

AGENDA
MAPLEWOOD CITY COUNCIL
MANAGER WORKSHOP
5:30 P.M. Monday, May 23, 2016
City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation of Comprehensive Annual Financial Report – 2015
2. Volunteer Advisory Board and Commissions Discussion

F. ADJOURNMENT

RULES OF CIVILITY FOR THE CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND OUR COMMUNITY

Following are rules of civility the City of Maplewood expects of everyone appearing at Council Meetings - elected officials, staff and citizens. It is hoped that by following these simple rules, everyone's opinions can be heard and understood in a reasonable manner. We appreciate the fact that when appearing at Council meetings, it is understood that everyone will follow these principles:

Speak only for yourself, not for other council members or citizens - unless specifically tasked by your colleagues to speak for the group or for citizens in the form of a petition.

Show respect during comments and/or discussions, listen actively and do not interrupt or talk amongst each other.

Be respectful of the process, keeping order and decorum. Do not be critical of council members, staff or others in public.

Be respectful of each other's time keeping remarks brief, to the point and non-repetitive.

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Melinda Coleman, City Manager
FROM: Ellen Paulseth, Finance Director
DATE: May 23, 2016
SUBJECT: Presentation of Comprehensive Annual Financial Report - 2015

Introduction

Members of the City Council have received a copy of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and an electronic version is available on the City's website, as well.

The CAFR will be submitted to the State Auditor's Office after acceptance by the Council. The due date is June 30th.

A representative with the firm of BerganKDV will present the results of the audit at the May 23rd workshop. The council will be asked to formally accept the CAFR at the May 23rd regular meeting.

Highlights

The General Fund had a decrease in fund balance of \$657,794, which was primarily due to the approved transfer of excess reserves in the amount of \$250,000 to the Building Replacement Fund and \$350,000 to the TH #36/English Project. Revenues came in under budget by \$301,531 and expenditures were under budget by \$372,174.

The fund balance in the General Fund at the end of 2015 is \$7,706,529. Of this amount, \$84,230 is designated for encumbrances. Fund Balance is required to fund operations during the first half of the following year until the next property tax payment is received from Ramsey County.

The legal debt limit at the end of 2015 is \$97,346,091. The city has \$70,269,630 in outstanding bonds. Of that amount, \$12,995,000 is subject to the legal debt limit.

Fund balance in the Debt Service Funds decreased by \$4,983,719, primarily due to the defeasance of advanced refunding debt.

The unrestricted net position in the six proprietary funds totals \$4,084,161. Four of the six proprietary funds have positive balances. The Community Center Operations Fund and Street Light Utility Fund have deficit unrestricted net position balances of \$1,041,160 and \$206,093, respectively.

The Employee Benefits Fund net position decreased from \$709,132 to \$532,321. This amount will be taken into account when computing the benefit expense for 2017.

Findings

None.

Budget Impact

None.

Recommendation

No action is requested at this time.

Attachments

1. Financial Analysis from Communications Letter

MEMORANDUM

TO: Melinda Coleman, City Manager

FROM: Michael Martin, AICP, Economic Development Coordinator

DATE: May 16, 2016

SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Board and Commissions Discussion

Introduction

At the May 23, 2016 workshop, the city council will be asked to consider alterations to the current makeup of the city's advisory board and commissions. All of the existing members of the volunteer groups were informed of this meeting and potential discussion items. If any changes are directed they would be brought back to affected groups for recommendations.

Discussion

Board and Commission Overview

In general, the city has had difficulties in recruiting new volunteer members to sit on the board and commissions. Also, staff is requesting the city council consider the start times of meetings and the frequency in which they are held. Below is a summary of the current status of each commission written by the assigned staff liaison.

Environmental and Natural Resources Commission (ENR) – Shann Finwall

There are seven members on the ENR. The city has been successful at filling and retaining this number of commissioners since the adoption of the ENR ordinance in 2006. There have been very few instances where an ENR meeting had to be canceled due to lack of quorum. For this reason, staff recommends the number of members on the ENR remain the same.

Staff does feel, however, that having the flexibility to move the ENR meetings from 7 to 6 p.m. is warranted. Some commissioners might find it more convenient to come to a meeting right after work, rather than coming back out of their homes after settling in after work. In addition, earlier meetings would ensure the meetings end earlier in the evening.

Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) – James Taylor

At the April meeting of the PRC, staff presented on changing the membership from a nine member commission to a seven member commission. There are multiple reasons why this makes sense. The most notable is the fact that the PRC has not been at nine members during an extended period of time over the last two years. In addition, it has become increasingly difficult to get applicants for open seats. If the PRC stays at nine, staff fears a quorum will start being an issue. A recommendation by the PRC was made and voted on unanimously to make

the change to the current code to move to a seven member commission.

Also, staff feels that moving to a 6 p.m. start is a good idea for the PRC. With heavy agendas and open discussion sometimes 7 p.m. starts run late into the evening. With the anticipated future workload of the PRC based on the implementation of the Parks System Plan, now is the time to look at this time change.

Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) – Virginia Gaynor

The HPC is charged with preserving and protecting Maplewood's historic and cultural resources. This is a seven-member commission. Over the past several years there have occasionally been one or two seats open. Two members recently moved out of Maplewood so there are currently two openings on the commission. Staff believes seven members is a good number for this commission. There is a nice mix of long-term vs. newer commissioners: two commissioners have served 8-10 years, two have served 2-4 years, and one has served less than a year.

Human Rights Commission (HRC) – Melinda Coleman

Since 2014 there have only been two occasions when there was a full complement of the seven member commission. In review of the last 24 months, 14 meetings have been cancelled due to a lack of agenda items and/or not having a quorum of the commission. In January, February and March of this year there were five members. In April and May meetings were cancelled due to a lack of a quorum and the commission is now down to only two members.

The HRC was reestablished in 2010 and is a seven member commission. The commission members are appointed for a three year terms. At least two members should have a background and experience in one or more of the following areas: public housing, civil rights, veterans' issues, education, employment or social work. At least one member should be a lawyer with sufficient background and experience in one or more of the areas noted above to provide meaningful support to the commission. At least one member should represent business interests within the community. Up to two members may be at-large members from outside Maplewood; the remaining members should be Maplewood residents.

Housing and Economic Development Commission (HEDC) – Michael Martin

In 2012, the business and economic development commission and housing and redevelopment authority were merged into the existing HEDC. All seven seats of this group are currently filled. Ordinance requires the commission to meet quarterly and at such other times as necessary. Staff would recommend adjusting the commission's rules of procedure to clearly set the expectations that this group will meet quarterly and as needed, but that monthly meetings should not be expected.

Community Design Review Board (CDRB) – Michael Martin

By ordinance this board is supposed to be meeting twice a month, but since 2011 it has only been meeting on the fourth Tuesday of every month. This group has five seats which one was recently vacated. Within the five members, ordinance requires one be an architect and two be from the design or construction field – i.e. landscape architects, interior designers, planners, civil engineers, contractors, appraisers, realtors, etc.

Again by ordinance, this group is supposed to meet 24 times a year – last year the group met eight times. When compared to other cities, a specific citizen volunteer design review board is unique. Staff would like to explore ways to better utilize the time and effort made by the existing board members.

Planning Commission (PC) – Michael Martin

By ordinance this board is supposed to be meeting twice a month and have nine members. Last year, the planning commission met eight times which has been a reflection of the required workload for the past several years. Currently, there are six members of the planning commission with three vacancies. Attached to this report is a spreadsheet comparing Maplewood's planning commission to other cities in the region.

Staff Recommendations

Commissions Start Time Change

A consistent theme found among staff and some existing commission members is a desire to move the general meeting start times of all commissions to 6 p.m. The CDRB has met at this time for several years. There is thought it might create more recruitment opportunities if the meetings started and ended earlier in the evening. It would also be a more efficient use of staff's time and the city's resources. Staff reviewed commission start times at other cities and there is not a consistent pattern but several cities do start meetings in both the 5 and 6 p.m. hours, while some business-related commissions even meet in the morning.

Parks and Recreation Commission Membership

As mentioned the PRC has already voted to recommend reducing its membership from nine to seven. Staff will bring a proposed ordinance amendment for the council's consideration at a future meeting.

HEDC Meeting Frequency

Staff is recommending the HEDC's rules of procedure be amended to state the group will meet the second Wednesday of every quarter – to match the ordinance. This general meeting pattern was also agreed to by the HEDC at a meeting in 2015. Currently the expectation set by the group's rules of procedure are monthly meetings, which leads to a negative perception when monthly meetings are canceled.

HRC

Staff is recommending that we re-commission the HRC to a different type of group that is more aligned with city goals and strategic objectives. One approach to consider is to form a Community Engagement Committee that would hold community educational forums on various topics. This is a model being used by several Ramsey County cities. Staff can provide more background at the meeting. Many of these engagement committees meet quarterly and have a wide range of topics such as understanding of immigration and norms and beliefs of our various ethnic populations, diversity training, racial equity and other community issues. This committee could consist of residents and staff that would host depending on the topic.

PC and CDRB

Staff is recommending the groups be combined into a single commission. This option was considered in 2012 but ultimately the council did not move forward, opting to review again in the future. The following are areas of consideration when deciding the role of these groups.

Effective Governance – Staff often hears feedback of confusion from volunteers on the two groups over which part of a development project they are supposed to review. Generally the planning commission reviews the “land use” and the CDRB reviews the “design plans” but often the discussions venture into each other’s territories.

Also, it is confusing to the general public as to when they are supposed to provide feedback on a development project. For instance, the city publicizes public hearings which are held before the PC but residents often read on the city’s website that a project is also being reviewed at a CDRB meeting and wonder which meeting they are supposed to be attending to provide feedback. Most residents will only engage with a city review process when a development is proposed nearby their home and by holding a single commission meeting it will make it clear as to when feedback is to be provided.

Efficiency – Currently, city code states the CDRB and PC are supposed to be meeting 48 times a year. Last year the two groups met a combined 16 times, with many agendas containing only one or two review items. Staff believes had the two groups been merged last year there would have been 10-12 total meetings with agendas containing meaningful review items to keep commissioners engaged. In addition, one staff member generally attends the same CDRB and PC meetings to review the same projects at both meetings – it will be a more efficient use of city resources to hold a single monthly meeting reviewing development projects.

Business and Development Friendly – As stated above, it can be confusing to residents to track which meetings are needed during a development review. It is equally confusing at times for developers and applicants to grasp what commissions have to review their projects and when the meetings will be held. Instead of telling applicants of several potential meeting times for commission review, there will be a benefit of stating that a single meeting, for example, is held on the third Tuesday of every month and a council meeting, if required, afterwards. It makes the development process more straightforward. Also requiring one less public meeting to receive city approval will make the city’s review process more efficient.

Design Standards – Finally, when the city council considered combining the two groups in 2012 there was concern regarding enforcing the city’s design standards. Staff shared that concern then and still has that concern. Staff would recommend keeping the ordinance requirement for design professionals being placed on the combined group. In addition, staff would recommend working towards codifying stronger design standards city-wide. For instance, in the mixed use zoning district, which is being discussed at the next regular city council meeting, new developments are required to adhere to a building materials schedule – i.e. 60 percent of new buildings must be built with brick, stone or glass. Staff believes there are opportunities to bring these types of standards to the other commercial zoning districts. Also, for development projects that currently only require CDRB review, staff would recommend this same process be allowable with a combined group.

There are nine individuals that currently serve on the PC and CDRB combined – Bill Kempe currently sits on both groups. If a decision was made to combine the PC and CDRB into a single group no members would be asked to give up their seats because of the combination.

Recommendation

Provide staff with direction of any changes proposed to be made to the current makeup of the city's volunteer board and commissions.

Attachment

1. Comparison of Maplewood's PC, CDRB and HEDC with other cities

City	PC Meetings - scheduled (actual)	CDRB or Equivalent?	HEDC or Equivalent?
Maplewood	2/month (8 meetings in 2015)	Yes, met 8 times in 2014	Yes, met 4 times (two quorum cancelations)
White Bear Lake	1/month (11 meetings in 2015)	No	No
Vadnais Heights	1/month (not on website)	No	No - Separate VHEDC
Mounds View	2/month (14 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes, met 6 times in 2015
Roseville	1/month (11 meetings in 2015)	No, but has variance board	Yes, just created EDA
Arden Hills	1/month (12 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes, met 7 times in 2015
Little Canada	1/month (10 meetings in 2015)	No	No
North Saint Paul	1/month (12 meetings in 2015)	Yes, met 5 times in 2014	No
Woodbury	1/month (10 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes, met 6 times in 2015
Oakdale	1/month (6 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes, met 5 times in 2015
Richfield	1/month (11 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes
Saint Louis Park	2/month (18 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes
Anoka	1/month (13 meetings in 2015)	No	Yes, met 7 times in 2015