



## Agenda Report

20-313

Agenda Date: 9/14/2020

### REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

#### **SUBJECT**

Discussion and Consideration of Approving a New Boards, Commission and Committee Policy

#### **BACKGROUND**

At the first quarterly Governance and Ethics Committee (Committee) meeting held on April 25, 2019, the Committee adopted its 2019 quarterly workplan, which included the review of the Boards, Commissions, and Committees policy regarding how business activities are conducted, and meeting attendance.

At the November 21, 2019 Governance and Ethics Committee meeting, the Committee deferred the Boards, Commissions, and Committees policy report to the first 2020 quarterly Governance and Ethics Committee meeting.

At the February 10, 2020, Governance and Ethics Committee meeting, the Committee reviewed a proposed new Boards, Commissions and Committees policy and provided feedback and directed staff to return on September 14, 2020 with a revised version.

Staff has attached the current City Council committees and outside agency committees approved on February 11, 2020, for reference (Attachment 1).

#### **DISCUSSION**

The current Boards and Commission policy was approved by Council on July 21, 1998. Staff is recommending it be repealed and replaced with the new version which is more in line with best practices and addresses the Committee's concerns related to absences, code of ethics, conduct, trainings and much more. A redline version is attached with the Committee's requested changes (Attachment 2).

In addition to the redline edits incorporated in the proposed policy, there were additional questions related to:

- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) membership
- Renaming of the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee
- Reinstatement of International Exchange Commission
- Violation of Code of Ethics by member and Council recourse to remove a member beyond absences

#### **Summary of Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) History**

The Citizens Committee on Bicycles was established in 1991. The Citizens Committee on Bicycles was comprised of 7 members (Chair - Councilmember, 1 member at large, 1 PTA representative, 1

SCUSD Administrator, 1 member representing Santa Clara Valley Bicycle Association, and 2 City Staff members [Traffic Engineering and Traffic Lieutenant from the Police Department]). The requirement to serve on the Committee was to either live or work in the City of Santa Clara. The City Council approved the BPAC structure found in their Guidelines (Attachment 3). It does not appear that the City has a City Code section addressing this Committee. If the Governance and Ethics Committee chooses, it may recommend to the City Council to enact an ordinance that clearly sets forth the composition of the membership of the Committee and the scope of the committee's jurisdiction.

### **Renaming the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee**

At the February 10, 2020 Governance and Ethics Committee meeting, the Committee inquired about renaming the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee (HRLC) to a Commission and noted that a name change may be appropriate given the Council Committee restructuring that was approved by the Council in 2019. As background, on February 5, 2019, the City Council approved the broad restructuring of Committees, which removed the Councilmember position from the HRLC. At that time, staff noted that the HRLC's scope did not require a Council Committee to consider loan approvals since these approvals are administrative in nature and funding has already been approved by the City Council in the annual appropriation of the budget. As part of the proposed change, loan approvals would be strictly administrative and approved by an internal credit Committee, while the restructured and renamed commission (Housing Commission) would include advisory functions related to the administration of the City's Federal entitlement grants and programs, which include neighborhood enhancement, homeless programs, and public service grants. The HRLC is currently comprised of a three-member body of Santa Clara residents. Staff looks forward to adding those new items and reporting quarterly on the loan portfolio to the advisory functions of the HRLC.

In review of the legislative history for the HRLC, it does not appear that the City ever established a City Code section addressing this committee. The Governance and Ethics may recommend to the City Council to enact an ordinance that clearly sets forth the composition of the membership of the Committee and the scope of the committee's jurisdiction.

### **Reinstatement of International Exchange Commission**

At the January 2020 City Council Priority Setting Session, the Council directed staff to evaluate the resources needed to reinstate the International Exchange Commission (IEC).

Staff began researching and assembling information to assist City Council in its decision to reinstate the IEC, which includes administrative, staffing and financial considerations. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, international travel to and from our Sister and Friendship Cities for staff and delegations has ceased for the time being.

Currently, there is no timeline for the resumption of international travel; however, staff is prepared to reinstate the IEC in January 2021 when there will be more known information about international travel activity. To that end, Council appointment to the IEC will be integrated with the regular process used by the City Council to appoint members of the Council to boards, commissions, and regional organizations. Because reinstatement of the IEC will impact the powers, functions, and duties of the Cultural Commission, staff proposes bringing the information forward to the Governance and Ethics Committee for review and discussion prior to taking this to the City Council.

### **Removal of a Member beyond Absences**

On February 10, 2020, the Governance and Ethics Committee inquired about what happens if a member was to violate codes of ethics and what the Council's recourse was for removal of members beyond absences.

The City Charter states in Section 1002 "Except as otherwise provided in this article, the members of each of such boards or commissions shall be appointed, and shall be subject to removal, by motion of the City Council adopted by at least four affirmative votes." The Council has not set forth the ground for Council to exercise their power. After review of what other jurisdictions have done to address removal of a member beyond absences, staff has provided below some reasons for Committee consideration.

#### Potential Reasons for Commission member Removal

The members of each board or commission may be subject to removal by motion of the City Council for the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain eligibility requirements
- Failure to complete required training
- Failure to adhere to Council policy governing board and commission member interaction with City Council, the public, staff, and/or other board or commission members
- Violation of Code of Ethics and Conduct

To provide due process, the Committee may choose to include in the policy a process whereby Council places commission member removal recommendations on a council meeting agenda, and/or at a hearing during an open council meeting.

In addition, there is currently a policy in place regarding complaints received about a commissioner, Policy and Procedure #032 (Attachment 4), found in the Boards and Commissions Handbook.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

There was no fiscal impact associated with this report

#### COORDINATION

This report was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

#### PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Governance and Ethics Committee agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email [clerk@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>>

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. Recommend that the City Council enact ordinances that clearly set forth the composition of the membership of each commission and the scope of the commission's jurisdiction; and
2. Approve the revised Boards and Commissions Policy that will be included in the Boards, Commissions, and Committee handbook.

Reviewed by: Nora Pimentel, Assistant City Clerk  
Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2020 City Council and Outside Agencies Committees
2. Redline Version of Proposed Policy
3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Guidelines
4. Boards and Commissions Handbook - Policy and Procedure #032