



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room A
City Hall Complex, 1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801**

- 1. Welcome and Call to Order at 10:09 am**
- 2. Roll Call:** Councilor John Tabor, Councilor Vincent Lombardi and Councilor Kate Cook present. Also present was the Deputy City Manager / Deputy City Attorney Suzanne M. Woodland and City Attorney Susan Morrell.
- 3. Committees/Ordinances to Review**
 - a. Committee Appointments Rotation Policy.**

Councilor Cook reviewed draft language for section 1.302 to improve the stagger of terms on several boards and committees.

Councilor Lombardi suggests deference should be paid to alternates and letting them have an opportunity to apply for open positions; otherwise, supports stagger language in the current draft.

Councilor Tabor is generally supportive of trying to improve stagger.

Councilor Cook emphasized that this proposed change would not affect the term of anyone who is currently sitting on a board, committee or commission. It is for future appointments.

The suggestion was made to add language that Mayor should consider alternatives when making appointments. In addition, the Deputy City Manager proposed additional language to the current draft, specifically “to the extent permitted by law” to accommodate the variety of boards, committees and commissions. Councilor Cook will work on developing a next version based on comments.

b. Appointments Schedule

Councilor Cook summarized the concern about appointments to boards, committees and commissions post-election of a new City Council, but prior to swearing-in in January. She seeks opinion from other councilors on topic.

In response to Councilor Lombardi's question, City Attorney Susan Morrell explained there is no date set in the State statutes for when terms for the land use boards in particular expire and new appointments get sworn in.

Councilor Tabor tends to lean toward adjusting termination so that an incoming City Council makes more appointments rather than the outgoing City Council.

Councilor Lombardi suggested that June is a good date for expiration of terms of board members.

Councilor Tabor expressed there was no consistency in what we have now.

Councilor Cook advised that Audit Committee, EDC, Planning Board, Trustees of Trust Funds, and Board of Adjustment all have members whose term expires between election and swearing in of new City Council.

Discussion about how to shift these appointments.

Councilor Lombardi suggested appointments be later than January so as not to overburden new Mayor.

Discussion of whether to get input of former Mayor Spear and Ferrini.

4. Agenda for Parks Discussion with Recreation Board, Conservation Commission, Trees and Public Greenery, and possibly the Planning Board

Committee discussed how to best get input from those boards, committees and commissions that have input on green spaces.

Councilor Lombardi would like the City to look at open space holistically.

Committee identified the questions they see to answer to help frame a further consideration of parks and greenspaces.

- a. How should the City best use or best manage the spaces; and specifically who advocates to add green space view scapes, etc.
- b. What is the right mix of active and passive uses of our green spaces?
 - i. Need a better understanding of what we have for green spaces.
 - ii. How do we take advantage of an opportunity to acquire property when then it arises?
- c. Who should be responsible, at a committee level, for supporting parks and greenspaces?

Committee also discussed briefly how the master planning process will be starting up likely next year and how consideration of greenspaces would fold into that. Committee also discussed how the City's bike/pedestrian planning efforts also factor into this discussion of green and passive recreation spaces. The Deputy City Manager offered to reach out to the Planning Director and Transportation Engineer to see if either one or both is available to attend next meeting to update the committee and provide perspective.

5. Other Business

The Deputy City Manager distributed and briefly discussed the flyer that will be distributed to board, committee and commission members summarizing public records and public meetings requirements. Governance Committee members indicated their support for that effort and also reiterated support for videos and other means for describing the operations and processes of the City.

- a. Next meetings: November 21, 2022; December 12, 2022; Tentatively January 9, 2022 and January 23, 2022.
- b. Upcoming Committee Topics
 - Sidewalk Policy
 - Donation Policy
 - Conflict of Interest

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7. Adjournment

Councilor Lombardi moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Tabor. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by
Suzanne M. Woodland
Deputy City Manager / Deputy City Attorney

Approved by Governance Committee on: October 31, 2022