

**Date:** 2021-03-15

**Subject:** **Current Vacancies – Approach during the Pandemic**

**Contact:** **C. Gravlev, Deputy City Clerk**

**Report Number:** Legislative Services-2021-346

**Recommendations:**

That staff be directed to proceed with the standard Citizen Appointments process to fill the current vacancies, with the position postings to include specific details relating to participation of committee members by electronic means.

**Overview:**

- **Meetings of committees with citizen members were postponed for the initial period of the pandemic, but were reinstated as demand for consideration of matters in their jurisdiction increased.**
- **Citizen advisory committees are currently taking place with their normal regularity, but fully by electronic means with no in-person attendance by the members, staff, external experts/presenters, or the public.**
- **Various citizen-based advisory committees have experienced notable attrition over the course of the past year, while some vacancies relate to unfilled positions from the time of formation of the committee.**
- **Direction is sought from the Citizen Appointments Committee whether it is deemed appropriate at this time to commence an appointments process to fill the current vacancies.**

**Background:**

For the most part, positions on the citizen-based advisory committees, boards, and adjudicative committees/tribunals were filled with appointments undertaken in due

course during the first portion of this current term of council. The various committees were meeting successfully from that point forward until March of 2020.

With the onset of COVID-19, meetings of committees with citizen members were postponed for the initial period of the pandemic, but were gradually reinstated as demand for consideration of matters in their jurisdiction increased.

### **Current Situation:**

Citizen advisory committees are currently taking place with their normal regularity, but by fully electronic means, with no in-person attendance by the members, staff, external experts/presenters, or the public.

Various citizen-based advisory committees have experienced notable attrition over the course of the past year (see Appendix A – Chart of Current Vacancies). While a few of the charted vacancies relate to unfilled positions from the time of formation of the committee, as with the Vehicle-for-hire Committee in particular - for which diligent recruitment was undertaken, but interested applicants to meet the particular position requirements were not attained. However, the majority of the current vacancies have resulted from resignations. The City Clerk's office is currently canvassing citizen appointees for confirmation of their continued interest, given continued electronic or hybrid meetings for the foreseeable future.

Given the current number of vacancies, staff are at this time seeking direction from the Citizen Appointments Committee as to whether to proceed with recruitment of new members during the current conditions and restrictions in place with respect to the pandemic, or to defer further appointments until conditions improve. Of note, in February 2020 a recruitment was underway, which was paused due to COVID-19, therefore staff also seek direction to reach out to those applicants for confirmation of their continuing interest and inclusion in any recruitment which may be commenced.

It should be noted that the current [Citizen-based Advisory Committee Guideline and Appointments Procedure](#) includes a provision for quorum in situations of vacancies in committee membership as follows:

- Should a citizen resign or be removed from a citizen-based advisory committee, quorum provisions for the committee with a vacant position, until the vacancy is filled, will be reduced by the number of vacant positions, as determined by the City Clerk (Resolution C186-2017).

As such, the committees are able to continue to meet and deliberate adequately with or without further recruitment being undertaken at this time.

A recruitment process to fill the current vacancies is possible, but would by necessity be largely electronic.

### **Corporate Implications:**

Financial Implications:

Nil

Other Implications:

Nil

**Term of Council Priorities:**

This report supports and reinforces the Term of Council Priority of a Well-run City by ensuring appropriate citizen appointment procedures and practices are followed to include valued citizen expertise, perspective and involvement within the Council decision-making process.

**Conclusion:**

While current pandemic related conditions and restrictions have led to vacancies on various citizen-based committees, these bodies are still able to function, electronically. Optimal interest and participation by citizens appears somewhat hindered in this environment. However, if deemed appropriate by the Citizen Appointments Committee, the regular process for appointments to fill the current vacancies will be commenced.

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**Attachments:**

Appendix A – Chart of Current Vacancies