

Board & Commission Task Force Recommendations

During the 2012 Council liaison discussion Council determined there was a need to evaluate the status and focus of current and future advisory Boards and Commissions, as well as other groups/organizations with connections to Littleton. The genesis and evolution of many of these boards/commissions has not been clearly documented and Council felt there would be value in the creation of a task force to delve deeper into this issue.

At the January 3, 2012, Council meeting, the City Council created the Boards/Commissions Task Force and appointed Council Members Cole, Beckman, and Cernanec along with City Manager Penny and City Clerk Heffner to the committee. The Council developed a scope of work (attached). The committee met 10 times between January 9, 2012 and July 9, 2012.

Task Force members surveyed each Chair and Vice-Chair on specific issues regarding each Board, Commission, Authority and Committee (hereafter called Board) such as training, what each believes their Board's charge is and if it is appropriate and clear, where they go for guidance, experiences with the Council liaison and with staff. The Task Force met with the City Attorney for her advice and guidance during the process.

The Board and Commission Task Force reviewed each Board. Below are the recommendations for each. The recommendations are intended to assist each Board and Commission on advising and assisting City Council to accomplish its goals and objectives.

The Task Force reviewed each Board for appropriate structure, number of members, makeup, need and service of Council goals and objectives. The Task Force also considered City Council Goals/Objectives, along with existing committee operational protocols, and incorporated those into the duties and overall recommendations. The Task Force affirmed that seven members be the baseline number for each Board paralleling seven Council members.

Task Force Recommendations:

Recommendation: Fine Arts

The Task Force discussed the number of members for the Fine Arts Committee and decided with the changes to the duties and focusing their charge to advising and advocating, and not a "working" committee or board, the reduction of members from 11 to 7 members through attrition is appropriate.

Fine Arts Committee – 7 Members

Duties: Littleton Municipal Code Section 2-6-1

- Provide arts programs for the City through the review and selection of art works and exhibitions at public locations and public facilities throughout Littleton.
- Serve as stewards of the Littleton art portfolio.
- Serve as the City's representatives in art-related projects with other public and private agencies to encourage the use of the arts in response to community needs and interests.
- Promote arts within the City to enhance quality of life.
- Recommend acquisition and disposition of City-owned art within City policies.
- Review proposed annual Fine Arts budget and make recommendations.

Recommendation: Library

Library Board – 7 members

Duties. Littleton Municipal Code Section 2-7-1

- Assist Library Director in planning for Library services and programs to serve community needs and interests.
- Review and recommend a long-range plan.
- Make recommendations regarding the use of gifts to the Library.
- Serve as an advisory body in the formulation of Library policies.
- Act as a mediator in matters involving freedom-to-read disputes with citizens.
- Promote the use of Library public facilities to further City Council goals.
- Review proposed annual Library budget and make recommendations.

Recommendation: Museum

Museum Board – 7 members

Duties. Littleton Municipal Code Section 2-8-1

- Assist Museum Director in planning for Museum services, programs and potential accreditation and affiliation to serve community needs and interests.
- At least every 3 years, review and recommend long-range plans and annual programs.
- Make recommendations regarding the use of gifts/loans to the Museum.
- Serve as an advisory body in the formulation of Museum policies.
- Have final authority over the disposition of unwanted collections.
- Act as a mediator in matters involving exhibition/program content disputes with citizens.
- Promote the use of Museum public facilities to further City Council goals.
- Review proposed annual Museum budget and make recommendations.

Recommendation – Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation – 7 members, 2 alternates

Duties. Littleton Municipal Code Section 4-6-4

The historical preservation board shall:

(A) Review properties nominated for designation as a historic landmark or historic district and make recommendations to the City Council regarding historic designations.

(B) Assist in public education programs including, but not limited to, walking tours, brochures, a marker program for historic properties, lectures, and conferences.

(C) Review and issue a certificate of historic appropriateness, a certificate of economic hardship, and/or a certificate of demolition, when appropriate, on any application for alterations, moving or demolishing a designated historic landmark or contributing property or non-contributing property in a historic district.

(D) Create a preservation plan of historic districts and historic landmarks.

(E) Advise the City Council on matters related to preserving the historic character of the City.

Recommendation - Tree Committee

It is recommended by the Task Force to disband the Tree Committee as a Council-appointed entity and replace it with a volunteer tree board which would work directly with staff. The City is not required by Tree City USA standard to have a Council-appointed committee.

Recommendation – Victim Assistance Compensation Board

The Task Force recommends this Board become a Staff Committee comprised of the Victim Advocate Linda Suttle, and Court Supervisor Richelle Work, plus citizens' assistance as determined by staff.

Recommendation Election Commission

The Task Force recommends the Election Commission review the district boundaries of the City at the third and sixth year after the census and when the census report is available to staff.

Board of Adjustment

The Board of Adjustment duties were adjusted through Ordinance 8, Series 2012, passed on 2nd reading on March 20, 2012. This ordinance repealed 7-5-24.5 (G), which sent appeals regarding wastewater fees to the Board of Adjustment.

Building Board of Appeals, Riverfront Authority

The Task Force reviewed the Building Board of Appeals and the Riverfront Authority and has no recommendations to City Council.

Licensing Authority

The Task Force reviewed the Licensing Authority and found no additional recommendations at this time. The Licensing Authority duties were amended through Ordinance 20, Series 2011.

Planning Commission

The Task Force reviewed the Planning Board and found no additional recommendations at this time. The Planning Commission duties were amended through Ordinance 11, Series 2012.

Recommendation: Titles of Boards and Commission

The Task Force reviewed definitions for all types of meeting groups and after discussion chose not to differentiate between quasi-judicial and advising boards and to recommend that titles be used as follows:

Authorities - State-mandated boards such as Licensing Authority and Riverfront Authority

Commission - Charter-mandated boards such as Election Commission

Board - Council-appointed groups such as Planning Board, Historic Preservation Board, Building Board of Appeals, Board of Adjustment, Fine Arts Board, Museum Board and Library Board

Working Group - City Council appointed groups that include representatives from outside the City

Task Force - Temporary groups formed for the purpose of carrying out a specific task as assigned by City Council

Recommendation - Liaisons

To elevate the communication between individual Boards and City Council and to even the flow of information, the Task Force recommends that each Board or Commission have the opportunity to meet with City Council in a Study session on an as-needed basis, as requested by the Board/Commission or the City Council. This recommendation also addresses those Boards which have both quasi-judicial and non-quasi-judicial responsibilities. The Task Force also recommends, with the support of City Attorney Crawford, that the Council not appoint a liaison to any Board or Commission.

Recommendation – New Board or Commission

During the City budgeting process, the Task Force recommends that staff request funding which would allow for a Senior Task Force to review the needs, value and goals and objectives that a task force might accomplish.

During the City budgeting process, the Task Force recommends staff request funding to allow for the appointment of a Youth Board for education and leadership in municipal government. The City Council would discuss the appropriate role of the Youth Board.

The Task Force discussed the need for an Economic Development committee and felt that the current work the City Council is undertaking with the Economic Development Think Tank and overall education process would serve the Council needs at this time. The outcome of the education process may warrant review of this issue at a later date.

Review of Process for Appointment

Staff will review the interview and appointment process, such as recruitment process, interview questions, selection process, handling of mid-year appointments, attendance expectations and minimal level of education/training, appointment /reappointment and recognition. Once staff has reviewed these processes and issues, they will make recommendations to the Task Force. The Task Force reaffirmed the length of each term is three years and term limits remain at nine years. The Task Force recommends City Council schedule a study session to review the recruitment and appointment process.

Conclusion:

There were several areas within the scope in which it was determined not to be feasible to address the Council scope. For example, as the group discussed standard criteria for evaluation of the existing Boards it was determined there are too many unique attributes to actually standardize. It will be up to each Council to determine the level of success each Board is bringing to bear on the community and meeting the Council goals. The same issue arose as the group discussed criteria for creation of new Boards. However, when City Council is contemplating a new Board, the Task Force recommends that the Council consider such items as (not inclusive): Is the issue short-term or sustaining over time; how does it fit with Council's goals/objectives, is it in service of Council/community needs, and is it appropriate for Council to delegate the authority on the issue.