relations

*The number of members on these boards are set by State statute.

There have been prominent studies that have found that once there are seven people in a decision-making group, each additional member reduces decision effectiveness by 10%. The commissions with nine members (Historic Preservation Commission, Environment & Energy Commission and Human Relations Commission) had at one point in time seven members. Adjustments were made for HPC in 1998 due to increased workload of the

Commission and a desire to find members with media backgrounds to publicize the Commission's activity and in 2010 for EEC and HRC as part of board and commission consolidations. The Administration Committee may wish to discuss the appropriate size of the boards and commissions.

Recognition

Prior to the Great Recession, the Village held an annual boards and commissions reception at the Historical Museum to recognize and thank resident volunteers. The last recognition reception was held in 2009. Given the countless hours of work devoted to improving our community, Board members have expressed an interest in recognizing these volunteers. Recognition methods for the Committee to consider include but are not limited to:

- Resolution / acknowledgment at a Village Board meeting following completion of a volunteer's term
- Provide a Wilmette-related keepsake/gift following completion of a volunteer's term
- Highlight specific boards and commissions, and/or their members, in the Village's social media
- Annual reception

Based on the Committee's feedback, staff can provide budget estimates and/or begin preparations to recognize volunteers.

Recruitment

To ensure a robust list of volunteers is available to fill vacancies, staff recommends the following enhancements to our recruitment efforts:

- Create an online form to submit Talent Bank Questionnaires (TBQs)
- Refresh the list of TBQs annually by confirming that those who have submitted forms remain interested; provide for an opportunity for these individuals to update their resumes and/or interest areas annually
- Engage Metro Strategies (the Village's communications firm) to prepare and execute a communications strategy to increase the number of residents submitting TBQs

If the Committee supports the foregoing, staff recommends implementing a more intensive recruitment strategy at the appropriate time given the COVID-19 restrictions.

Next Steps

The July Administration Committee meeting is anticipated to be the first of several on this topic. While recruitment, recognition and training/orientation efforts do not require review and approval by the full Village Board, discussion regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of boards and commissions will ultimately be brought to the full Board for consideration.

Documents Attached

1. Metro Strategies Scope of Work- Recruitment

Village of Wilmette Proposal

Volunteer Boards Promotion

Communications / content creation / videos / graphic design

Metro Strategies will spend approximately 15 hours total to produce communications materials, including videos, E-News, website and social media content and print materials. We built in time for potential back and forth for revisions and will bill for actual time spent on the project.

Scope of Work:

Key Messaging:

- Work with staff to identify and draft key messages, including benefits, specific time commitment (e.g. number of meetings per month/year), what volunteers do, how residents can use their skills to improve Wilmette

Video:

- A 2-3 minute educational/promotional video
 - Metro Strategies will film/interview two volunteers (e.g. one long-time volunteer and one new volunteer from different boards/commissions) about their experiences serving on volunteer boards in Wilmette.

Graphic Design:

- Design graphics for use on website and print materials

Website Content:

- Evaluate and provide recommendations on existing website content; write and package new content about volunteer board opportunities

Print Materials:

- Produce a flyer or pamphlet about volunteer board opportunities

Cost

Metro Strategies will provide this service for a total cost of \$2000-\$2300.