

BILL NO. _____

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS, ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR COMMUNICATION, AND ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS, DUTIES, AND NORMS OF BEHAVIOR FOR ALL APPOINTED CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES.

WHEREAS, Section 2.10(10) of the Independence City Charter permits the City Council to create boards, commissions, or committees as determined necessary; and

WHEREAS, on February 20th, 2023 the Independence City Council formally adopted the 2023-24 Independence Action Plan (“Action Plan”) via Resolution No. 6902; and,

WHEREAS, Section 1.2 of the Action Plan encourages the City of Independence to “[b]roaden and deepen engagement of the community in city government, innovating methods for inviting input from the community and stakeholders” to more effectively advise the City and engage the public”; and,

WHEREAS, Strategic Plan Section 6 High Performance Organization states, “[w]e operate as an ethical high-performance organization, anticipating future needs, utilizing best practices, and striving for continuous improvement.”; and,

WHEREAS, on June 20th, 2023, the Independence City Council formally adopted Resolution No. 6936, directing the City Manager to establish standards for the recruitment and appointment of board members, establish standards for how board members will communicate with the Commission and individual members of the City Council and City staff to increase efficiency and efficacy of advisory board input; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council further aims to formalize and streamline communications between the City Council, advisory boards, the City Manager, and the public; to achieve policy driven decision-making; and to create consistency, predictability, and stability by clearly defining duties, norms, and expectations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That the following rules, process, and procedures are hereby established by the Independence City Council for all Boards, Commissions, and Committees as well as all members of said Boards, Commissions and Committees:

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITMENT, & APPOINTMENT

- 1) **Membership:** Membership is established in the resolutions, ordinances, or statutes establishing each Board’s structure, including any mandatory member qualification. Additional membership requirements include:
 - a) Board Members may only serve in one City appointed position at a time;
 - b) The balance of an unexpired term served by an appointee shall be considered a “term” if such unexpired term exceeds 50% of the full term;

- c) Upon completion of a gap in service equal to a position's full term, a former member may be eligible for re-appointment; and
 - d) Appointments should be made during a regular meeting in January.
- 2) **Recruitment:** Councilmembers, Board Members, and the City Manager are encouraged to actively recruit qualified members to apply. During the recruitment process, the City will focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and will actively work to achieve membership that reflects, at the least, the demographics of our community – as outlined in, but not limited to available census data – across all board membership. Formal recruitment will occur by three methods:
 - a) Vacancies will be posted in the lobby of City Hall and on the City's website;
 - b) Biannual active solicitation period; and
 - c) As necessitated by vacancies.
- 3) **Review:** The review of applicants shall occur by a panel consisting of either the Councilmember responsible for filling an individual appointment or an assigned liaison of the City Council, dependent on the vacancy to be filled, the Board or Commission Chair, and the City Manager's assigned staff liaison:
 - a) Interview questions must ensure applicants receive a fair comparison with other candidates and will focus on potential conflicts of interest, compliance with norms of conduct, including but not limited to decorum, communications, and the concept of acting as a body with one voice;
 - b) Evaluation criteria must consider the City's goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the duties and purpose of the individual board, and any membership requirements in enabling legislation or law.
- 4) **Appointment:** All Board and Commission appointments will be made by the City Council except for appointments authorized by law to be made by the Mayor. Board Officers (Chair & Vice-Chair) shall be appointed by the City Council, except where otherwise mandated by the City Charter.

SECTION 2: COMMUNICATIONS

- 1) City Boards and Commissions shall receive direction from the City Council pursuant to the Council's annual goal setting session, requested assigned work priorities, or other specific direction as the City Council may provide;
- 2) A Board or Commission's annual work plan must align with the City Council's adopted Strategic Plan;
- 3) The Board or Commission should communicate with the City Council only through approved minutes, work plans, progress reports, or formal recommendations/resolutions voted on by the Board or Commission;
- 4) Board and Commission chairs shall communicate with the Staff Liaison on matters related to the Board and Commission's operations and agendas;
- 5) Each Board and Commission shall be assigned a City Council Liaison, who shall serve as the conduit between the Board or Commission and the City Council.
- 6) Board and Commission Chairs should direct policy related questions to both the City Council Liaison and the Staff Liaison;

- 7) Board and Commission Members shall adhere to the “One Body, One Voice” principle in communications to the City Council on matters under the Board or Commission’s purview, or may become under the purview of the Board or Commission.
- 8) City Staff will develop minutes that the Board or Commission will review and approve; minutes shall be provided to the City Council and made available to the public.

SECTION 3: EXPECTATIONS, DUTIES, AND NORMS OF BEHAVIOR

Norms for Board Members are modeled upon the City Council’s Rules of Procedure as most recently revised in Resolution No. 6953.

- 1) **Training of Board and Commission Members:** Board and Commission Members must participate in an onboarding program established by the City Manager.
 - a) The training will include, but is not limited to:
 - i. General onboarding: Board and Commission procedures, open meetings, public records, process, requirements, and expectations;
 - ii. Purposes and focus areas of the Board or Commission to be presented by the Staff Liaison;
 - iii. “Effective Meetings” – a training facilitated by the City Clerk to assist Board Members in conducting an efficient and effective meeting;
 - iv. Ethics: Initial ethics training upon appointment and annual ethics training thereafter; and
 - v. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Training focusing on various DEI topics including, but not limited to, implicit and unconscious bias, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination; accessibility; and DEI in institutions, workforces, and local government.
 - b) Board and Commission Members must complete onboarding and training within six months of the appointment of any member; and
 - c) Board and Commission Members must participate in a six-month check-in with the Staff Liaison.
- 2) **Duties:**
 - a) City Council Liaison has the following duties:
 - i. Lead the interview of applicants;
 - ii. Serve as the primary contact with the Board or Commission for the City Council;
 - iii. Assist with resolving questions regarding the role of the City Council, City Manager, Staff Liaison, and the Board or Commission;
 - iv. Serve as contact rather than an advocate, unless assigned as a voting member;
 - v. Review the Board or Commission’s work plan and make recommendations to the City Council regarding said work plan;
 - vi. Support efficient Board and Commission operations; and
 - vii. Assist training of new Board and Commission members.
 - b) The Presiding Officer (Board or Commission Chair) has the following duties:
 - i. Act as meeting facilitator;
 - ii. Maintain a tone of civility during debate;
 - iii. Ensure the public has a meaningful opportunity to participate, and that meetings operate fairly and impartially;

- iv. Ensure the Board or Commission's questions and discussion are germane to the issues presented.
 - c) Board and Commission Members have the following duties:
 - i. To ensure the Board has a quorum at all meetings, and commit sufficient time to ensure regular and punctual attendance;
 - ii. Be prepared, attentive, and participate;
 - iii. Abide by Rules of Procedure and the City and State Laws;
 - iv. Notify the Staff Liaison as soon as they learn they will not be able to attend a meeting and of any changes to contact information.
 - d) Staff Liaison and/or their designee(s) will prepare the agenda with collaboration from the Board or Commission Chair.
- 3) **Norms of behavior:**
 - a) Board and Commission Members are encouraged to share their experience and knowledge with new members;
 - b) Board and Commission Members should treat all city employees with respect, and in doing so recognize staff in performing their work strive to always serve the public to the best of their abilities;
 - c) Board and Commission Members should be mindful of arguing or debating the merits of staff's professional judgment; rather, should Board or Commission Members disagree with staff's professional judgment, they should direct such disagreement to the Staff Liaison; in the event that the Staff Liaison is subject to the disagreement, Board and Commission Members should direct their concerns to the City Manager;
 - d) Board and Commission Members must seek to ensure staff recognizes the Board or Commission Member's questions are for purposes of inquiry only and should in no way be taken as an order, a request to take action, or a directive;
 - e) Board and Commission Members should not use language or communication methods that a reasonable person would find humiliating, intimidating, hostile, or offensive;
 - f) A Board or Commission Member may not take any action that could be construed as a directive or order to staff;
 - g) A Board or Commission Member must not attempt to pressure or influence discussions, recommendations, workloads, schedules, or department priorities absent the approval of the City Manager and only then upon an action of the majority of the City Council;
 - h) Board and Commission interaction with staff during board meetings:
 - i. Criticism of staff by a Board or Commission Member should be made in private to the City Manager. Board and Commission Members are encouraged to provide commendation to staff in public;
 - ii. Board and Commission Members may not direct or issue orders to staff;
 - iii. Board and Commission Members may direct questions regarding the factual basis for an item or a question soliciting staff expertise to the City employee presenting the item; questions other than those directly related to the factual basis of an agenda item should be directed to the Staff Liaison who may request the assistance of other city employees in answering the question.

- i) Specific provisions for Board and Commission Member's attendance at meetings other than Board or Commission meetings:
 - i. Board or Commission Members may not attend staff meetings unless requested by the City Manager;
 - ii. Board and Commission Members' conduct at public meetings or other events should be informed by this Resolution and the Code of Ethics.
- j) All appointed members of City boards or commissions should be mindful of the City Charter prohibition regarding interference with administration.

SECTION 2. That the provisions of this resolution shall be consolidated into a "Board and Commission Members Handbook" and made available to each said member at the time of their appointment by the City Council.

PASSED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2023, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.

Presiding Officer of the City Council
of the City of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

City Counselor

REVIEWED BY:
