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Advisory Committee Appointment Policy

POLICY TITLE	Advisory Committee Appointment Policy
CATEGORY	Corporate
POLICY NUMBER	ADM 045
DEPARTMENT	Corporate Services
DIVISION	City Clerk
AUTHORITY	Council
APPROVED BY	Council
EFFECTIVE DATE	(11/29/2022)
REVIEW DATE	(11/29/2024)

POLICY STATEMENT

Advisory Committees are special purpose bodies established at Council’s pleasure to provide a means of regular, on-going community input with respect to particular issues and policies.

While it is the legislative mandate of the Cambridge Council to make the final decision on all matters that affect the Municipality, the role of an advisory committee is to provide recommendations, advice, and information to staff to be incorporated into reports to Cambridge City Council on those specialized matters which relate to the purpose of the advisory committee. Advisory Committees also facilitate public input to Cambridge City Council on programs and ideas and to assist in enhancing the quality of life of the community in keeping with the Cambridge City Council’s Strategic Plan principles.

Advisory Committees provide feedback to staff and have a relationship with a specific City Department. Advisory Committees enlist persons with special knowledge or interest in a particular topic. Advisory committees have an on-going function, while others are created to deal with a specific issue and are established for a limited period of time.

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PURPOSE

The City acknowledges the value of committees and the feedback they provide to Council. The policy provides a guide for Council Members and City Staff involved in the process to ensure consistency, integrity, and fairness in administering the process and provides information about how the City's process works for those applicants who are interested in applying to be appointed to an advisory committee.

DEFINITIONS

Advisory Committee - a committee established to provide advice to Council as mandated its Terms of Reference. They are normally ongoing and do not have a finite term. Other advisory committees may be "Ad Hoc" which means that they are for a specific purpose and have a mandate with a finite end.

Resident - all persons who reside in Cambridge, and includes permanent residents, refugees, refugee claimants and residents without homes and who are at least 16 years of age (unless otherwise specified and approved in the terms of reference). For the purpose of this guiding principle resident also includes any person who owns property in the City of Cambridge.

Terms of Reference – a document that establishes a particular board or committee and details the specific authority that board or committee has to oversee a delegated area of responsibility.

AUTHORITY

Council

SCOPE

The Advisory Committee Public Appointment Policy applies to all City boards and committees.

POLICY

Eligibility and Qualifications

Unless otherwise specified in the terms of reference, applicants must be residents or owners of property in the City and at least 16 years of age. Specific skills and experience for membership on each Advisory Committee shall be established by way of the Terms of Reference.

Appointees are required to maintain their eligibility and qualifications throughout the term of their appointment.

City staff are not permitted to serve as members on an Advisory Committee. Councilors are not permitted to serve on Advisory Committees unless in the role of Council liaison.

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Qualifications for Advisory Committees vary considerably and are to be established in the Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference. The following guidelines may be considered in establishing any such qualifications:

- Ability to perform the duties of the Advisory Committee, including any complementary skills and/or competencies.
- Areas of specialization where required, experience or community service.
- Geographic location within the City.
- Individuals with diverse backgrounds and lived experience

Advertising Vacancies

The following methods may be employed to advertise vacancies for Advisory Committees:

- a) Page in a local newspaper
- b) City of Cambridge website
- c) Email distribution lists to individuals or groups
- d) City of Cambridge Social media accounts

Application Process

Those interested in applying for an Advisory Committee vacancy will begin by filling out the Application for Appointment to Statutory Boards and Advisory Committees form

<https://cambridge.formbuilder.ca/Clerks/Statutory-Boards-and-Advisory-Committees>

During the application process, those interested in applying to an Advisory Committee are encouraged to fill out the optional self-identification questions. Staff will use the data from these questions to ensure that its recruitment campaigns are reaching marginalized communities and groups as well as to help make appointment decisions to support diversity and inclusion. Members of the public who are interested in serving are welcome to apply to as many Advisory Committee vacancies as they would like. However, members of the public may only serve on one Committee at a time.

Shortlisting and Interview Process

After the application deadline, the City Clerks' Division will forward all applications to the Committee's interview panel to begin the shortlisting process. The interview panel will be made up of the Committee's Staff Liaison and Council Liaison. Additionally, a representative of the Office of the City Clerk will form part of the interview panel, as an advisor. This advisor is neutral, they will provide guidance on the interview process, provide logistical support, prepare interview packages and reporting, and attend interviews in an observer capacity. The shortlisting and interview process shall include the following steps:

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- The interview panel will review all applications that expressed an interest to serve on the committee or board. Their review will be based on the body's terms of reference, the advertised desired skillsets, and the selection framework provided in this policy.
- The interview panel will convene to review applications, and by consensus determine a shortlist of candidates, two of the short listed candidates shall be recommended as alternate members to the Committee who will be non-voting members that can be moved into a vacancy where a voting member resigns.
- Once a shortlist is developed a representative from the Clerks' division will schedule interviews.

In support of equity all interviews will be conducted in the same manner and each candidate will be asked the same questions. All members of the interview panel must be present at all interviews, to be eligible to contribute to the recommendation. The interview panel shall conduct all interviews in private and information received at these interviews shall be confidential.

Through this policy, Council provides the following guidance to its interview panels when making appointment recommendations to committees and boards. Overall committee composition should:

- be a balance between experienced and new members, and lived experience versus skills and abilities,
- achieve geographic representation,
- be representative of diversity and demographics of the community which may include, age ranges, gender, sexual orientation, Aboriginal status, race, and disability

Upon the completion of interviews, the interview panel shall provide a recommendation for each vacant position, and dependent on the quality of applicants, select two (2) alternate appointees, according to committee terms of reference, and in preferential order.

Confirming Appointees

A report from the Clerk's Division communicating the recommendations from the interview panel will be prepared for Council approval. The report will be public but will include a confidential appendix that will provide Council with the names of all shortlisted candidates, as well as which candidates the interview panel has recommended for appointment. After Council has made its decision on appointments, all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by the City Clerk.

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Advisory Committee Subcommittees

Subcommittee members may be appointed outside the Advisory Committee Appointment Policy; however, ratification of appointment is done by the committee or board with a correspondence to Council issued through the Council Information Package.

Appointment terms and limits

Members of the public are eligible to serve for two consecutive terms (8 years) on the same Advisory Committee. Members of the public are required to take at least one-year absence after serving on the same Advisory Committee for eight years. After the one-year absence, the member of the public is eligible to re-apply to serve on the former Advisory Committee. If no applications are received for a vacancy, a previous member may be appointed for an additional term at the discretion of Council. During the one-year absence from an Advisory Committee, a member of the public may apply to serve on a different Advisory Committee. Exceptions to the 8-year limit are noted as follows:

- When an insufficient number of applications have been received.
- If a particular area of expertise is required and there are no other eligible and qualified candidates.
- If the advisory committee would suffer from a lack of continuity if all or the majority of members are replaced at once.

Any recommendation to reappoint an incumbent who has reached their sunset date shall identify these special circumstances and recommend a waiver of the limit on length of service. A member of the public who has been appointed to fill a vacancy partway through the Advisory Committee term will be appointed for the balance of the existing term. The new Member is eligible to apply for re - appointment(s) for a maximum of eight (8) consecutive years. The balance of the term that the Member would have previously served does not count toward the eight-year (8) maximum term limit. Renewed membership on an Advisory Committee is not automatic. Members who wish to serve for an additional term are required to reapply.

Potential Conflicts

Applicants should consider whether they have a real or perceived conflict of interest with the Advisory Committee, including any direct or indirect pecuniary interest with the City. Disclosure of such potential conflicts does not mean that an applicant is automatically ineligible for an appointment, but the interview panel may assess potential conflicts in its determination of whether the applicant should be considered further. Appointees will be subject to the City's Conflict of Interest Policy and Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, if appointed.

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Member conduct

All members of Advisory Committees, special committees or task forces who are not Municipal Council members or employees of The Corporation of the City of Cambridge shall abide and handle themselves in proper conduct. Council recognizes the value of the impartial and objective advice received from committee members and the challenges and inherent restrictions facing committee members in assessing and recommending various options in a conscientious and ethical manner. Advisory Committees, when carrying out their committee responsibilities, are expected to:

- abide by the provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario Human Rights Code, City of Cambridge policies and any other applicable related statutes and, in doing so, shall treat every person, including other committee members, corporate employees, individuals providing services on a contract for service, students on placements, and the public, with dignity, understanding and respect for the right to equality and the right to an environment that is safe and free from harassment and discrimination;
- act in the best interest of The Corporation of the City of Cambridge;
- seek to advance the common good of the community which they serve; and
- truly, faithfully and impartially exercise their duties to the best of their knowledge and ability.

Resignations

Advisory Committee members wishing to resign their appointment mid-term shall submit their resignation in writing to the City Clerk. When the resignation is accepted by the City Clerk, the City Clerk shall also consider the need to replace the Advisory Committee member, having regard to the remaining composition of the committee, whether there are any alternate members that could take the place of the member who has resigned, the current workload of the committee and the length of time remaining in the committee member's term. If the City Clerk deems it advisable to replace the member an alternate shall be selected following which any vacancies for alternate positions shall be publicly advertised and residents of the City shall be invited to apply to fill the vacancy. Vacancies for Advisory Committee members who represent a particular organization/agency shall be nominated by that organization/agency.

Attendance

The Staff Liaison or Recording Secretary will record the attendance of Members in the minutes of the meeting. A Member of an Advisory Committee who intends to leave a meeting before the meeting is adjourned shall inform the Chair of this intention either at the start of the meeting or prior to leaving. If a Member of an Advisory Committee is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings or fifty percent (50%) or more of the annual meetings without cause acceptable to the



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Advisory Committee, the seat of the Member is vacant. The City Clerk will contact the absent Advisory Committee member to inform them of their removal from the Advisory Committee. The City Clerk will publicize the vacancy and the need for a replacement. A Member who has been removed from an Advisory Committee will not be eligible to serve on any Advisory Committee until the start of the new four (4) year term of the municipal council.

POLICY COMMUNICATION

Not listed