

Boards and Commissions Transition Taskforce
Boards and Commissions Workgroup Report

DRAFT 4/28/14, 8:30 pm

1. PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

The Boards and Commissions Workgroup, (BCW), was formed initially to assess responses from various Boards and Commissions, (B&C), to a questionnaire developed by the B&C Transition Taskforce, (BCTT), regarding the transition from a 7-member to an 11-member City Council. Once responses were received, the BCW charge expanded to include making recommendations on the future, (continue, discontinue, merge, etc.), of any B&C not under consideration by the Planning & Development Review Workgroup. Comments and input were received during BCTT meetings, (including Citizens Communication), as well as from B&C representatives and staff liaisons.

2. ORGANIZATION

The BCW included the following members of the BCTT:

Angela-Jo Touza-Medina, Commission on Immigrant Affairs

Olga Wise, Library Commission

Norman Kieke, Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

3. MEETINGS

The BCW met or conferred via email on these dates:

March 3, 6, 10, 13, 24, 27

April 1, 3, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 25

Updates have been regularly provided to the BCTT at scheduled meetings.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS and LISTING of IMPACTED APPOINTEES

Note:

- *This document does not cover Boards or Commissions being considered by the Planning and Development Review group.*
- *Boards and Commissions not addressed by Transition Taskforce Work Groups will transition to 11-members with membership appointed by the City Council.*
- *City staff will determine departmental oversight, and responsibilities in the case of mergers or new Commissions or Committees.*
- *Commissions which are newly formed or merged should use Work Groups or permanent Committees to accomplish activities or address issues.*
- *The merger of some existing Commissions and the creation of new Commissions or Committees represents efforts to (1) reduce the overall number of Commissions, Boards, Committees, etc.), (2) facilitate communication between groups and eliminate issue silos which currently exist in the Boards and Commissions structure, and (3) create Commissions or Committees to address issues not represented in the recommended re-structuring of all groups*

- For Commissions which are new, represent a merger of two existing Commissions or Boards, or have membership drawn from other Commissions, it is recommended that a “lead” staffing City Department be identified, with representation provided by additional appropriate City Departments.
- It is recommended that a consistent naming convention be used in referring to all possible groups as “Commissions”.
- Boards or Commissions represented in joint Commissions or Committees will select their own representative from their membership. Members who are not representatives of a Board or Commission shall be (1) nominated by the Mayor and approved by a majority of the Council or (2) appointed by Council-approved stake holder groups.
- It is recommended that the City Council hold a public hearing on (1) the transition of Boards and Commissions to the 11-member City Council and (2) the Boards and Commissions Transition Task Force reports and recommendations.

A. GROUPS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR REMOVAL

- Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Task Force – Work is complete. The group is still on the Boards & Commissions web site to allow citizens to view documents.
- Lake Austin Task Force – Final Report was in 2013.

B. GROUPS TO CONSIDERED FOR CONSOLIDATION

B1. *Emergency Response Services Commission*

- Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Committee – Advises the Downtown Austin Community Court on policy and operational issues.
- Public Safety Commission – Advisory body on all budgetary and policy matters concerning public safety including matters related to the Austin Police Department, the Austin fire Department and the Austin/Travis county EMS Department. Currently under the APD, AFD and EMS Departments.

JUSTIFICATION: The combined groups address issues pertaining to emergency services and public safety.

MEMBERSHIP: 11 members appointed by the City Council.

B2. *Environmental Commission*

- Environmental Board – Advisory capacity on all projects and programs which affect the quality of life for the citizens of Austin. Connected to the Watershed Protection Department.
- Urban Forestry Board – The care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal or disposition of trees and shrubs and other landscaping in public areas. Currently under the Parks and Recreation Department.

JUSTIFICATION: – *The Urban Forestry Board should be formally connected to the Environmental Board and to the Watershed Protection Department. The WPD is focused on the green infrastructure of the city and uses a science-based approach to protecting that infrastructure. The WPD also works with other departments routinely and can facilitate activities that can result in protection of the canopy of the City of Austin.*

MEMBERSHIP: 11 members appointed by the City Council.

B3. *Municipal Contracts and Construction Commission*

- MBE/WBE Small Business Enterprise Procurement Program Advisory Committee – Review and recommend changes to City Code provisions 2-9A-18, 2-9B-18, 2-9C-18 and 2-9D-18. - Small and Minority Business Resources
- Construction Advisory Committee – Monitor enforcement of prevailing wage scales and job classifications on municipal construction contracts. Review construction contracts. - In Public Works

JUSTIFICATION: Both address common issues related to municipal construction and contracts.

MEMBERSHIP: 11 members appointed by the City Council.

B4. *African American Quality of Life Commission*

- African American Resource Commission – Quality of life for the African American community.
- African American Cultural & Heritage Facility – The advisory group working on this facility.

JUSTIFICATION: Both address issues common to African Americans. By having a joint forum, all aspects of Quality of Life for the African American community can have higher visibility and a unified voice before City Council. This proposal increases the number of volunteers representing the African American community and it gives stake holder groups the ability to select representatives without seeking nomination from the Council.

MEMBERSHIP: 15 members; eleven appointed by the City Council, 4 community representatives from stake holder groups.

SUGGESTION: In order to not lose focus on quality of life initiatives unrelated to the AACHF, a subcommittee should be created to address AACHF issues. This subcommittee would provide the visibility and access the advisory group currently enjoys. Additional consideration could be given to groups in this community which may have, at some point, received City of Austin funds such as the Carver Museum.

B5. *Asian American Quality of Life Commission*

- Asian American Quality of Life Commission – Asian American quality of life issues. Currently under ATC Health & Human Services Dept.
- Asian American Resource Center – Currently under PARD.

JUSTIFICATION: Both address issues common to Asian Americans. By having a joint forum, all aspects of Quality of Life for the Asian American community can have a higher visibility and a unified voice before City Council. The proposal increases the number of volunteers representing the Asian American community and it gives stake holder groups the ability to select representatives without seeking nomination from the Council.

MEMBERSHIP: 15 members; eleven appointed by the City Council, 4 community representatives from stake holder groups.

SUGGESTION: In order to not lose focus on quality of life initiatives unrelated to the AACC, a subcommittee should be created to address those issues. This subcommittee would provide the visibility and access the advisory group currently enjoys. With expanded membership, the Commission could address additional issues.

B6. Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Commission

- Hispanic / Latino Quality of Life Commission – Quality of life issues for Hispanic/Latino community. Currently under the City Manager’s Office.
- Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center – Advises the City Council on the establishment and operation of the MACC. Currently under PARD.

JUSTIFICATION: Both address issues common to Mexican Americans, Latinos and Hispanics. By having a joint forum, all aspects of Quality of Life for the Mexican American, Latino and Hispanic community can have higher visibility and a unified voice before City Council. The proposal increased the number of volunteers representing the Mexican American, Latino and Hispanic community and it give stake holder groups the ability to select representatives without seeking nomination from Council.

MEMBERSHIP: 15 members; eleven appointed by the City Council, 4 community representatives from stake holder groups.

SUGGESTION: In order to not lose focus on quality of life initiatives unrelated to the MACC, a subcommittee should be created to address those issues. The subcommittee focus on the MACC would continue to provide the visibility and access the MACC board currently enjoys. Additional consideration could be given to groups in this community which may have, at some point, received City of Austin funds.

B7. People with Disabilities and Seniors Quality of Life Commission

- Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities – Helps to encourage, assist and enable people with disabilities to participate in the social and economic life of the city. Currently under the Human Resources Department.
- Commission on Seniors – Quality of life for seniors. Identified issues: Housing, Transportation, Fixed-Income. Currently under the ATC Health & Human Services Department.

JUSTIFICATION: Common issues of healthcare, fixed income, transportation, housing, etc.

MEMBERSHIP: 15 members; eleven appointed by the City Council, 4 community representatives from stake holder groups.

SUGGESTION: In order to not lose focus on issues specific to each population, subcommittees should be created to address issues. Examples might include specific senior issues or the annual Employment Awards for People with Disabilities. These subcommittees would provide the visibility and access each group currently enjoys.

C. GROUPS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CREATION OR RE-ASSIGNMENT

C1. Joint Sustainability Committee

This new Committee would take over responsibilities of the Resource Management Commission with membership derived from other Commissions and supported by relevant City Departments.

JUSTIFICATON: This is the surviving entity of the Resource Management Commission through which different components of sustainability are blended and expanded.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 7 recruited from other Commissions: Planning Commission, Economic Prosperity Commission, Water & Wastewater Commission, Community Development Commission, Zero Waste Commission, Environmental Commission and Electric Utility Commission.

C2. Joint Cultural Committee

This new Committee would combine membership of nine Commissions which have involvement with cultural activities throughout the city. The Committee would provide opportunities for collaboration, information-sharing, etc.

JUSTIFICATION: It provides a cohesive direction and perspective on cultural issues in Austin.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 9 recruited from other Commissions: Arts Commission, the Music Commission, the Asian American Cultural Center, the Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, the African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility, the Library Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Historic Landmark Commission and the Economic Prosperity Commission.

C3. Joint Inclusion Committee

This Commission would address issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion. It would consist of one representative each from the African American Quality of Life Commission, the Asian American Quality of Life Commission, the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Commission, the Commission on Immigrant Affairs, People with Disabilities and Seniors Quality of Life Commission, in addition to someone to represent the needs/interests of the former Commission for Women, and a representative from the LGBT Community.

JUSTIFICATION: Breaks ethnic and minority silos and provides an opportunity to find common ground.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 7 recruited from other Commissions and groups: African-American Quality of Life Commission, Asian American Quality of Life Commission, Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Commission, Commission on Immigrant Affairs, People with Disabilities and Seniors Quality of Life Commission, (the former) Commission on Women and a representative from the LGBT community.

C4. Commission for Women

This group will be blended with the Joint Inclusion Committee. In addition to working on the Joint Inclusion Commission, there may be work group or Committee activities with a singular focus on issues or activities impacting women.

C5. Resource Management Commission

Responsibilities for the Resource Management Commission will go to the new Sustainability Commission.

C6. Intergovernmental Commission

This group would provide citizen oversight and monitor activities of various entities and jurisdictions in the Austin Metropolitan Area and offer pro-active recommendations to the City

Council on how the City of Austin can work cooperatively and successfully with these groups to ensure the best outcomes for the citizens of Austin and the region. Groups and entities which could be monitored, but may not be limited to the following, include:

- Independent School Districts in Austin's City Limit
- Capital Area Council of Government, (CAPCOG's 10 Counties)
- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, (CAMPO's 6 Counties)
- Region K of the Texas Water Development Board
- Higher Education Institutions such as the University of Texas, Austin Community College, etc.
- Capital Metro, Lone Star Rail District, and Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority
- State Legislature and State Agencies such as TxDOT
- Federal Agencies such as Parks and Wildlife, Housing and Urban Development, etc.

JUSTIFICATION: With the population growth in central Texas, this group would provide oversight to the City Council regarding decisions made in the surrounding geographic area which may effect what happens in the City of Austin and provide a venue for cooperation with other entities.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 11 members appointed by the City Council.

C7. Economic Prosperity Commission

This group would oversee activities of the Economic Development Department which are related to construction and job creation, (not issues which might be considered by the Cultural Commission). Suggested membership might include representatives from the following entities:

- Community Development Commission
- Urban Transportation Commission
- (Infrastructure group)
- Hotel/Motel Association
- Automobile Dealers Association
- Austin Restaurant Association
- Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Black Chamber
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Chamber of Commerce

JUSTIFICATION: This group would provide oversight and input regarding opportunities for construction and growth for the City of Austin.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 11 members appointed by the City Council.

D. CHAPTER 2-1 BOARDS AND NON-2-1 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

D1. 2-1-102 Animal Advisory Commission

- (A) The Animal Advisory Commission is established as prescribed by Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 823, (Animal Shelters). The Commission shall consist of five members as described in section B.
- (B) The Council's Public Health and Human Services Committee shall nominate the following members for Council approval:
 - (1) one licensed veterinarian;
 - (2) one person whose duties include the daily operation of an animal shelter;
 - (3) one animal welfare organization representative;
 - (4) one person recommend by the Travis County Commissioners Court; and
 - (5) one person nominated at-large.

D2. 2-1-123 Early Childhood Commission

The Commission would continue with its current membership of 13.

D3. 2-1-127 Community Development Commission

The CDC would continue with its current 15 members; 7 nominated by residents from each geographical area designated in 2-1. The additional 8 members could be nominated by a committee of the Council.

D4. 2-1-170 Sustainable Food Policy Commission

The Commission would continue with its current 13 members with 6 nominated by Travis County and 7 by the City Council. The 7 Council representatives could be nominated by a committee of the Council.

D5. Airport Boulevard Advisory Group

The ABAG would continue with 21 members appointed by the Council. This group can select replacement members without Council consent, but cannot exceed the original number of members.

D6. Applicant Review Panel

The Panel would continue with its current 3 members.

D7. Austin Area Comprehensive HIV Planning Council

The Council will continue to operate as directed by its bylaws, (with 13 members).

D8. Austin Energy Low Income Customer Advocates

The group had 16 members. Its final report is to be submitted no later than 6 months after 11/7/2013, the date the resolution was adopted.

D9. Austin Energy Resource Planning Task Force

The Task Force has 8 members. It is set to dissolve upon the Council's adoption of an updated generation plan or on December 21, 2014, whichever occurs first.

D10. Austin Travis Integral Care Board of Trustees

The Board will continue with its current 9 members, (it may have 5 – 13 members), three appointments each for the Council, (nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council), Travis County and the Healthcare District.

D11. Central Health Board of Managers

The Board will continue with its current membership of 9; 5 appointed by the Mayor, (nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council), 4 appointed by Travis County.

D12. City of Austin Firefighters, Police Officers and Emergency Medical Services Personnel Civil Service Commission

The Commission will continue with its current membership of 3 appointed by the City Manager, confirmed by the Council.

D13. Housing Authority of the City of Austin

The group will continue with its current membership of 5 appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

D14. Independent Citizen Redistricting Commission

The Commission has completed its work but remains listed in the City Charter.

D15. Municipal Service Commission

This group will continue with its current membership of 5 nominated by a committee of the Council and confirmed by the Council.

D16. Travis Central Appraisal District Board of Directors

This group would continue with its current membership of 3 nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

D17. Urban Renewal Commission

The group would continue with its current membership of 7 nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

D18. Austin-Travis County EMS Advisory Board

This group would continue with its current membership of 9, 6 nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.