



RECOMMENDATION FORM
Presented to Mayor Brown on August 8, 2011

1. Committee: Boards and Commissions
Chairs: Charles A. Clarkson & Robert F. Spohrer
Members: Karen Landry, Bobby Martin, Clara McLaughlin, Doug Milne, Seth Pajcic, Eric Smith, Marcella Washington, Jim Winston

2. Recommendation(s):

The administration has either nomination or appointment responsibility to over 60 boards and commissions. Consequently, there are many areas to review and study for potential overlap and improved efficiencies. Below is a list of suggested changes of existing policies that may realize better use of staff, more efficient use of existing resources, expanded opportunity for volunteer service with increased production and involvement of appointed volunteers and better communication between the administration and the board and commission structure.

As all nominations and appointments are volunteer positions and administration support exists from current staff these potential changes have minimal budget impact.

General Recommendations

3. We strongly recommend that the city lead the development of a fiscal impact analysis approach that will have broad application across all agencies, boards, commissions and departments.

Recognizing the financial and economic impact of public decisions on taxpayers should be a fundamental goal. Therefore, it is critical that we increase efforts to fully understand fiscal impacts of decisions and make such goals a key part of the decision making and approval process.

Example: when the Planning Commission considers a subdivision or Jacksonville Economic Development Commission (JEDC) a new project, part of that approval process should include a quantitative projection of the potential fiscal impact on

police and fire, schools, utilities etc as well as an estimate of the impact on sales/real estate taxes, jobs and the local economy. Although we did not review all agencies and we understand that cost benefit discussions occur frequently we uncovered little to no rigorous focus on this basic issue. Tourist Development Council (TDC) has a "heads in beds" focus and JaxPort began regular discussions of "return on investment" four years ago.

4. Logically, the administration would lead and coordinate, in cooperation with City Council, a citywide process in establishing a consistent, disciplined and transparent process for developing a fiscal impact analysis process. Public review and discussion of cost/benefits for taxpayers should be a priority throughout the decision making process.

5. The city develops a website where all city data and analysis (such as the various fiscal impact projections) will be transparently available for public review and discussion. This would assist the goals of the Taxation Revenue & Utilization of Expenditures Commission (TRUE) and provide a transparent review of city of Jacksonville projects for all residents to evaluate.

Recommendations and suggestions for the administration, scheduling and staffing of boards and commissions

6. Advisory boards should meet quarterly or more often if necessary. This recommendation would ease the burden on administrative staff as well as being less burdensome on volunteer appointees. As an example, The Film and Television Advisory Board currently meets every two months and has found success with this schedule.

7. Advisory boards should submit an annual plan with the administration. This recommendation would assist the administration in aligning goals with future appointments as well as supporting the board with its yearly goals.

8. Advisory boards should have a sunset provision added to their respective Executive Order if a quantified goal cannot be established within the 2011-2012 fiscal year. This would clarify the mission of each advisory board as well as address potential updates and changes to each board's executive order or ordinance.

9. Advisory board chair and officers as well as terms of members coincide with the City of Jacksonville's fiscal calendar, 9/30-10/1. This should assist the administration in the appointment process as well as the budget process.

10. In order to create more transparency, community involvement and greater awareness, the administration should review the possibility of conducting as many board and commission meetings in a central, consistent location.

11. For mayoral reappointment to a board or commission a member must have an attendance rate above 70% including subcommittee meetings. It is obviously at the discretion of the administration but this would set a standard for all boards and commissions as reappointments are evaluated. This is in addition to the requirement in Chapter 50 of the ordinance code that states 3 or more unexcused absences in a row from a board or commission shall result in that members seat becoming vacant and open for a new nomination. In addition, it is encouraged that phone participation be reviewed as an avenue to ease the scheduling burden of volunteer board and commission members.

12. The administration should study the feasibility of a dedicated 2-4 member staff from existing resources being allocated to provide administrative support for board and commission meetings. This would provide continuity for scheduling and noticing as well as an increase of information flow between the respective boards. It is hoped this would also alleviate staff time from other departments and divisions who currently support various boards and commissions.

13. The notice and publicity policy of scheduled board and commission meetings should be reviewed to insure maximum exposure to the residents of north Florida.

14. The mayor should annually meet with each board Chair and full board and at a regularly scheduled meeting of each board.

15. Many minority groups in north Florida face the same challenges and obstacles in society. We believe it would be beneficial if all minority communities received the same access to information and resources provided by the City of Jacksonville. It is recommended the administration review the feasibility of housing all minority advisory groups under one umbrella minority advisory board. The African American community should be included as part of this minority outreach.

16. Just as this review has been helpful in understanding the breadth and depth of the board and commission structure a detailed outside review and report every 3 or 4 years should be performed on the board and commission organization.

17. The Ethics Office is encouraged to review the current “conflict of interest” provisions for board and commission volunteers and ensure they are consistent with elected officials and employees of public office. We want to reinforce the importance

of rigorous review by the Ethics Office over all boards and commissions as each body and membership holds a piece of the public trust.

Recommendations and suggestions for specific Boards and Commissions

18. Health and Environmental representation with Planning Department

In order to facilitate better communication between affected parties, members of Health Planning Council, Health Facilities Authority and Environmental Protection Board should be included in Planning Commission meetings and related development group meetings: either of an existing board member having a standing invitation or directing staff to attend on behalf of the board.

19. Tourist Development Council & Cultural Council

Jacksonville benefits from its arts community drawing patrons from throughout north Florida. A busy cultural calendar not only attracts visitors but also enhances the stay of tourists. The Cultural Council and TDC should work in concert to encourage and support cultural events that draw visitors to Jacksonville. Either by encouraging increased applications to the TDC for grant monies by the Cultural Council and/or through better coordination with the convention calendar both groups would benefit from an enhanced relationship.

20. Independent Boards and Authorities

In order to create more transparency and community involvement, the administration should request each of the following Authorities hold at least one regular board meeting a year in the City Council Chambers of City Hall: Jacksonville Aviation Authority, Jacksonville Housing Authority, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, JEA, and Jacksonville Port Authority.

21. JEDC

Due to the importance of their work and the priority Mayor Brown has put on downtown development we feel a more in depth evaluation of the JEDC and its various roles deserves consideration within the first 100 days. We believe the current scope of duties and oversight of the JEDC is too broad and needs to be reduced. An emphasis on downtown development through a separate, dedicated authority is strongly encouraged to be considered by the administration. Additional to the findings and suggestions of other transition committees, the administration, City Council and private sector need to agree on 3-5 priorities annually in order to focus the objectives of the JEDC. The offices of JEDC should be located within City Hall, and the JEDC leadership located within the Mayor's Office.

22. Human Rights Commission

The administration should always be mindful of representative racial, ethnic and cultural inclusion and minority participation when making board and commission nominations. Advisory boards that represent minority groups should schedule regular meetings before the Human Rights Commission on issues that are affecting members of their community.

23. Disabled Services

A review of the relationship of the Disabled Services division and the Human Rights Commission will insure communications on issues facing local compliance of ADA regulations.

24. Sexual Assault Advisory Council and Victims Assistance Advisory Council

In a better utilization of staff the Sexual Assault Advisory Council should be reorganized as a committee of the Victim Assistance Advisory Council.

25. Joint Planning Council

Like the Joint Planning Council, the administration should identify areas where agencies and departments can collaborate on projects and development to ensure strong communication and greatest return on tax dollar investment.

Charles A. Clarkson, Date

Robert F. Spohrer, Date

Committee Co-Chairs