

MINUTES OF THE RULES COMMITTEE
Monday, January 4, 2016
6:00 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
Council Chambers

Present: Ald. Peter Braithwaite, Ald. Judy Fiske, Ald. Delores Holmes, Ald. Brian Miller
Ald. Mark Tendam, Ald. Melissa Wynne and Ald. Donald Wilson

Absent: Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl and Ald. Ann Rainey

Presiding: Ald. Judy. Fiske

Staff Present: Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager, Oscar Murillo, ICMA Fellow, and Mario Treto,
Assistant City Attorney II

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

Ald. Fiske declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:07p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Jessica Feldman, former co-chair of the original City/League of Women Voters study on Boards, Committees and Commissions. She said the study started as a staff project and then the League offered to help to get community input. The League worked on it for 2 years. They started out with the intention of finding BCC's that were not needed. They ended up eliminating 2 and combining 1. The BCC's are really the place where the Council gets community input, they take a lot off the Council's shoulders, and are there to be used to do the background stuff. If the BCCs have purposes they probably won't have a problem filling vacancies and probably won't have a problem with quorums because they will actually be doing some helpful work. The BCC's can be of great help if used appropriately. The League recommends once again that if thinking about having another study committee, that community members be added to the staff that is going to be thinking about making recommendations. If you look at the communities that have universities they have a lot of committees, and lots of input and involvement in government and the others do not. This is Evanston and there are a lot of bright people to offer information and like to be involved. Lastly, to be accurate, the Plan Commission does not have 14 members and subcommittees of the Plan Commission have nothing to do with being committees. They are just subcommittees. The Age Friendly Task Force is a temporary group that is looking for a specific thing. That is not a BCC, it is a task force.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 5, 2015:

Ald. Miller moved approval of the October 5, 2015 minutes. Ald. Holmes seconded. Minutes approved.

UPDATE ON BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES (BCC):

a) REDUCING MEMBERSHIP ON VARIOUS BCCs; b) REDUCING NUMBER OF BCCs

City Manager Bobkiewicz reported that the memorandum included in the packet includes information about other neighboring communities and the number of BCCs they have as well as other comparable out of state communities. Also is a list of the 29 citizen BCCs of the 46.

Ald. Wilson stated that he thinks the business of the Rules Committee could be done a regularly scheduled Council meeting. The meetings are usually very, very short, and causes Human Services to be delayed and there is often a gap between the two meetings. They should also look at combining some of the missions of the BCCs. It would be nicer or more appropriate if they look at a way to do

this by attrition instead of telling people they are going to take the numbers down to this number of that number. The terms are on a rolling basis and they could look at how that plays into the terms. When he served on ZBA, his understanding, before he got on there, was there were problems getting a quorum. So this could possibly eliminate some of those quorum issues if they have different numbers and different requirements and more people committed to the specific thing instead of trying to fill so many spots.

Ald. Tendam agreed, they don't do much at the Rules Committee. He asked if there had ever been a time when it was used heavily to discuss very important issues that they are possibly already discussing elsewhere. Ald. Wynne stated the Rules Committee has been a committee as long as she has been on the Council. There have been times when they met quite regularly. Obviously, this past year and the year before they have not. She thinks Ald. Wilson's suggestion is a good one.

Ald. Miller agreed as well. He also thought they could cut their committees at least in half and does not think the level of dialogue they have regarding the various issues will suffer as a result. It may be more transparent in a sense because they will have more of an idea in the central location of what is going on with the various issues that are arising. It is kind of hard to keep track of 46 different committees that are eventually going to come to Council for approval. He would like to put in a formal request to staff for a proposal to consolidate most of these committees. He is not wedded to it but after going through the list brought the number down to about 14. There will probably have to be some ordinance changed because a number of committees are established by ordinance and there are also a variety of state laws. For example, A&PW could include 911-ETS Bd., the ADA Advisory Bd., Chicago Main TIF, Citizen's Advisory Committee on Public Place Names, the City Chamber Committee, the M/W/EBE Committee, Public Safety Civil Service Commission, Sign Review & Appeals Bd., Taxicab Advisory Bd., Transportation/Parking Committee and Utilities Commission. They could have a separate Economic Development Committee. Human Services could take a number of the other committees, for example, the Animal Welfare Bd., Downtown Performing Art Center Task Force, etc. They could have a Parks/Recreation Environment Bd., a Planning Development and Preservation Bd., Design & Project Review Committee including the Board of Local Improvements where they could have staff review a variety of the proposals that come forth. A separate Board of Ethics. Not sure if legally they can combine the Firefighter's Pension Bd. with Police Pension Bd. The Library Board, Liquor Control Board, Rules Committee of the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. There are a number of overlapping purposes that should be subsumed by other committees.

Ald. Wilson pointed out the Chicago/Main TIF is specific to one little neighborhood so you would have to be thoughtful about that. The Plan Commission probably doesn't need a Rules Committee. The Environment Board has people who are very engaged in the environment. Ald. Miller noted that the Environment Board currently has 6 vacancies. Ald. Wilson responded then they don't need to have 13 members or roll it into something else with their input and as long as it is a thoughtful process. He would like staff to bring back a proposal with ways to do this. He and Ald. Wynne both sit on the City Chamber Committee and would like to suggest that it be eliminated because they don't really meet.

Ald. Tendam stated that certain committees require a certain amount of special knowledge. He served on the Sign Review and Appeals Board and it is sort of a language onto itself and people who understand the business have more business on that committee. Certain committees benefit from having certain expertise from residents. Ald. Miller disagreed stating that the expertise they are getting comes from a lot of the staff and not necessarily from the members of the committee. Ald. Tendam said in his 4 years on that committee they never counted on staff because staff could not speak the language or understand what the committee was talking about.

Ald. Holmes clarified that the Rules Committee listed is the Rules Committee of the Plan Commission which is a subcommittee of the Plan Commission. Not the Rules Committee meeting now which is a standing Committee of the Council. Secondly, she understands that the Council's Rules Committee does not meet that often and could certainly go between the P&D and maybe Council meetings. But they should not talk about getting rid of it. This committee sets policies, does all the discussion on new rules, rules and policies that have to be developed. As for the Age Friendly Task Force she thought it was a subcommittee of Commission on Aging. There is some combining that could be done, not necessarily getting rid of, and making sure they are getting as much as they can out of each group and for the citizens to continue to have input.

Ald. Wynne agreed, there are times when Council does need to have a policy discussion and the Council's Rules Committee is the place to do it and moving it to a different night might work better. She agrees that some of the BCCs could be combined or moved under another. She served on the Environment Board years ago and does not think there were 13 members at the time. But that is a committee they could reduce the membership. It is a good committee to have because the issue is so broadly interesting for a lot of people. When she was on the board they did a lot of good things and got a lot of good things started. If they begin to combine things they do have to be aware of the workload that happens as a result.

Ald. Fiske suggested they specifically ask the folks that staff these various committees how they would feel. There are some committees that deal directly with the public in a more indebt manner than staff. For example, the Plan Commission, ZBA, and the Preservation Commission do require a fairly high level of expertise and it is sensitive because it affects people and their daily lives. She agreed with moving Rules to a City Council night. Also suggested they go back to having two City Council meetings a month and asked that the City Manager give a run down on the issues they have dealt with over the past year on those 3rd Monday meetings.

Ald. Wynne added she would like staff to give information about committees that have had trouble getting a quorum on a regular basis. That would be an indicator of committees to possibly reduce the number in members. If over a short period of time it is not necessarily problematic but over a longer period they should recognize that they should reduce the number of members. She suggested they be provided with information over the last 2 years on how many of the Special meetings they've had.

City Manager Bobkiewicz responded that the 3rd Monday meetings have covered the larger topics. Harley Clarke took up one or two, in the fall there are budget issues, and this month Robert Crown. They were doing a lot more reports at those meetings that were really informational. They have largely stopped doing that and provide that information in other formats. So if staff brings an issue to the Council on that 3rd Monday it is usually something that needs a decision. As Council deliberates this further, they have already made the change to try to have those meetings just for decision points. Ald. Fiske stated she would like to have a list provided of what they've done.

Ald. Wilson mentioned staff should not be making the decision but going to each of the committees and asking a few important questions. For example, do you need less people? Do you want less people? Do you feel like your BCC could be part of another? Or is your mission suitable for combination with another committee and if it is intuitively obvious that they think X should go with Y, like the Arts Council and the Public Art Committee. Those intuitively would go together and it seems that worked out ok. Board of Local Improvements and Zoning Board of Appeals are decision making bodies and they aren't going to make any changes to those but some of the others they could.

City Manager Bobkiewicz stated it is very difficult to get real concrete feedback on some of the

questions raised. Perhaps staff could come back with a proposal and he would be happy to reach out to the League prior to doing that. His guess is that there be one recommendation that will include land use committees and then there would be one recommendation for the others. So if the committee could give staff until the March or April meeting to sort of internally discuss some of these issues and work with the League and perhaps come up with a consensus proposal. Then if the Council felt it was reasonable, staff would then take it to the BCCs. It would be easier for them to have something that was a little more concrete rather than to ask more open ended questions. In his experience in working with them it is sometimes difficult to get answers. This way it helps the process simply because these folks spend limited amounts of time focusing on these issues. But they would certainly want to get their advice once there was a more concrete proposal to react to.

Ald. Wilson said he did not think there would be the same need to defer on the Council only committees. So the Council only committees could be done sooner then take the time needed to go ahead with the others.

City Manager Bobkiewicz asked if the committee would like staff to come back with something specifically pertaining to the Rules Committee. Staff could have a resolution to amend the Council's Rules so that the Rules Committee remains, but no longer has a fixed meeting time and meets as needed.

Ald. Wilson moved to recommend to the City Council that the City Chamber Committee be eliminated. Ald. Wynne seconded. Motion passed.

Ald. Wilson moved to recommend to the City Council that the regularly scheduled 2016 City Council meetings held on the 3rd Monday of each month be eliminated and substituted with an as needed policy for special meetings which will occur on the 3rd Monday. Ald. Fiske seconded. Motion failed. Ald. Fiske, Miller and Wilson voted yes. Ald. Braithwaite, Holmes, Tendam and Wynne voted no.

Ald. Wynne said it would be helpful if the City Manager could look at giving notice of a cancellation of the 3rd Monday meeting at the beginning of the month.

Ald. Wilson moved to eliminate the separate meeting night for the Rules Committee and roll the Rules Committee into a regularly schedule Council meeting night on an as needed basis. Ald. Holmes seconded. Motion passed.

Ald. Fiske noted that on the BCC memo Palo Alto, CA is listed as having 9 BCCs and she would like to know what those 9 are.

CITY COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP SCHEDULE:

City Manager Bobkiewicz pointed out that vacancies need to be filled to replace former 7th Ward Alderman Jane Grover. Ms. Grover was the chair of both Human Services and Administration & Public Works. Past practice has been the previous chair fills the vacancy. So Ald. Braithwaite would continue with Human Services thru the February 2016 meeting and Ald. Fiske would take it over in March as scheduled. Ald. Braithwaite said he would be fine finishing up her term on Human Services.

City Manager Bobkiewicz said Ald. Braithwaite would then serve as chair for A&PW beginning now until July 2016. Ald. Holmes pointed out that you cannot serve as chair at the same time on two standing committees and this would put Ald. Braithwaite chairing Human Services and A&PW.

Ald. Wynne noted A&PW would go back to Ald. Rainey and they should propose that that happens and if Ald. Rainey doesn't want it then they would go down the list.

Ald. Fiske asked if Ald. Miller replaced Ms. Grover on A&PW. Ald. Miller said he did not but he is a member of A&PW and would be happy to fill the chairmanship role on A&PW.

Ald. Wilson moved that Ald. Miller serve as chair on A&PW beginning January 2016 through the second meeting in July 2016. Ald. Fiske seconded. Motion passed.

Ald. Wilson moved that Ald. Braithwaite complete the remainder of the term on Human Services through February 2016 and Ald. Fiske will pick up in March 2016 as scheduled. Ald. Wynne seconded. Motion passed.

City Manager Bobkiewicz confirmed that Ald. Miller will complete the term on A&PW thru July 2016 second meeting. Ald. Braithwaite would then take over A&PW as planned in August 2016 and serve as chair on Human Services through February 2016 and in March 2016 Ald. Fiske will take over. He added that Ms. Grover was schedule to serve as chair of the Rules Committee starting in February 2016. Ald. Wynne volunteered to serve as the chair for Rules Committee on an as needed basis.

Ald. Wilson moved that Ald. Wynne serve as chair for the Rules Committee beginning February 2016 through June 2016. Ald Fiske seconded. Motion passed.

City Manager Bobkiewicz said Ms. Grover was also scheduled to serve as chair of the Economic Development Committee beginning in May 2016. The committee decided they would deal with Economic Development Committee at a later time.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURMENT:

Meeting adjourned 7:05p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Francellno

A video of this meeting is available at www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes/agendas-minutes--rules-committee.