



STAFF REPORT

DATE: January 12, 2021

DISCUSSION

AGENDA ITEM: Committee Structure

TO: Mayor and Council

SUBMITTED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator

BACKGROUND:

The city has five committees (Environment, Finance, Human Resources, Maintenance Advisory and Public Safety) comprised of residents who provide recommendations to the council and staff when requested. These committees have met a varying amount of times over the last few years. The finance committee meets most frequently with about 4-5 meetings each year for the last couple years. The environment and human resources committees met the least at only once in 2020. The public safety and maintenance advisory committees met 2-3 times in 2020. In addition to the infrequent meetings, most of the committees struggle to fill their membership positions.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

Should Council make changes to the committee structure?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Staff would ask the council to consider changing the committees in order to increase the benefit received from them as well as provide a more meaningful experience for those who volunteer their time to the city. Staff is proposing to eliminate these five committees and instead create a Capital Improvement Committee. Breaking down the “silos” by bringing folks together with varied areas of interest to give input on some of the biggest expenses of the city, should provide a more comprehensive set of recommendations. This configuration will also help address some of the challenges of arriving at a decision when folks are only looking at it from a certain perspective. For example, it's not the role of the Maintenance Advisory Committee or Public Safety Committee to decide how to fund trucks or fire engines; the funding source is the responsibility of the Finance Committee. Conversely, it is not the Finance Committee's role to decide if a piece of equipment is needed and what equipment is best to purchase as that is the role of the other committees. Committee members have struggled with this distinction in the past so bringing all sides together in one committee will allow them to consider all aspects of a project.

The Capital Improvement Committee would meet a handful of times from late spring through summer to review, prioritize and provide recommendations on projects in the annual Capital Improvement Plan. The lead staff person would be the Finance Director with assistance from the Public Works Director, Fire Chief, Planner as needed when their projects are being considered. Committee membership is proposed to be 11 people:

- 2 members of the Parks Commission
- 9 residents of Lake Elmo

Their proposed annual work plan would look something like this:

May: Orientation and Update on current CIP
Begin identifying projects for CIP update

June: Review existing CIP projects and identify new projects.
Site visits, if necessary

Review Financial Capacity and conditions
Evaluate funding Options

July: Evaluate funding options
Evaluate and program capital projects
Prioritize capital projects
Select projects, schedules and assign a funding source

August: Hold Public Hearing with Planning Commission
Make CIP recommendation to City Council

ATTACHMENT:

- Proposed Committee Policies



Capital Improvement Committee Operating Policies & Procedures

Scope & Purpose: To aid the City Council and staff in the development of the annual Capital Improvement Plan; a plan for the city's infrastructure (such as streets, parks and utility systems), vehicles, equipment and public buildings. The plan shall include estimated cost, the need for each improvement, funding source and the financial impact that the improvement will have on the city.

Committee Duties:

- A. In conjunction with the City Staff and Parks Commission (as applicable), develop, review and recommend projects for the city's Capital Improvement Plan.
- B. Review financial capacity and conditions; evaluate funding options.
- C. Prioritize projects in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- D. Hold a public hearing at a joint meeting with the Planning Commission before finalizing a recommendation to the City Council.
- E. Annually elect a chair and vice chair to preside over meetings.

Meeting Schedule: Monthly (or as needed) May through August

Committee Composition: 2 Members of the Parks Commission (terms to run consecutively with their term on Parks Commission)

9 residents of Lake Elmo (staggered three year terms)