



City of Madison
Minutes – Approved
Task Force on Structure of City Government
Boards, Commissions and Committees
Subcommittee

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

11:30 a.m.

City-County Building, Room GR-27
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

**NOTE: POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE
STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT OR THE COMMON COUNCIL
MAY BE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING**

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Yog hais tias koj xav tau ib tug neeg txhais lus, ib tug neeg txhais ntawv, cov ntawv ua lwm hom ntawv los sis lwm cov kev pab kom siv tau cov kev pab, cov kev ua ub no (activity) los sis qhov kev pab cuam, thov hu rau tus xov tooj hauv qab yam tsawg peb hnub ua hauj lwm ua ntej yuav tuaj sib tham.

Office of the City Attorney (608) 266-4511

[Legislative File No. 50732](#) - DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE TASK FORCE

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Meeting Called to Order at 11:36 a.m.

Present: John Rothschild, Justice Castañeda, Alder Rebecca Kemble and Eric Upchurch

Absent: Maggie Northrop

Also Present: Nick Zavos, Office of the Mayor and Assistant City Attorney John Strange

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Rothschild to approve minutes of December 3, 2018 meeting (referred to hereinafter as "Minutes"), seconded by Kemble. Motion passed on voice vote.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this meeting.

4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals from the members present.

NOTE: The subcommittee voted to suspend Robert's Rules to stand informally and allow for public discussion and engagement on any agenda item.

5. REVIEW PROS AND CONS OF THE CURRENT BOARDS, COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE IDENTIFIED IN THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The subcommittee reviewed the pros and cons listed in the Minutes.

6. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE CONS OF THE CURRENT STRUCTURE

The subcommittee discussed potential strategies and alternatives to address the cons of the current BCC structure. The subcommittee addressed each con in the order in which they appeared in the table contained in the Minutes, recognizing as they went that some of the cons were redundant or covered by earlier cons.

First, the subcommittee noted that high number of BCCs in the current structure often leads to over analysis and slow processes. The subcommittee noted these could be addressed by having less standing BCCs, clarifying the purpose of each BCC to prevent mission creep, providing better training to members and staff, increasing accountability to other committees and the Common Council, limiting the occurrence of one issue going to multiple BCCs, and eliminating, combining, or sunseting BCCs that have finished their work or whose work is redundant. In suggesting these possibly strategies, the subcommittee noted that the total number of BCCs may not be a problem *if* they function well but that it appears, on balance, many of the BCCs do not function well.

Second, the subcommittee noted that the high number of BCCs in the current structure make it appear, on paper, as though the city has robust citizen participation when, in fact, the statistics suggest the current structure lacks diversity, is populated by individuals who reside primarily in 5 of the city's 20 districts, and therefore do not represent all of the people and are accountable to no one. The result, then, is a structure that creates a veneer of participation. The subcommittee noted several possible ways to address this problem. First, work to increase diversity on BCCs by creating better access to serving on a BCC. This may require reexamination of the time, place, and manner in which BCC meetings are held, including when and where meetings are held and whether Robert's Rules of Order should apply. Second, work to increase diversity by addressing how BCCs are constituted and consider specifying who must serve on BCCs (i.e., with an emphasis on requiring people of color or people from a variety of districts). Third, work to increase diversity by reviewing the process used by the mayor's office to recruit BCC members. Fourth, address concerns that serving on a BCC is a waste of time by giving BCCs more authority and codifying that authority so that members know the time and effort they spend on a BCC is likely to result in action by the Common Council. Finally, create multiple avenues for public participation at BCC meetings, utilizing technology, among other things, to make participating in BCC meetings easier for the city resident whose time and resources may not allow them to attend meetings as they happen in the current structure.

Third, the subcommittee noted that the upper tier BCCs tend to know their role, stick to it, and operate according to known rules and procedures, while lower tier BCCs tend not to. The subcommittee noted that this could be addressed by clarifying the purpose of each BCC in the ordinance in which it is created, sunseting, consolidating, or combining BCCs that have fulfilled their purpose, reexamining how BCCs are staffed and ensuring that staff to BCCs are trained appropriately. Within this discussion of staffing, the subcommittee discussed the possibility of creating an office or resident participation and engagement. This would be a department of city staff that would be responsible for staffing BCCs and dedicated to working for greater resident engagement. Part of what staff in this department could do is closely examine the issues that come before BCCs and determine who in the city is most likely to be impacted by those decisions.

Fourth, the subcommittee discussed the con that the high number of BCCs suck staff and alder time. The subcommittee noted that possible solutions to this issue included reducing the number of BCCs, reducing the number of BCCs on which alders are required to serve, and reexamining how BCCs are staffed, including, again, the possibility of creating a new city department dedicated to resident engagement and participation.

The subcommittee noted that in addressing the cons of the current BCC structure, it and the full Task Force must be mindful of not negatively influencing the pros listed in the Minutes. For example, the subcommittee noted that requiring alder representation on all BCCs helps keep check on the BCCs and provides a liaison between the BCCs and the counsel. Any proposed solution that would eliminate this pro should be considered not only within the context of how it addresses the con but also the extent to which it eliminates a pro.

The subcommittee noted that the rest of the cons listed in the table from the Minutes.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The subcommittee noted that at its next meeting it will continue to examine possible alternative structures that could implement some of the proposed strategies and solutions listed above.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Kemble to adjourn, seconded by Upchurch. Motion passed on a voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.