

RESOLUTION No. 37285

Strengthen transparency and accountability of City advisory bodies (Resolution)

WHEREAS, local government works best when community members and government work together as partners, and effective public involvement is essential to sustaining this partnership; and

WHEREAS, the City of Portland is committed to transparency and accountability, and to robust community involvement in Council and bureau decisions; and

WHEREAS, public involvement opportunities should be accessible to a broadly representative group of community members; and

WHEREAS, transparency and uniform standards serve to increase the integrity and impact of advisory body recommendations and give members enhanced confidence in the value of their service; and

WHEREAS, City Council adopted Public Involvement Principles (Resolution No. 36807) on August 20, 2010, which states that effective public involvement:

- Ensures better City decisions that more effectively respond to the needs and priorities of the community.
- Engages community members and community resources as part of the solution.
- Engages the broader diversity of the community, especially people who have not been engaged in the past.
- Increases public understanding of and support for public policies and programs.
- Increases the legitimacy and accountability of government actions.

WHEREAS, the City of Portland has over 100 boards, commissions and committees ("bodies") that provide valuable guidance to City bureaus and to Council on a wide variety of issues; and

WHEREAS, the City Attorney's Office has been providing legal guidance to Council offices, bureaus, staff and members concerning service on bodies; and

WHEREAS, the City does not have a comprehensive database of these bodies and the hundreds of people who serve; and

WHEREAS, there is no standard training provided to staff or members to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and the rules governing their service, nor is there a system to track who has received such training; and

WHEREAS, the City does not require conflict of interest disclosures as a condition of serving on advisory bodies; and

WHEREAS, full transparency of disclosure statements increases public confidence in government, ensuring that individuals serving on advisory bodies declare conflicts and recuse themselves when appropriate.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Council finds that it is necessary for the City to have a more comprehensive approach to effectively train City staff and advisory body members on their obligations and responsibilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City shall take affirmative steps to create Citywide protocols and procedures for existing and new members serving on City bodies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, within 60 days of passage of this Resolution, the Office of the City Attorney shall coordinate the development of a comprehensive inventory of City advisory bodies, including those anticipated to begin during 2017. For each advisory body, the Bureau shall provide to the City Attorney's office the following documents and information:

- When the body was created, if information is readily available.
- Purpose and charge of the body, name of City staff managing the body.
- Authority under which the body was created (Charter/Code provision, Resolution/Ordinance number, another related City body, or otherwise).
- Current bylaws and any governing procedural rules for the body.
- Number of positions and any current vacancies.
- Current members, including available demographic information; positions, terms and any subcommittee assignments.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, within 120 days of passage of this Resolution, the City Attorney's Office shall develop, in consultation with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Office of Management and Finance, and Office of Equity and Human Rights:

- Uniform application, including mandatory conflict of interest disclosure form.
- Training materials for City staff who facilitate advisory bodies.
- Training materials for members of advisory bodies.
- Bylaw template, including recommendations regarding required term limits, staggered terms, and subcommittee participation.
- Options to track the delivery of training.
- Survey to be completed by members at the end of their service.
- Values to guide transparent selection processes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the package of updates shall be forwarded to Council by the Office of the City Attorney within 150 days, and shall include a proposed budget and lead office for implementation.

Adopted by the Council: MAY 11 2017

Commissioners Eudaly, Fritz, Fish
Prepared by: Sonia Schmanski
Date Prepared: April 25, 2017

Mary Hull Caballero
Auditor of the City of Portland
By 

Deputy