

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Date: July 13, 2015
Item No.: 15.c

Department Approval

City Manager Approval



Item Description: Community Engagement and Human Rights Commission Structure
Discussion

BACKGROUND

On July 6 the City Council discussed authorizing the advertising for three vacancies that currently exist on the Human Rights Commission. The City Council tabled advertising the vacancies pending a more comprehensive discussion of commission structure. Staff has prepared options that the City Council may consider in the event a restructuring of commissions is desired. Attachment A includes the duties and functions for each commission in City Code.

Currently our Community Engagement and Human Rights Commissions are charged with the very large responsibility of trying to identify how to pare down efforts. The Human Rights Commission currently devotes a lot of time trying to figure out what area of human rights to focus on (i.e. mental health, immigrant/refugee needs, voting rights, Fair Housing, etc.). The Human Rights Commission no longer hears complaints of human rights violations which was a major reason for its origination in the 1960's.

The Community Engagement Commission has devoted a lot time trying to define community/civic engagement, whether or not the commission should be engaging directly or advising, and engagement equity (engagement efforts equally distributed across all demographics regardless of homeownership status, tech savvy, or resource availability.)

City staff has been reviewing all existing volunteer opportunities for effectiveness. The City most recently entered into a Service Enterprise Process, currently managed by Points of Light, to create a robust volunteer program. The Service Enterprise Process is a research based training and consulting model that leads to organizations reimagining the way they strategically engage volunteers. This process has allowed us to start thinking creatively about what volunteer opportunities we are providing, including opportunities on our commissions.

Frustrations from both commissions include commissioners that would like to be out in the community 'doing' versus commissioners that would like to serve merely in an advisory/informational role. The options listed below are designed to provide opportunities for both styles of commissioner involvement:

Option A – Merge Community Engagement And Human Rights Commissions

One option for the commissions would be to merge the commissions. The idea would be to include the major responsibilities of each commission into the merged commission. The size of

the commission may increase to accommodate existing members on each commission.

For example, the Human Rights Commission responsibilities could be merged into the Community Engagement Commission.

Annual responsibilities of the Human Rights Commission include the Naturalization Ceremony and the Essay Contest. The Community Engagement Commission could accommodate these additional functions with limited impact. See 'Attachment B' for an example of the commission merge at Falcon Heights in February of 2015.

Option B – Create New Commission with Greater Scope and Functions

Option B includes the opportunity to expand on the duties and functions of the existing commissions to create a larger commission. The City of Brooklyn Park, MN has been a case study in community engagement and has created a Community Engagement Division. Under the Division are several teams of residents that include the 'Diversity Team,' 'Resources Team,' 'Steering Team,' and 'Youth Engagement Team.' Please see Attachment C for more details on this. Staff is not suggesting that a new staffed division be created, but their structure might be something worth considering.

An example of how a new commission might be structured could be as follows:

Nine Commissioners. Three Youth Commissioners with one youth designated to each focus.

Outreach: The Commission will identify ways to partner with various city departments, local businesses, local non-profit and cultural organizations, for the purpose of establishing a stronger sense of community. The Commission will work with the Volunteer Coordinator on finding ways to expand volunteerism throughout all Roseville demographics and will work to identify ways the community can meet the needs of underserved populations in Roseville.

Rights: The Commission will oversee the annual Human Rights essay contest. A member will be a liaison to the League of Human Rights Commissions meetings and/or possibly serve on the Board. The Commission will explore ways to engage the Roseville community on various issues of human rights through the use of dialogues, informational series, etc.

Engagement: To foster stronger engagement, the Commission will work to broaden participation and enhance diversity on advisory boards and commissions, develop recommendations for improving the City's public participation process, recommend innovative ways the city can improve communication processes, and advise the City Council on ways the City can increase engagement equity across all demographics in Roseville. Engagement efforts will extend beyond best communication practices and may consider volunteer engagement, cultural engagement, and youth engagement.

Option C – Commission Structure Remains As-Is

Option C maintains existing commission structure. The City Council may use the upcoming joint meetings with the commissions to provide clarity on the duties and functions to minimize overlap of commission efforts.

85

86 **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

87 In the event the Council proceeded with merging or creating a larger commission the budget
88 would be impacted by a cost savings of approximately \$2,500 due to the reduction of minute
89 preparation from two commissions to one. Additionally, the City currently has two staff
90 members that serve each commission. Staff time may not be necessarily cut in half as a new or
91 merged commission may be a larger commission with heightened functions, however, liaison
92 support to one commission would still result in a reduction in staff hours.

93

94 **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

95 Staff recommends the City Council discuss existing commission structure. If no change to
96 structure is necessary at this time, staff recommends authorizing filling three vacancies on the
97 Human Rights Commission for terms expiring March 31, 2016, March 31, 2017, and March 31,
98 2018.

99 **REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION**

100 Discuss existing commission structure. If no change to structure is necessary at this time,
101 authorize, by motion, filling three vacancies on the Human Rights Commission for terms
102 expiring March 31, 2016, March 31, 2017, and March 31, 2018.

103

Prepared by: Kari Collins, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk
- Liaison to Human Rights Commission

Attachments: A: Duties and Functions of Existing Commissions in City Code
B: Falcon Heights Example
C: Brooklyn Park Example of Community Engagement Teams

Members of the commission shall be appointed for terms of three years, except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which such member's predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term. Upon the expiration of such member's term of office, a member shall continue to serve until such member's successor is appointed and shall have qualified.

- C. Compensation; Removal: The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, and may be removed from office by a 4/5 vote of the City Council. (Ord. 566, 2-19-1968)

204.05: DUTIES:

In fulfillment of its purpose, the commission's duties and responsibilities shall be to:

- A. Adopt bylaws and rules for the conduct of its affairs including the election, assumption of duties and definition of responsibilities of officers and committees.
- B. Enlist the cooperation of agencies, organizations and individuals in the community in an active program directed to create equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination and inequalities.
- C. Formulate a human relations program for the city to give increased effectiveness and direction to the work of all individuals and agencies addressing themselves to planning, policy making and educational programming in the area of civil and human rights.
- D. Advise the mayor, the City Council and other agencies of the government of human relations and civil rights problems. Act in an advisory capacity with respect to planning or operation of any city department on issues of civil and human rights and recommend the adoption of such specific policies or actions as are needed to provide for full equal opportunity in the community.
- E. Develop such programs of formal and informal education as will assist in the implementation of the Minnesota state act against discrimination, and provide for the commission's assumption of leadership in recognizing and resolving potential problem areas in the community. (Ord. 566, 2-19-1968; amd. 1995 Code)
- F. Monitor statistical and other data trends in our city and identify and recommend to the city council ways to encourage mutual understanding among our citizens about the community's diversity through, but not limited to:
 - 1. connecting and partnering with neighborhood, community, educational, business and social services groups and organizations;
 - 2. co-sponsoring citywide neighborhood or facilitating community events which would include opportunities for heritage and cultural events; and
 - 3. programs for engaging citizens and community leaders in a holistic approach including dialogues, education and training about diversity issues.

(Ord. 1381, 4-27-2009)

CHAPTER 208

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

208.01: ESTABLISHMENT AND MEMBERSHIP:

There is established a Community Engagement Commission of the City which shall consist of seven members appointed by the City Council. Members shall be residents of the City and appointed for three year staggered terms. Terms of the initial members will be established by the council at the time of their appointment. In addition to the members appointed above, the City Council may for one year terms appoint additional residents of the city under 21 years of age to serve as (ex officio) member(s) of the commission. No member shall serve more than two full consecutive terms.

208.02: ORGANIZATION:

The Commission shall annually elect one member to serve as chairperson and one member to serve as vice chairperson.

208.03: MEETINGS AND REPORTS:

The Commission shall annually adopt a regular meeting schedule and may hold other meetings as it deems necessary. The Commission may adopt rules for the transaction of business and shall keep a record of its meetings and actions. The commission shall request a joint meeting with the City Council when deemed necessary and a minimum of once a year.

208.04: SCOPE, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS:

The City Council has created the Community Engagement Commission to serve in an advisory capacity regarding the effective and meaningful involvement of Roseville residents in their community. The Commission shall make recommendations, review policies, and suggest strategies that will help to improve City communication and increase a sense of community.

The duties and functions of the Commission may include:

- A. Review and recommend opportunities to collaborate with neighborhood, community, educational, business, and social services groups and organizations.
- B. Recommend strategies for and actively promote and encourage effective and meaningful volunteerism as well as participation on advisory boards, task forces, commissions, and other participatory civic activities.
- C. Review and recommend ways to improve the City's public participation process and

policies, identify under-represented groups, remove any barriers, and engage and promote increased participation of all residents (both homeowners and rental populations), businesses, and community and neighborhood organizations.

- D. Review and recommend ways to improve the City's communication efforts, both printed and electronic, to facilitate effective two-way communication between the City and its residents, businesses, community and neighborhood organizations including making information available in multiple languages.
- E. Collaborate with City staff to explore and inform the City Council regarding other government efforts in the area of community engagement, as well as the latest trends, technologies, tools, methods, and information used to facilitate community engagement, communication, and volunteer efforts.
- F. Advise the City Council on the community's visioning process.

(Ord. 1462, 2-10-2014)



[Back to Web Site](#)

Falcon Heights Families, Fields and Fair

[Archive](#)

Historical agendas and minutes for commissions and City Council can be found by clicking this [link](#).

** The city of Falcon Heights combined the Neighborhood Commission and the Human Rights Commission to form the Community Engagement Commission on February 25, 2015. Merging the two commissions was a logical step forward as it will allow the strengths of both to combine. The many years of combined service will allow for the commissioners to continue to serve the residents of Falcon Heights in an advisory capacity to the city council regarding matters of community involvement, community education, community outreach and reviewing complaints of alleged human rights violations. The Falcon Heights Community Engagement Commissioners will continue to work with neighborhoods to promote and improve the quality of life here in Falcon Heights.

City of Falcon Heights, 2077 Larpenteur Avenue West, Falcon Heights, Minnesota 55113-5594 651-792-7600

[Back to Web Site](#)

Falcon Heights Families, Fields and Fair

Community Engagement Commission

The Community Engagement Commission advises the City Council on matters related to community needs and issues, crime and prevention, public awareness, community involvement, and human rights issues. The commission also helps plan and facilitate community events such as Human Rights Day and block parties.

The Community Engagement Commission meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at City Hall.

Current commissioners:

- Melanie Leehy, Chair
- Gary Kwong
- Jay Colond
- Helen Foster
- Ahmed Hassan
- Amino Mohamed
- Gwen Willems
- Felicia Turner
- Shirley Reider
- Clem Kurhajetz
- Richard Carlson
- John Ohl, SAPD Police Chief
- Peter Lindstrom, Council Liaison
- Anton Fehrenbach, Fire Department
- Tim Sandvik, Staff Liaison
- Katie Thrasher, Staff Liaison

 [Agendas](#)

 [Minutes](#)

City of Falcon Heights, 2077 Larpenteur Avenue West, Falcon Heights, Minnesota 55113-5594 651-792-7600

Attachment C

A THRIVING COMMUNITY INSPIRING PRIDE WHERE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR ALL

Community Engagement: Future of Brooklyn Park



Brooklyn Park is the sixth largest city in Minnesota with a highly diverse population. This is a sharp contrast to the community that was founded by potato farmers of European heritage.

The significant demographic change over the last 20 years resulted in Brooklyn Park being a community of communities. People of different backgrounds were living near one another but not with each other. There was a disconnection among communities.

That's why a group of residents called the Core Planning Team created a mission statement and core values for our community.

Brooklyn Park's mission

Brooklyn Park, a thriving community inspiring pride where opportunities exist for all.

Community core values

- Everyone has equal intrinsic value
- Diversity enriches community
- Trust is the foundation for building a healthy community
- The community thrives when each individual takes responsibility to contribute
- When a community supports all its members, it thrives

So how will we achieve our mission?

By focusing on three areas:

1. Resources - Make sure we use all our resources of our diverse community to make sure we make our goals a reality
2. Diversity - Engage our diverse community to promote acceptance and understanding of one another
3. Youth - Ensure the success of all our young people by using community assets

Volunteer: you have the power to make a difference

Volunteer on one of our teams to help achieve the community's mission. If you are a resident, community organization or business owner, you have the potential to make a positive impact in your community.

Stay up to date

Whether it's monthly, weekly or daily, we will keep you informed of what's going on in the city.

[Sign up for newsletters and alerts](#)

Contact us

City Hall

5200 85th Ave N

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

[View map and directions to City Hall](#)

Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone and email

Josie Shardlow

763-493-8388

[Email Josie Shardlow](#)

TELEPHONE 763-424-8000 FAX 763-493-8391

HOURS M-F

8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Copyright © 2015 Brooklyn Park

City Hall 5200 85th Ave., N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

A THRIVING COMMUNITY INSPIRING PRIDE WHERE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR ALL

Diversity Team

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

— Martin Luther King Jr.

We believe that diversity enhances the community. The Diversity team works to enhance acceptance and understanding of one another's culture and backgrounds.

Members: 15-20

Term: One year

Meets: 4th Thursday of every month, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N. Dinner is provided

Time Commitment: Two and a half hours per month

Goals

- Build trust and relationships with one another
- Identify barriers to opportunities and providing solutions
- Support and develop diverse leaders

Past and current projects

- Cultural Awareness events including an international bazaar of cultural food, crafts, resources, and entertainment during Tater Daze 2013
- Promoting community events and celebrations such as Hispanic Heritage Festival, Ramadan, Hmong Resource Fair, and Women History Month
- Highlighting a diversity group each month
- Addressing public policy to achieve social equity

Contact us

City Hall

5200 85th Ave N

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

[View map and directions to City Hall](#)

Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone and email

Josie Shardlow

763-493-8388

[Email Josie Shardlow](#)

TELEPHONE 763-424-8000 FAX 763-493-8391

HOURS M-F

8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Copyright © 2015 Brooklyn Park

City Hall 5200 85th Ave., N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

A THRIVING COMMUNITY INSPIRING PRIDE WHERE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR ALL

Resources Team

One number may determine how healthy you are and how long you will live. It's not your weight, cholesterol count, or any of those numbers doctors track in patients. It's your address. If you live in a community with parks and playgrounds, grocery stores selling nutritious food, access to good jobs and other economic opportunities, clean air, safe streets, good schools, ample health care, social services, and neighbors who look after one another, you are more likely to thrive.

—PolicyLink Executive Summary: Impacting Health Through a Focus on Race and Place

The Resources Team works to connect neighbors with one another and promote the positive assets of the community.

Members: 15-20

Term: One year

Meets: 4th Thursday of every month, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N. Dinner is provided

Time Commitment: Two and a half hours per month

Goals

- Maintain a comprehensive inventory of community resources
- Leverage the time, talent, and skills of residents to benefit the overall community
- Connect organizations and develop partnerships with one another

Past and current projects

- Delivering welcome bags to new residents in the community
- City-wide community garage sale in the month of May
- Photography contest
- Dog park event in the Fall
- Creating neighborhood groups to address common issues, safety, and livability

Want to welcome new neighbors?

To volunteer to be a Community Connector, contact Josie Shardlow.

Providing products or services to new residents

Are you a business that wants to provide a free product or service to new residents?

To sign up to donate a product or service, contact Josie Shardlow.

Contact us

City Hall

5200 85th Ave N

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

[View map and directions to City Hall](#)

Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone and email

Josie Shardlow

763-493-8388

[Email Josie Shardlow](#)

TELEPHONE 763-424-8000 FAX 763-493-8391

HOURS M-F

8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Copyright © 2015 Brooklyn Park

City Hall 5200 85th Ave., N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

A THRIVING COMMUNITY INSPIRING PRIDE WHERE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR ALL

Steering Teams

Measurement Team

The Measurement Team works to ensure that by 2015, 90% of Brooklyn Park residents feel prideful; that we have a thriving community; and opportunities exist for all.

Members: 5-10

Term: One year

Meets: Once every two months, 4-5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N.

Time Commitment: One and a half hours every two months

The Measurement Team analyzes the citywide survey in 2011 and 2013 and focuses on the following indicators to measure the Community Engagement Initiative

- Economic vitality
- Safety
- Sense of community
- Amenities
- Appearance
- Housing
- Media perceptions
- Education

Go BP! Coalition Team

The Go BP! Coalition serves as the advisory group to the community engagement teams.

Members: 5-10

Term: One year

Meets: Second Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. at City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N.

Time Commitment: One and a half hours per month

Goals

- Monitor the Community Engagement budget
- Review applications for Community Engagement fund request
- Ensure overall progress and collaboration of team projects

Core Planning Team

The Core Planning Team created the city mission statement, core values and strategic plan in 2009. The team meets annually for two consecutive days in the fall. It serves as the mission champion and makes any necessary adjustments to the strategic plan.

Contact us

City Hall

5200 85th Ave N

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

[View map and directions to City Hall](#)

Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone and email

Josie Shardlow

763-493-8388

[Email Josie Shardlow](#)

TELEPHONE 763-424-8000 FAX 763-493-8391

HOURS M-F

8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Copyright © 2015 Brooklyn Park

City Hall 5200 85th Ave., N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

A THRIVING COMMUNITY INSPIRING PRIDE WHERE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR ALL

Youth Team

The Youth team works to ensure success of all youth.

Members: 15-20

Term: One year

Meets: 4th Thursday of every month, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N. Dinner is provided

Time Commitment: Two and a half hours per month

Goals

- Assess needs and obstacles of youth
- Connect youth-serving organizations with one another
- Develop programs to engage youth
- Provide resources to families and parents
- Celebrate the accomplishments of youth

Past and current projects

- Back to School Event that provided free backpacks and school supplies to over 400 high school students
- Hosting a youth employment forum
- Developing a website for youth, Brooklynsyouth.com
- Working with the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance and Brooklyns Youth Council
- Creating a web-based portal and database of youth services and programs

Contact us

City Hall

5200 85th Ave N

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

[View map and directions to City Hall](#)

Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone and email

Josie Shardlow

763-493-8388

[Email Josie Shardlow](#)

TELEPHONE 763-424-8000 FAX 763-493-8391

HOURS M-F

Copyright © 2015 Brooklyn Park

8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.
City Hall 5200 85th Ave., N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55443