



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

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
[www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com)

Friday, November 16, 2018

2:00 p.m.

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

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**NOTE: POSSIBLE QUORUM OF 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 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 2:03 p.m.

Present: John Rothschild, David Ahrens, Ron Trachtenberg, Justice Castañeda, Maggie Northrop (alternate)

Absent: Eric Upchurch

Also Present: Alders Rebecca Kemble and Keith Furman. City Attorney Mike May and Deputy Mayor Enis Ragland. Mayor Assistant Nick Zavos arrived later.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Trachtenberg and seconded by Castañeda to approve Minutes of the November 2, 2018 meeting. Passed by 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 1 IDENTIFIED IN THE COMMON COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

Motion by Northrop to suspend Robert's Rules, second by Ahrens, approved voice vote.

The subcommittee discussed each topic under Topic Area 1 in its work plan. The subcommittee tentatively identified Positive and Negative results from the change, and other effects that could be viewed positively or negatively, or on which the subcommittee was unsure if the effect would occur. The subcommittee noted the difficulty in that the topic areas are intertwined, and also relate to other subcommittees.

a. Full time Alders

Positive effects: More in tune with citywide issues. More professional. Less influenced by a vocal minority in the district (assumes a smaller council). More candidates due to salary. Less stress on family, job, childcare.

Negative Effects: Not as close to constituents (assumes smaller council). Not supported by residents. Makes alder more likely to suffer from job (election) loss and career gap. Fewer candidates because no longer part-time. Bigger campaigns, more money and more influence of moneyed interests. Not as close to local issues (assumes smaller council). More "political." Loss of varied background and job status.

Other effects: Balances power of Mayor and city staff. Alders would have longer elected careers. Effect on communities of color is unknown.

b. Keep 2-year terms for Alders.

Positive Effects: More campaigns means more constituent contact.

Negative Effects: It takes a year to learn the Council. Fewer candidates for two-year terms. More campaigns/cost/time for candidates. More cost to city clerk from more elections.

Other Effects: More turnover with two-year terms. More responsive to district/vocal minority in district.

c. Staggered Terms

The subcommittee identified no positives or negatives from staggered terms. It noted that you have to have 4-year terms to have staggered terms, and you need to decide when the Mayor will run – with one set of alders and not with the other set, or move the mayoral election to an even numbered year with no aldermanic elections.

d. Reduce number of districts/alders.

Positive Effects: May reduce the length of debate at Council meetings. Likely necessary if want more full time staff. Fewer alders with staff may reduce inquires to current city staff. Reference some of positive effects of full-time council, above, that assumed reduction in size.

Negative Effects: Bigger districts may increase campaign costs and change nature of campaign. Little support from residents, survey. May increase the power to wealthy and high turn-out districts; these two factors are correlated. Reference some of negative effects of full-time council, above, that assumed reduction in size.

Other Effects: May insulate alders from pressure. Will make Madison's residents per council member closer to other cities.

**6. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Noted.

**7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Items for next meeting noted.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Ahrens, second by Castañeda to adjourn. Passed by a voice vote and adjourned at 3:55 pm