

Memo

To: Mayor Dennis McBride

From: Mike Arney, Chair, Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee

Re: Changes to Wauwatosa Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2.29, "SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE"

Background

The Wauwatosa Code of Ordinances, chapter 2.29.010, says the Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee shall consist of eight citizen members appointed by the mayor, one (voting) member of the common council, and an optional, non-voting staff liaison.

For the past several years, the Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee has been operating with ten citizen members (plus council member and liaison).

In the past several months:

- One member has resigned;
- One member's term expired 12/31/23 and they requested not to be re-appointed;
- One member's term expired 12/31/23, they expressed interest in being re-appointed, they were slow to provide the documents needed for re-appointment, and that re-appointment has not occurred; and
- One new member has been appointed.

So we are now at eight citizen members. We would like the option to have more than eight, to give more people the opportunity to exercise their talents for sustainability in the city. Several commissions have no upper bound to membership (Youth, Senior, Equity and Inclusion).

At the same time, in case of less interest in committee membership, allowing for lower membership seems prudent. The Commission for Persons with Disabilities requires between seven and eleven members.

Two other issues related to chapter 2.29:

- There is no provision for removing a committee member, in particular one who does not show up to meetings but has not formally resigned; and
- Chapter 2.29.040 calls for the committee to report to community affairs in the first quarter of each calendar year. In the past four years we have reported twice to government affairs and twice to financial affairs, several of those times in the second quarter.

Proposal

We propose the following changes to the size of the committee:

- In chapter 2.29.010, section A, strike the words, "comprised of nine individuals".
- In chapter 2.29.010, section A.1, to replace the word "Eight" with "Not fewer than seven nor more than eleven".

To clarify the procedure when a member leaves the committee, we propose:

- Replace chapter 2.29.020, section B, with “Terms shall expire at the end of each calendar year. If a member should leave the committee before the end of their term, the mayor may appoint a replacement to serve out the remainder of the term.”

For removal of members we had thought of something like this, but we do not want to imply other committees cannot remove their members. Perhaps staff can offer us some clarity around this issue of removing members from the committee:

- [withdrawn] “Committee members are expected to participate in the life of the committee. Members may step down from the committee at any time with written notice to the Mayor and committee chair. A member who has not attended meetings or otherwise participated in the life of the committee in a meaningful way during a six month period should be contacted by the committee chair. If the lack of participation continues, they may be removed from the committee by two-thirds vote.”

For reporting we propose:

- Amend section 2.29.040 to replace, “to the community affairs committee in the first quarter of each calendar year” with “to a standing committee designated by the city clerk in the first half of each calendar year.”

Resulting Chapter

2.29.010 Created.

- A. There is hereby created a committee to be known as the Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee, ~~comprised of nine individuals~~, to include:
1. ~~Eight~~ Not fewer than seven nor more than eleven citizen members, who shall be residents of Wauwatosa, to be selected at large by the mayor and subject to confirmation by majority vote of the common council, being selected so as to provide a broad range of expertise on energy, recycling or sustainability issues; and
 2. One member who shall be a member of the common council, appointed biannually by the mayor, to be a liaison and voting member of the committee;
- B. A city staff member may be appointed to serve as an ex officio (non-voting) member.

2.29.020 Appointment.

- A. Appointments to the committee by the mayor shall be for a term of three years.
- B. ~~Members shall serve staggered three year terms, with three terms expiring at the end of each calendar year.~~ Terms shall expire at the end of each calendar year. If a member should leave the committee before the end of their term, the mayor may appoint a replacement to serve out the remainder of the term.
- C. The members shall elect a chair, vice chair, and secretary for one-year terms at the beginning of each calendar year, after the start of new membership terms. The chair, vice chair and secretary may serve a maximum of two consecutive, one-year officer terms.

2.20.030 Mission.

The committee's mission shall be to champion environmentally sound practices fostering the city's long-term livability and economic vitality. The committee advises the common council and city staff on sustainability matters, and collaborates with residents, businesses and other partners to advance the city's environmental goals, including:

- A. Energy use practices that optimize financial, health and environmental benefits, including demand reduction, building and vehicle efficiency, and renewable energy options.
- B. Waste and material management practices that optimize financial, health and environmental benefits, including waste reduction, recycling, composting and other initiatives.
- C. Community outreach initiatives that help to educate residents and businesses on sustainability initiatives that enhance the quality of life in Wauwatosa.

2.29.040 Annual report.

The sustainability committee shall provide an annual update to the community affairs committee in the first quarter of each calendar year a standing committee designated by the city clerk in the first half of each calendar year.