



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

Date: August 24, 2012

To: Council Member Robert Lilligren, Chair, Committee of the Whole

Referral to: City Council

Subject: **2012 Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey Report**

Recommendation:

1. Direct the Neighborhood and Community Relations director to work with the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission to
 - a. develop draft principles or guidelines that support increased diversity on the City boards and commissions for the City Council and the Mayor to consider when filling vacancies, and
 - b. review and make recommendations on the selection process, including an examination of successful models in the City, and
 - c. report back to the City Council's Committee of the Whole by January 31st, 2013.
2. Direct the City Clerk to review eligibility requirements for the City's boards and commissions to ensure their relevancy and to recommend to the City Council by January 31st, 2013, where possible, the elimination of unnecessary requirements.

Previous Directives:

February 6, 2009 - As part of the consideration of appointments to the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission the City Council adopted the following motion:

Hodges moved to amend the report to direct NCR staff to forward a request to the NCEC to develop and recommend recruitment strategies for NCEC board member selection for both city and neighborhood appointments that promote racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic diversity on the NCEC board. Staff should request that the recommendation include evaluation methods and an annual report to the NCR's reporting committee, and that the NCEC report back with its recommendation to Committee of the Whole no later than August 13, 2009.

This deadline was later extended.

July 17, 2009 – City Council adopts Resolution 2009R-316 which authorizes a diversity audit of City boards and commissions.

Department Information

Prepared by: David Rubedor Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

Approved by:

David Rubedor, Neighborhood and Community Relations Director _____

Paul Aasen, City Coordinator _____

Presenters in Committee: David Rubedor, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations

Financial Impact: There is no financial impact from this action.

Community Impact:

- City Goals: This action supports the City goals of

One Minneapolis

Family friendly opportunities and amenities abound, New arrivals are welcomed, diversity embraced, Race and Class gaps are closed in employment and housing, Seniors stay and talents are tapped.

A City that Works

Shared democracy empowers residents as valued partners, 21st Century government: collaborative, efficient and reform minded, Transparency, accountability and fairness are our hallmarks

- Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC)

The NCEC has reviewed the findings from the Boards and Commission Diversity Survey and provided input in the development of the recommendations. The NCEC has also expressed a strong interest in working with the NCR department and the City Council on further developing the recommendations included in the report that will build greater diversity and representation on our City’s boards and commissions.

Supporting Information

The City benefits from the volunteer efforts of about five hundred residents who serve on more than fifty appointed advisory boards and commissions. These boards and commissions represent a key component of community engagement activities in regard to City actions and decision making. Boards and commission members provide valuable insight, help shape key policy decisions and provide community-based input into the design and administration of services.

Boards and commissions fall into a handful of categories: appeal boards, development boards, general advisory boards, and special service districts, which are defined areas within the city where special services are rendered.

In order to be effective in their work, and truly represent the many interest of the city’s residents, membership on the City’s boards and commissions should reflect the people in our city. The Neighborhood and Community Relations department is working with the City Clerk and the City Council to ensure that the boards and commissions represent the diversity Minneapolis residents. Diversity, for the purposes of this report, includes racial, economic, age, gender, geographic, ownership, disability and education attainment.

To increase the diversity on the City’s boards and commissions, the following actions have been undertaken:

1. Streamlined appointment process: In 2010, the appointment process for all boards and commissions was streamlined so that it occurred twice per year (spring and fall cycles). This provides clarity for residents and community members by allowing information, communication, and outreach about vacancies to occur in a coordinated manner.
2. Outreach and Education: The Neighborhood and Community Relations Department actively supports outreach to cultural communities, neighborhoods and other community-based organizations about upcoming boards and commission vacancies during the appointment process. The NCR Department works directly with individuals interested in applying for vacancies.
3. Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey: To understand and measure the demographics of the City's boards and commissions, the NCR department conducts a voluntary survey of the board and commission members. The first survey was completed in 2009. The second survey was completed in June 2012.

It should be noted that the Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey is voluntary. Respondents' participation is neither compulsory nor random. As a result, the survey is not scientific. Any propensity for one demographic group to participate or not participate is not weighted in the results. The validity of the survey is based on the response rate. Both the 2009 and the 2012 survey had nearly identical response rates of 39% (195 and 196 respondents, respectively, out of a pool of 497).

Overall Conclusions from Survey

1. Actions implemented to date have significantly increased the size of the applicant pool. More people are applying for vacancies on our boards and commissions than previously.
2. Actions implemented to date have not resulted in greater diversity of our boards and commissions.
3. Additional review and changes to the appointment process is needed to increase the diversity of our boards and commissions.

Recommendations

1. Develop principles/guidelines for the appointing authorities to consider when filling vacancies.

Recognizing that one size does not fit every situation, a set of principles/guidelines can be developed and adopted by the Council to provide guidance with the appointing process. These principles can provide guidance when considering applications for boards and commission vacancies while providing flexibility. Principles may include guidance on the various diversity factors included in the survey such as serving on multiple boards, income levels, gender, ownership status, etc.

2. Review Current Selection Practices

There are specific examples in the City where diversity has been significantly increased when key staff and appointing authorities work together. For both the Civil Rights Commission and the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, staff works directly with the City Council and the Mayor in the recruitment and appointment process. For the NCEC, this has resulted in people of color representing 50% of its membership. Using this or a similar model for other boards and commissions may prove effective in increasing diversity.

3. Increase opportunities for more participation.

There are several changes to the administration of our boards and commissions that can open additional opportunities for our increased applicant pool.

- Limit multiple appointments: The survey found that over 1 in 4 volunteers serve on two or more boards or commissions. Reducing the number of people serving on multiple boards will increase opportunities for others to participate.
- Enforce Term Limits: A number boards and commissions have members who have served past the established term limits. Adhering to term limits will increase opportunities for others to participate and allow for new perspectives.
- Review eligibility requirements of specific boards and commission and eliminate unnecessary barriers.
- Examine whether other support measures will increase participation (childcare, parking, meeting locations, etc.).

4. Implement Leadership Training Supported with Cultural Outreach:

Residents should have good information about service opportunities and be well-oriented once selected to serve. The NCR department is developing a resident leadership academy that will support residents' capacity to effectively serve on our City's boards and commissions.

The City Clerk's office is also developing an orientation session to ensure that new members understand their roles and responsibilities as members of boards and commissions. Both of these efforts will help provide the tools to increase the capacity of residents with limited City or boards and commission experience.

5. Increase Staff Involvement:

City Staff are often in contact with residents that could be excellent candidates for our City's boards and commissions. Encouraging City staff to help with outreach and recruitment of qualified individuals, with a focus on the diversity factors, will also ensure a diverse and capable applicant pool.

6. Collect Demographic Data:

Establishing a voluntary system to track the demographics of the pool of applicants will help determine the success of outreach efforts.