



MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 2nd, 2023

TO: Independence Mayor and City Council

FROM: Zach Walker, City Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendations Regarding City Boards & Commissions Policies and Procedures

Section 1.2 of the Independence City Charter empowers the City Council to determine the policies of the City of Independence. On November 28th, 2022, the Independence City Council held a strategic planning session to identify the main areas of focus for the City Council over the next year. Following the strategic planning session, each member of the City Council completed a survey to confirm the primary issues identified by the Council at the strategic planning session.

On February 20th, 2023, the Independence City Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 6902. This resolution formally approved the 2023-24 City of Independence Action Plan. The Action Plan affirms the priorities of the City Council and provides City staff with a roadmap for addressing and implementing the core focus of the City Council. The Action Plan Contains six purpose statements established by City Council and 105 strategies developed by City staff to act upon the broad vision set by the City Council. Among the six purpose statements is “1. *An Engaged Community. We foster a culture of engagement and civic leadership based on innovation and best practices involving community members of all backgrounds and perspectives*”. Section 1.2 of *An Engaged Community* states: Community Engagement – Broaden and deepen engagement of the community in city government, innovating methods for inviting input from the community and stakeholders.” Strategy 1.2.C directs staff to “Create a standard City Council, Boards, and Commissions Onboarding and Education Process.”

As part of City staff’s work to implement this strategy, Resolution 6936 was unanimously adopted by the City Council on June 20th, 2023. This resolution directed the City Manager to establish standards for the recruitment and selection of board and commission members, to establish standards for communication with and from boards and commissions, and to establish expectations, duties, and norms of behavior for all appointed City boards, commissions, agencies, and committees. The paramount objective of this initiative is to foster public trust through collaboration and cooperation to achieve the following goals:

- Increase efficiency and efficacy of advisory board input;
- Formalize and streamline communications between advisory boards, the City Council, and the public;

- Ensure policies and not personalities are the dominant driving factor of decision-making; and,
- Create consistency, predictability, and stability by clearly defining expectations, functions, and roles.

With the adoption of Resolution 6936, the City Manager was tasked with making recommendations to the City Council regarding uniform operating standards for Boards and Commissions by October 1st, 2023.

City staff have researched and surveyed multiple municipalities, both locally and nationally, and identified a series of best practices. Staff has prepared a resolution for City Council consideration that is responsive to the directive issued by the City Council in Resolution 6936. Specifically, this resolution would:

1. Standards for membership, recruitment, and appointment for City Boards and Commissions.
2. Expectations regarding communications between City Boards and Commissions and the City Council.
3. Expectations, duties, and norms of behavior for City Board and Commission members.

My recommendation is to add this resolution for City Council consideration to the October 16th Regular Meeting. Consistent with the City Council Rules of Procedure, this item is being published on September 22nd, 2023 in advance of the October 2nd Regular meeting, giving citizens 24 days to review this proposal and provide feedback prior to a possible Council vote on October 16th.

I look forward to working with the City Council on this initiative and further improving our performance and operations at the City of Independence. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

CC: Adam Norris, Deputy City Manager
Jeremy Cover, City Counselor
City Department Directors