

## **SECTION 8. CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

- 8.1** Mercer Island's boards, commissions and ad hoc committees provide an invaluable service to the City. Their advice on a wide variety of subjects aids the Mayor and Council members in the decision-making process. Effective citizen participation is an invaluable tool for local government.
- 8.2** These advisory bodies originate from different sources. Some are established by Title 3 of the Mercer Island City Code while others are established by motion or ordinance of the City Council. It is at the discretion of the Council as to whether or not any advisory body should be established by ordinance. Title 3 of the Mercer Island City Code establishes the following advisory boards and commissions for 2004:
- (1)** Design Commission
  - (2)** Planning Commission
  - (3)** Utility Board
  - (4)** Youth and Family Services Board
  - (5)** Mercer Island Arts Council
- 8.3** The adoption of uniform rules of procedure is necessary to assure maximum productivity for these boards and commissions.
- 8.4** The Council may dissolve any advisory body that, in their opinion, has completed its working function or for any other reason.
- 8.5** Members and alternate members of all advisory bodies are recommended for appointment by the Mayor, following consultation with the Council Liaison and staff, during a regularly scheduled meeting, subject to City Council approval.
- 8.6** Vacancies are advertised so that any interested citizen may submit an application. Applicants must be citizens of the City of Mercer Island if required by the Mercer Island City Code or if required by the Mayor. Councilmembers will be notified of any vacancy in any board or commission. Council members are encouraged to solicit applications from qualified citizens. Applications shall be available from the Office of the City Clerk. The City Clerk will retain completed applications for 2 weeks for City Council review.
- 8.7** Lengths of terms vary from one advisory body to another, but in all cases overlapping terms are intended. On ad hoc committees, where a specific project is the purpose, there will not be terms of office.
- 8.8** All meetings of advisory bodies are open to the public in accordance with Chapter 42.30 RCW, Open Public Meetings Act and require a minimum 24 hour advance notice.
- 8.9** The number of meetings related to business needs of the advisory group may be set by the individual body, unless set forth in a resolution or ordinance or unless the number of meetings adversely impacts City staff resources, as determined by the City Manager.

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- 8.10** Members may be removed, from any advisory committee, prior to the expiration of their term of office, by a majority vote of the City Council.
- 8.11** All members of advisory bodies should be aware of the need to avoid any instance of conflict of interest. No individual should use an official position to gain a personal advantage.
- 8.12** The City Council transmits referrals for information or action through the City Manager and the City Council liaison to the advisory groups. These advisory groups transmit findings, reports, etc., to the City Council through the City Manager and City Council liaison.
- 8.13** While the City staff's role is one of assisting the boards and commissions, the City staff members are not employees of that body. The City staff members are directly responsible to his or her Department Director and the City Manager.
- 8.14** Annually, staff shall develop a draft work program for each board and commission based upon the City Council's annual work plan. Staff will present the draft work program to each board and commission for input and revision. All Board and commission work programs will then be presented to the City Council for review, possible amendments and approval. Boards and commissions shall not direct City staff to perform research, gather information or otherwise engage in activities involving projects or matters that are not listed on the work plan unless approved by the City Council or City Manager. Copies of board and commission agendas will be included in City Council regular meeting packets.
- 8.15** **Roles & Duties for Council Liaison.** The Mayor may appoint a Council liaison for any boards or commissions. The Council liaison shall report objectively on the activities of both the City Council and the advisory group. Any member of the Council is allowed to attend advisory committee meetings so long as a quorum is not present. The Council liaison shall report objectively on the activities of both the City Council and the advisory group. The specific duties of a Council liaison are as follows:
- (1) Attend meetings of the board or commission on a regular basis and sit at the table or dais, as applicable.
  - (2) Except in quasi-judicial matters, may participate in discussion and debate of the board or commission but may not vote on any matter.
  - (3) Represent the majority City Council position, if known.
  - (4) Participate in a manner that will not intimidate or inhibit the meetings and operations of the board or commission. Make comments in a positive manner so as to promote positive interaction between Council and the board or commission.
  - (5) Be prepared to give Council regular and timely reports at every regular City Council meeting. Take the lead on discussion items before the Council which pertain to the assigned board or commission.
  - (6) With the Mayor, evaluate potential candidates for appointment to the board or commission. Based upon liaison and Council input, the Mayor will recommend appointment of candidates subject to City Council approval.
  - (7) Schedule with Council an annual presentation by the board or commission and staff on the annual work program, projected goals and funding

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requirements. These presentations should be integrated with the annual budget process.

- (8)** Schedule with Council an annual presentation by staff on the annual work program, projected goals and funding requirements. These presentations should be integrated with the annual budget process.

(Section 8 Updated February 21, 2006)