

Boards & Commissions Report

Administration Committee Recommendations

October 13, 2020

Summary of Committee's Review

- The Committee held 4 meetings on boards and commissions:
 - July 6, 2020
 - July 30, 2020
 - September 3, 2020
 - September 17, 2020
- A cornerstone of the review was public engagement which helped to inform the Committee's recommendations
 - Agenda materials posted to website as far in advance of meetings as possible
 - Regular email communications to residents who expressed an interest
 - Thorough review and consideration of resident suggestions

Scope of Review & Summary of Recommendations

- Statement of goal to fill boards and commissions with a diverse mix of residents
- New functions for the Housing Commission
- New mission, purpose and initial task for the Human Relations Commission
- Membership Changes
 - Term limits and lengths, consolidations, number of members, qualifications
- Adjustments to the appointment and selection process
- Miscellaneous changes
 - Training and orientation, annual reports, enhanced recognition

Membership Diversity Goals

Include the following statement on the Village website and Talent Bank Questionnaire (TBQ) form:

The Village is committed to seeking to fill its boards and commissions with a diverse mix of residents which includes but is not limited to different races, ethnicities, religions, genders, sexual orientations, ages, and socio-economic differences.

Housing Commission- Mission

The Committee reviewed the current mission of the Housing Commission and does not recommend any changes:

To present to the President and Board of Trustees recommendations for the alleviation of the shortage of decent, safe and reasonably affordable housing for the elderly and low and moderate income persons, including, but not limited to, the study and development of housing alternatives and housing requirements in the village. Thereafter, the commission shall periodically review and update its recommendations with respect to any recommendations made to the President and Board of Trustees.

Housing Commission- New Functions

- Assist in the review of the Housing Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and subsequent review of the Village's Affordable Housing Plan as directed by the Village Board
- Work with and monitor community land trusts (ex. Optima/CPAH)
- Conduct public education regarding the fair housing regulations
- Conduct a housing needs assessment as directed by the Village Board
- Receive an annual presentation from Village Staff regarding Housing Our Own-Wilmette's housing assistance rental and property tax subsidy programs
- Monitor sales at the Village Green Atrium to ensure units remain affordable; make recommendations to the Village Board should units sell at prices deemed not affordable
- Research methods to preserve existing affordable housing units and how to increase the number of affordable housing units
- Research to encourage developers to include affordable units in new multi-family buildings in concert with the Village's Affordable Housing Plan
- Review with Village staff the Illinois Housing Development Authority's publication of updated affordable housing statistics in Wilmette

Human Relations Commission- Mission

Mission (New narrative statement)

The Human Relations Commission shall be an advisory body to the Village Board and its Boards and Commissions, and its mission shall be to foster and promote an inclusive community where all racial, ethnic, gender, religious, sexual orientation and cultural backgrounds feel safe and welcomed. The Human Relations Commission shall also promote increased participation in all aspects of community life and a sense of shared community among all residents.

Initial Task

Conduct community engagement initiatives and community discussions on racism, social equity and community building to identify the needs of Wilmette and create a proposed two-year work plan. The work plan may then be presented to the Village Board Administration Committee for review and discussion.

Human Relations Commission- Purpose

To make recommendations to the Village Board regarding the following:

- To promote the well-being of all members of the community;
- To support all segments of the population including, but not limited to, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, ~~minorities~~ black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ), and low income groups ;
- To support, address and make recommendations concerning emerging community needs;
- To serve as an advocate, educator, communicator, and a point of contact for all segments of the population in the community;
- To promote justice and equity equality;
- To encourage and facilitate solutions to social issues;
- ~~To promote the arts and multi-cultural events;~~
- To plan or support community events and programs that bring together and support diverse members of the community;
- To provide recommendations to the Village Board on matters pertaining to community welfare; and
- To develop ways of anticipating, preparing for and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict.

Membership Changes

Term limits & term lengths

- No changes; continue to apply terms limits to nearly all boards/commissions and terms lengths are consistent with nearby communities

Consolidations

- No consolidations recommended

Number of members

- Housing- Increase membership from 5 to 7
- Human Relations- Include 2 students as part of the 9 members
- Historic Preservation- Reduce membership from 9 to 7

Stagger terms for initial Housing and Human Relations appointments

- 1 member appointed to a 4-year term
- 3 members appointed to a 3-year term
- 3 members appointed to a 2-year term

Membership Changes- Preferred Qualifications

Recommended Backgrounds/Experience	
Board of Fire & Police	Human resources, diversity, public safety, legal
Housing	Affordable housing expertise, real estate, development/construction, financing, legal, urban planning
Historic Preservation	Historic preservation, architecture, history, landscape architecture, urban planning
Fire/Police Pension	Financial investments, human resources
Transportation	Transportation-related industries including, civil engineering, site plan development, traffic and parking studies, public transportation systems, bike and pedestrian studies
Plan Commission	Architectural, real estate, legal, finance, landscape, urban planning, development, construction, housing
Zoning Board of Appeals	Architecture, real estate, legal, finance, urban planning, construction

Membership Changes- Preferred Qualifications

Human Relations Commission

Preference may be given to candidates that will foster a Commission consisting of a diverse mix of residents encompassing different races, ethnicities, religions, genders, sexual orientations, ages, and socio-economic differences.

In addition, preference may be given to candidates that are:

- disabled (or have an immediate family member that is disabled),
- experienced or trained to promote diversity and cultural understanding,
- experienced or trained in youth-oriented services,
- a Veteran, or experienced or trained in promoting Veteran affairs.

Appointment & Selection

- Enhanced recruitment/outreach efforts to fill vacancies
 - Implement a robust recruitment program for all upcoming vacancies
 - Improvements to the Village website to enhance transparency and make it easier to navigate
 - Streamline the TBQ submittal process to provide for online submittals through the Village website
- Improved communication with residents who submit Talent Bank Questionnaires
 - Ensure a Village representative personally follows-up with each resident who submits a TBQ
 - Develop a summary of the appointment and selection process to be provided to new applicants
 - Complete an annual review of TBQs on file to update candidate areas of interest and qualifications
- Regular report from staff to the Village Board (in a public meeting) which may include:
 - Current board and commission membership with term expirations identified
 - Appointments made in past six months
 - Current and upcoming vacancies
 - Status of TBQs on file

Appointment & Selection- Recurring Appts.

- Proactively communicate upcoming vacancies to the community
- Village President and staff review of upcoming vacancies and TBQs
- Village President discuss needs of the board or commission with staff and ensure the board or commission chair is also consulted
- Village President interview of candidate(s)
- Submit recommended candidate to the Village Board in advance of placing the recommendation of appointment on the public agenda
- Introduce the candidate at a public meeting off of the consent agenda (candidate to briefly address the Village Board)
- Request that the Village President include a written memorandum in the Board's public agenda material describing the candidate's qualifications when they are recommended for appointment

Appointment & Selection- Housing & Human Relations Commissions

Additional recommendations given the number of appointments to be made at the same time:

- Village President to determine who will be appointed as the commission chairs and collaborate with the chairs to gather feedback on candidates under consideration
- Submit a memorandum to the Village Board describing the candidates' qualifications in advance of placing the recommendations of appointment on the public agenda
- Place the memorandum in the Village Board's public agenda materials describing the candidates' qualifications to the community when the recommendations of appointment are made and prior to a vote by the Village Board

Miscellaneous Changes

- Training and orientation
 - Open Meetings Act
 - Freedom of Information Act and Village email policy
 - Roles and responsibilities of a board or commission member
 - Land use policy documents
- Annual reports and goals submitted to the Administration Committee from the Housing, Human Relations, Historic Preservation, and Environment & Energy Commissions
- Enhance board and commission member recognition
 - Acknowledgment at a Board meeting following completion of a volunteer's term
 - Provide a Wilmette-related keepsake following completion of a volunteer's term
 - Highlight specific boards and commissions, and their members, in the Village's social media

Next Steps

- If there is consensus on the Housing and Human Relations Commission recommendations, immediately begin public recruitment efforts to fill vacancies as quickly as possible
- Adopt ordinance #2020-O-44 to codify the recommended changes
- Finalize updates to Village website, TBQ form, etc.