



CITY OF WORCESTER

CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 6:30 PM

Hybrid MEETING

In Person: Levi Lincoln Jr. Chambers, City Hall

Remote Access: Microsoft Teams

- Present:** District 2, Rachel Brown, Chairperson
District 4, Theodore Kostas, Vice Chairperson
District 1, Isabelo Cruz
District 1, Tina Zlody
District 2, Ammar Asbahi
District 3, Michael Richard
District 3, Siaka Kromah (6:46pm)
District 5, Carol Stovall
At Large, Julie Cohen
- Excused:** District 4, Casey Thomas
- Guest:** Feanna Jattan-Singh
- Staff:** Jeannie Michelson, Human Resources Department

1. Rachel called the meeting to order at 6:32pm
2. Roll call attendance: 8 members were in attendance. 1 member arrived at 6:46pm, bringing the total to 9 members present.
3. Rachel asked for a motion to accept and approve the minutes from the 8/14/24 meeting.
 - a. Carol made a motion to accept the minutes and Tina 2nd the motion. After a roll call, the minutes of 8/14/24 were approved. 8-0 in favor.
4. Interview current applicants:
 - a. Erik Bartenhagen:
 - i. Zoning Board of Appeals: 8 – 0 in favor
 - b. Lauren Morocco:
 - i. Historical Commission: 8 – 0 in favor
 - ii. Advisory Committee on the Status of Women: 8 – 0 in favor
 - c. Emmilie Roach:

- i. Other Post Employment Board: 9 – 0 in favor
 - d. Daniel “Drew” Schnobelen:
 - i. Worcester Arts Council: 9 – 0 in favor
 - ii. Advisory Commission on LGBTQ+ Affairs: 8 – 0 – 1 in favor
 - iii. Human Rights Commission: 9 – 0 in favor

5. Updates:

- a. List of applicants, nominations and appointments / Appointment process
Timeline:

- i. Jeannie provided the number of applicants, nominations and appointments since 2019 to show the demographics of each.
 - ii. Jeannie provided a list of applicants since 2019 that have been appointed to show the number of days from the time the applicant attended a CAC meeting to the time they were appointed. The average number of days is 66.
 - iii. Julie asked for clarification about the process and was concerned about a couple of applicants that are in “limbo” and have not heard about their status.
 - iv. Ted requested the list of current applicants that are still waiting to hear about appointments. It was discussed that the numbers are off due to several factors and comparing the list probably won’t help.
 - v. Jeannie will get status updates on the few individuals that are waiting and provide updates to the CAC.
 - vi. Ted and Tina are concerned that the applicants may lose interest or feel disrespected if they don’t hear anything in months about their application status.
 - vii. Carol asked about automated emails just so that the applicants know that they are still being considered. Jeannie said that automation probably isn’t doable, but that we could send individual emails just to touch base with applicants.
 - viii. Tina wants applicants to at least have a contact to reach out to get updates.
 - ix. Siaka asked about having a separate body of people charged with handling the recruitment aspect of volunteers. Jeannie indicated that the CAC is the recruitment body and that the recruitment team of Human Resources is just beginning to get involved with the volunteer recruitment. Rachel requested that the recruitment team from HR be invited to a CAC meeting so they can discuss expectations.
 - x. Siaka suggested that the CAC send recommendations to the City Manager without Human Resources involvement. Rachel

mentioned that the CAC is an advisory board and the duties/authority of the CAC is outlined in the City Charter.

- xi. Julie asked if the person from the City conduct interviews on the spot at the CAC meetings. Rachel discussed the logistics of having each staff liaison at the meetings and that there could be pushback.
- xii. Ted asked to have the recruitment team attend a meeting so they could share recruitment ideas. Tina would like the CAC to be able to talk about what the CAC does and how they move people through.
- xiii. Julie asked if applicants are given a reason why they are not selected at each stage of the process. Jeannie said they do not get a specific reason.
- xiv. Guest: Feanna Jattan-Singh asked to speak about her application for the Parks Commission. She interviewed in June/July had the follow up interview with the staff liaison and was told that someone from the City would reach out to her but she has not heard anything. The CAC apologized to her for her patience and appreciated that she took the time to come in to express her frustration.
- xv. Julie requested clarification on the action being taken. Jeannie will work with the HR team to figure out the best time to have the recruitment team attend a CAC meeting to discuss process.
- xvi. Julie mentioned giving reasons to the applicants when they are voted down by the CAC and at each step along the way. Several members are not inclined to offer that feedback in a public forum and were concerned about legal issues. Rachel mentioned developing a tally sheet. Rachel said that this topic is not on the agenda and would like to include it on the next agenda so that the public could weigh in on the issue.

b. Language added to website:

- i. Jeannie updated the CAC that the language surrounding informational sessions prior to the CAC meetings has been added to the website so that applicants are aware of the opportunity to ask questions prior to the meeting in an informal manner.
- ii. There were 3 applicants that came early (2 online and 1 in person) to the meeting tonight to ask questions.

6. Recruitment/Outreach

- a. Rachel mentioned that the list of permitted events was included in the packet and members are encouraged to reach out to Jeannie if they can attend.

- b. Tina reminded members that the last stART on the Street event is occurring on Sunday, September 15th from 11am – 6pm and invited all to attend.
- 7. Future Agenda Items:
 - a. Discussion: Process of CAC members when voting (including a copy of questions used by HR during follow up interviews)
- 8. Carol motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm.

/jmm

Approved: 6 – 0 in favor 10/17/24