



**City of Madison**  
**Minutes - Approved**  
**Task Force on Structure of City Government**  
**Common Council Subcommittee**

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

Friday, November 30, 2018

2:00 p.m.

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

**NOTE: POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY  
GOVERNMENT OR THE COMMON COUNCIL  
EXISTS AT THIS MEETING.**

If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this service, activity or program, please call the phone number below at least three business days prior to the 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 hnuv 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 2:03 p.m.

Present: John Rothschild, Alder David Ahrens, Ron Trachtenberg, Justice Castañeda

Absent: Eric Upchurch (arrived at 2:11 p.m.) and Maggie Northrop

Others Present: Alder Keith Furman, City Attorney Mike May, Assistant City Attorney John Strange, Mayoral Aide Nick Zavos, Council Assistant Lisa Veldran, Racial Equity Coordinator Tori Pettaway

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Trachtenberg, second by Ahrens to approve minutes of November 16 meeting. The following changes were discussed and approved for the minutes: Correct spelling of Justice Castañeda in every instance where misspelled. The second sentence under Negative effects under 5.d., reducing the number of alders, is modified to read:

May increase the power to wealthy and high turn-out districts; these two factors are correlated.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was approved on a 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.

#### 5. DISCUSSION OF TOPIC AREA 2 IDENTIFIED IN THE CC SUBCOMMITTEE WORK PLAN

Discussion of Topic Area 2. The following chart represents the discussion for Topic area 2.

Topic Area 2 Issues:

At Large Districts:

Positive	+/- ?	Negative
Alder looks at the benefit to the whole City to determine policy.	May need fewer alders.	Neighborhood interests and needs may be ignored.
People of color may have more opportunity to be elected.	May run on City issues as a slate for or against the Mayor.	Some people of color and women may be under represented.
More impartial decision-making.	Districts numbered or not?	Areas of City with larger turnout may be more influential.
Vote trading or deference to colleagues may be minimized.	May require longer terms with alternate elections.	More practical in smaller cities with homogenous populations.
Every citizen votes on each council member.	Does at large = full time?	70% survey respondents opposed.
More candidates for office.	Are at large alders immediately made competitors for Mayor?	Cost of running for office higher. Door to door impractical.
		Voters may be more detached from Council without their own alder.

Geographical Districts:

Positive	+/- ?	Negative
Promotes awareness of neighborhood issues.		Citywide policy may not be focus of district representative.
More connection and accountability with residents as their Alder.		District lines may reduce representation of people of color due to housing patterns.
Less expensive campaigns and more personal contact possible with district residents.		Less competitive races.
Resident engagement on issues may be easier.		Constituent assistance difficult if district is large.
70% survey respondents favored.		
Easier for alder to interface with power groups in the		

district.		
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Hybrid (Both At Large and Districts):

Positive	+/- ?	Negative
Possible to combine the positive aspects of both structures.	Are at large alders full time?	Most cities using at large and geographical districts have weak Mayor form with Manager. Mayor is the one At large member elected.
Perhaps more voice for disenfranchised due to at large positions.	Likely will result in longer service.	Under current form of Council /Mayor sets up potential rivalry between Mayor and Citywide elected officials.
	Will terms be longer and require alternate elections?	Confusion for residents voting for both a district representative and one or more at large representatives.
	Do the at large alders become Mayor's competitors?	May be the worst of both worlds.
		Are the District alders considered second-class members?

Term Limits:

Positive	=/- ?	Negative
Fresh candidates/new ideas. Closer to residents. More turnover.	Many cities have term limits.	Deprives Council of qualified experienced leaders.
More competitive elections.		Infringement of democratic process.
Less influence of special interest groups.		Outside professionals and staff have more influence over short timers.
Might be needed with full-time alders.		Impact on long term funding of projects and policy.
		62% of survey respondents oppose term limits.
		Term limited Alders may be less accountable to residents.
		Part time Council effectively term limits itself.

Redistricting considerations and diversity representation:

Value of compact neighborhood districts v. Madison's historic housing patterns. Difficult to achieve in Madison due to housing patterns. Limits of the federal census in identifying all residents. Need for expert evaluation after 2020 census.

Coterminous boundaries with County Board.

Negative: Cannot be done.

**6. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

December 7 and 14, 2018, GR-27, from 2-4 pm.

**7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

On December 7, Topic Area 3, and on December 14, Topic Area 4:

**TOPIC AREA 3**

1. Compensation levels.
2. Compensation and term of Council President and Vice President.
3. Support staffing levels and training for Council members.
4. Alders serving on BCCs.

**TOPIC AREA 4**

5. Appointment of Council members to BCCs.
6. Appointment of Residents to BCCs.
7. Council Members as Chairs of BCCs.
8. Structural and procedural issues relating to equity and meaningful engagement of residents in council decision-making. Subtopics to be discussed include, but are not limited to, are time, place and length of Council meetings, budget development, barriers to resident participation and accountability.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Upchurch noted he could not attend the December 7 meeting. Motion by Upchurch second by Castañeda to adjourn. Approved on a voice vote at 3:38 pm.