



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved TASK FORCE ON STRUCTURE OF CITY GOVERNMENT

Thursday, September 19, 2019

6:00 PM

Room 153, MMB
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

POSSIBLE QUORUM OF THE COMMON COUNCIL EXISTS AT THIS MEETING

[50732](#)

Documents related to the Task Force on the Structure of City Government

THE TASK FORCE MAY SUSPEND THE RULES TO STAND INFORMALLY AND ALLOW FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND ENGAGEMENT OF ANY AGENDA ITEM

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Call to Order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: 7 - Keith Furman; John E. Rothschild; Roger Goodwin; Justice M. Castañeda;
Maggie Northrop; Eric S. Upchurch and Eileen Harrington

Absent: 4 - Paul E. Skidmore; Syed Abbas; Rebecca Kemble and Ronald M.
Trachtenberg

Kemble arrived at 6:35 p.m.; Skidmore arrived at at 6:10 p.m.

Also present: Karl Van Lith, ACA John Strange, Sue Hoppenberg

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Rothschild, second by Goodwin to approve minutes. Motion 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 at this meeting.

5. DISCUSSION OF SURVEY RESULTS

Karl Van Lith provided a brief summary of the resident survey results, including
that there were a total of 1,640 (1,262 from the community liaisons). The Task
Force asked if staff could download the comments into an excel spreadsheet
so that they could better work with the data.

The Task Force also explained that the post-it notes from the last open house were summarized and distributed at the last meeting.

Member Castaneda cautioned that the Task Force should not use the survey results because the survey's methodology was not sufficient to produce reliable data. Others noted that the purpose of the survey was to get resident input, not necessarily create scientifically reliable data.

Member Upchurch noted these conflicting positions and offered that the world is changing and our approach to informing/engaging people must also change. Things we can do – texts, remote participation, etc. – may help in that regard. However, rather than forcing these alternative methods on people, we need to let people choose how to participate and then nurture those approaches. He also reiterated the critical need of identifying impact and focusing our engagement on those who are most impacted. Survey results, though perhaps not based on pure scientific methodology – could help the city begin to identifying solutions to these issues.

Chair Harrington noted that from her perspective the survey results were not intended to be scientifically valid, per se, but to inform and assist the task force as it considers the issues upon which it must make recommendations.

6. UPDATE ON SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 OPEN HOUSE AT WARNER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Task Force gave very brief update on the status of the open house at Warner Park. Everything appears set to go.

7. DECISIONS REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCLUDE IN FINAL REPORT TO THE COMMON COUNCIL ON ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE CITY'S BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES, INCLUDING:

There was a motion by Castaneda, seconded by Rothschild, to adopt all of the recommendations found in the BCC Subcommittee Report, Section V, p. 7. Chair Harrington read them all.

Kemble made a motion, seconded by Northrop, to amend the original motion to withdraw the existing recommendation about the Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support. Motion to amend adopted by voice vote with Upchurch and Rothschild voting no.

With the original motion amended, the Task Force then voted on whether to recommend all the remaining recommendations in the list. Amended motion passed on a voice vote, unanimously.

Then, there was a motion by Kemble, seconded by Castaneda, to approve new language concerning the Office of Resident Engagement Neighborhood Support. Motion passed on a voice vote, unanimously.

There was some discussion of referring this issue to the next TFOGS meeting, but a motion to refer ultimately failed.

After much discussion, the TFOGS said that the new language should include a

recommendation that something like the original ORENS concept be created, but recognize that doing so right now may not be economically feasible. In the meantime, the City should create a BCC staff services team to take on some of these issues. Member Goodwin expressed concern that including the larger ORENS concept will water down the staff team recommendation, which, in his view, is the most feasible and most likely path to achieving the ORENS goals. Moreover, members wanted to make clear that this recommendation has limitations when it comes to addressing the larger issues of representation on BCCs and that the final report should recognize this limitation.

There was a motion by Kemble, seconded by Northrop, to amend Kemble's initial motion to adopt the following recommendation "Create an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support that would be responsible for, among other things, staffing, training, minutes/reporting for BCC meetings and for engaging residents on key issues coming before the City's BCCs. As the City works towards the creation of ORENS, it should immediately create a BCC Administrative Services Team consisting of staff from the offices of the Common Council, Mayor, Human resources and City Clerk who are already involved with BCC support, and to be housed in the Common Council Office. The Team shall also be charged with developing systems for BCCs to use for resident participation in decision making and ensuring that prompt and direct feedback is given to issues about which residents have expressed interest." Motion passed by voice vote with Skidmore and Goodwin voting no.

Next, there was a vote on Kemble's initial motion to insert the just adopted language into the list of recommendations. Rothschild moved the previous question, seconded by Kemble. Motion passed on a voice vote, unanimously.

The Task Force then moved on to discussing whether it should recommend the city organize the BCCs around lead committees as proposed by the Rothschild Plan and the plan offered by the Office of the City Attorney. The Task Force engaged in a lengthy discussion about this topic. Some struggled with the idea of not having alders on all committees, as would be the case under either plan. Others noted the major time commitment required by all involved with the BCC system, especially the alders, and mentioned that the City needs to do something. Alder Kemble noted that the proposals are just too much and too detailed to recommend at this point. She thought they not endorse either but take key principles from each and think about it as they implement changes to the BCC structure. Kemble struggles with resident only committees.

8. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

October 2, 2019, 7:00 p.m. - Room 215, MMB
October 16, 2019, 6:30 p.m. - Room 103A, CCB

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Task Force determined it should continue discussing at its next meeting, at which point Goodwin moved to adjourn, seconded by Rothschild. Motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.