

Guidelines for Advisory Boards & Commissions



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Role of Advisory Boards & Commissions

City councils deal with so many items, it is difficult to research each one in depth. Advisory boards and commissions assist city councils by focusing on a particular area and making recommendations for city council action.

The City Council of Jordan, Minnesota has established the following standing advisory groups:

The **Planning Commission** is required by Minnesota State Statutes and reviews issues of land use planning, zoning, subdivision regulation and requests for variances from existing regulations.

The **Park and Recreation Commission** reviews issues related to acquisition and development of parks and trails in the City.

The **Economic Development Authority (EDA)** advises the City Council on attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses.

The City Council cannot delegate its decision making authority to advisory commissions. Therefore, occasionally the Council may decline to accept an advisory commission recommendation. This usually happens when the City Council has additional information about how the recommended action would affect the “bigger picture” that extends beyond the advisory commission’s purview, and should not be perceived as a lack of confidence in the commission. Residents should be allowed to be on one board or commission at one time.

Membership Rosters with Terms, Meeting Dates and Times

Planning Commission (3 year terms)

| Name | Term Expires |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Tom Sand | January 2022 |
| Robert Bergquist | January 2022 |
| Brenda Lieske | January 2024 |
| Jeff Will | January 2024 |
| Jane Bohlman | January 2024 |
| Robert Whipps | Annual Council Appointment |
| Bill Heimkes | Annual Council Appointment |
| Nathan Fuerst, staff liaison (952-492-7929) | |
| Ben Schneider, staff liaison (952-492-7940) | |

The Planning Commission meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Park & Recreation Commission

| Name | Term Expires |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Donna Breeggemann | January 2022 |
| Grant Tilus | January 2022 |
| Nathan Warden | January 2022 |
| Becky Brewster | January 2023 |
| Matt Schmitt | Annual Council Appointment |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Ben Schneider, staff liaison (952-492-7940) | |

The Park & Recreation Commission meets the fourth Monday of every other month at 6:30 p.m.

Economic Development Authority (EDA)
(6 year terms)

| Name | Term Expires |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Ryan Dahnert | January 2022 |
| Shane Ahlbrecht | January 2026 |
| Derek Nelson | January 2026 |
| Chuck Cook | January 2022 |
| Joe Spillman | January 2027 |
| Amanda Schuh | Annual Council Appointment |
| Jeremiah Monyok | Annual Council Appointment |
| Tom Nikunen, staff liaison (952-492-2535) | |
| Nathan Fuerst, staff liaison (952-492-7929) | |

The EDA meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Commission Administration

Selection of Chair and Vice-chair

The Chairperson shall be chosen from the board or commission membership annually to serve for 1 year; provided, however, that no Chairperson shall be elected who has not completed at least 1 year as a member of the board or commission.

If a board deems it desirable to have a Vice-chair, the same procedure would apply.

Vacancies

Vacancies are filled in the same manner as expired terms, but an appointment only lasts until the end of the unexpired term.

Advertisement

Openings may be advertised in the *Jordan Independent*, City website, Social Media and the City Newsletter. Advertisements include a contact number and application deadline if applicable.

Application

Application forms are available at City Hall, 210 East First Street, or by calling 952-492-2535 or on the City website.

Appointment

Appointments are made by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Elected officials may take into account the education, expertise and experience of applicants, as well as that already represented on the commission.

Compensation

Appointed members of commissions, but not ex-officio members, receive a financial stipend based on the number of meetings attended. An I-9 form must be completed for income tax purposes.

Resignation

Commission members who are unable to complete their terms for any reason should provide written notice to the Mayor and send a copy of the notice to the appropriate staff liaison.

Removal

Appointed board and commission members may be removed by the City Council for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance in office.

Qualifications**Residency**

All appointed members of commissions shall be residents of the City, except that two members of each commission may be residents of a neighboring township if the City Council deems such arrangement more representative.

City Employees

City employees may serve as regular or ex-officio members of commissions if there are no conflicts of interest.

Interest

It goes without saying that applicants should have an interest in the activities of the commission for which they are applying. It is important, however,

that the interest is broader than one topic and encompasses a majority of the issues reviewed by the commission. A willingness to learn is more important than expertise in a particular field.

Time Commitment

Commission meetings may only involve a few hours a month but the time commitment for members can be substantially more. Preparation includes reviewing the agenda and staff report, reading regulations related to agenda items, visiting sites under consideration, learning about the issues and developing a list of relevant questions for the meeting.

Duties & Responsibilities

Attendance

Consistent attendance at commission meetings is vital to discussion and action. Absence not only burdens the remainder of the commission, it short changes the people depending on the commission's decisions. Someone who cannot attend at least nine regular monthly meetings each year should not apply. Members who cannot maintain that level of attendance should resign to allow the appointment of replacements who can make the appropriate time commitment.

Preparation

It is important to review the agenda items and associated staff reports well in advance of the actual meeting. That review may reveal a need for additional information or a site visit. At the very least it will provide the commission member with an opportunity to think of relevant questions to ask. Commission members are encouraged to contact staff liaisons with questions prior to a commission meeting to allow staff adequate time to provide a detailed response.

Participation

In the event absence is unavoidable, a phone call or email to the staff liaison is required in advance of the meeting. In instances where there will not be sufficient attendance to provide a quorum, staff will recommend cancellation of a meeting.

Each commission member's views are important in reaching the best possible decision. Discussion raises issues and questions that improve the

final outcome. It is natural for new members to feel hesitant about looking foolish due to a lack of knowledge. The staff liaison can help by answering questions before the actual meeting so new members can speak with more confidence.

Conduct

Commission members should be fair, firm and factual as they review the issues before them. Members may hold different opinions and reach different conclusions than their colleagues, but such differences are not an excuse for disrespect. It is important to listen to fellow commissioners and members of the public without interrupting and without making derogatory personal remarks. Members should not let occasional differences interfere with ongoing working relationships among board members.

Members of the public who become argumentative, disruptive or abusive should be called to order by the board chair.

Continuing Education

The staff liaison can provide materials to assist commission members in learning more about the issues confronting them. There may be other learning opportunities through workshops and seminars. The staff liaison can determine if funding is available and can arrange registration.

Dealing with the Public

Individual commission members should avoid speaking on behalf of the commission unless a majority of the members have authorized that role.

Commission members are encouraged to have contact with and gather information from the community. They may also be approached by neighbors or members of the public. When discussing issues outside of commission meetings, commissioners should never promise that the board or the city council will take a specific action.

Commission members can and should elevate the level of public understanding and discourse by providing factual information about issues. They also can and should invite people to attend commission meetings so the entire board can discuss issues. Where more information is needed, commission members are encouraged to connect members of the public with staff who can often provide such information.

Meeting Procedures

Agenda

Agenda Preparation

The agenda packet is compiled by the staff liaison and delivered the week before the meeting. It consists of an agenda with numbered discussion items and a written staff or consultant report corresponding to each item. The staff report contains background information and specifies what action, if any, is being requested. It usually includes a staff recommendation, which the board may or may not accept.

Getting an Item on the Agenda

Putting an issue on the agenda allows board members to prepare for discussion and results in more productive discussion. Commissioners are encouraged to bring relevant issues or topics they would like to discuss to commission meetings. At an appropriate time, the commissioner should propose that issue/topic for discussion at a future meeting. If the Commission agrees, it may provide staff further guidance on preparing that item. Individual commissioners may not direct staff independent of the entire Commission's guidance.

Order of Business

Call to Order

At the scheduled start time, the Chair says, "The meeting will please come to order."

Roll Call

Absences are noted and designated "Excused" or "Unexcused." The only absences considered "Excused" are those involving a commission member on commission business, on a work assignment or absent for a medical/family emergency.

Approval of Agenda

Commission members or staff may request additions or deletions to the agenda before it is approved.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the last commission meeting may be approved “as presented” or corrected and approved “as revised.”

Public Comment

At Commission meetings, public comment is only allowed during preschedule Public Hearings on specific items. Audience members who wish to speak on a topic may do so for up to three minutes after providing their name and address for the minute taker. If the audience is large, the chair may request that groups appoint spokespersons to represent them. The board is not required to take action on issues raised during Public Comment.

Presentations for Information

Community groups or other government entities may present information that does not require commission action.

New Business

For agenda items not previously considered by the commission.

The chair asks for the staff report. After staff reports, commission members may ask questions of clarification but commission opinions are not expressed and debate does not occur.

The chair invites public comment. Commission members may ask questions of those who testify.

The chair closes public comment and invites comments from the commission members.

The chair calls for a motion. If motion is made and second given, discussion may continue. Motions may be made and seconded to amend the original motion. Debate may occur on the *amendment*, not the original motion.

The chair calls for a vote by repeating the motion or a commission member may “call the question” to end debate. The “call” requires a second and is immediately voted upon. If two-thirds of the commission members agree, there is a vote on the motion without further debate.

The chair notes that the motion is approved or fails.

Old Business

The commission considers items previously discussed but not acted upon. After further discussion, the commission takes action.

City Council Member Update

Appointed City Council commission members have an opportunity to comment, ask questions or request that an item be placed on a future agenda.

Commission Comment

Commission members have an opportunity to comment, ask questions or request that an item be placed on a future agenda.

Adjournment

The chair says, “If there is no further business, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.” If a motion is made and seconded, the motion is voted upon without debate.