

To: Council Members

From: Council President Pirtle-Guiney

January 13, 2025

Memo Topic: Committee Vice Chairs and their role

Many of you have asked about the roles of Vice Chairs. While I plan for us to further address the role of Chairs, collaboration with Vice Chairs, and standard norms for Committees, once our committees are seated I wanted to introduce the role of Vice Chairs today so that Councilors can better contemplate our committee proposal.

It is my hope and expectation that Chairs see their Vice Chairs as a thought partner in their work. Vice Chairs will have four critical roles:

1. Running the Committee in the absence of the Chair

This includes running meetings, gaveling portions of a meeting where a chair is presenting a concept, and setting agendas if the chair is unable to set the agenda by deadline due to an unplanned or extended absence

2. High level agenda setting

While the Chair will set individual agendas (except as noted in 1) Chairs and Vice Chairs should meet regularly to discuss the direction of the committee and long-term agenda planning

3. Collaboration on answering big questions

I have shared with most of you that there are some big questions I hope committees will tackle. If your committee is tackling one of these big picture questions Chairs and Vice Chairs should work toward a solution that both can support. These are the types of questions around which we need to build broad consensus, and your agreement will signal to the rest of Council that we've found solutions the majority of Portlanders will be able to support.

4. Intergovernmental Appointments

There are some intergovernmental boards that Councilors will be appointed to. Often (though not always) Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs will be the first people considered for these positions, or will be consulted in choosing a Councilor to recommend.