



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Ashley Owens, City Secretary

Date: April 26, 2022

Reference: Discussion regarding Boards and Commissions Attendance Policy

Introduction:

This Work Session item is a follow-up to discussions that City Council had during the Boards and Commissions application and appointment process last Fall. City Council expressed a desire to revisit the attendance policy for all boards and commissions members. This discussion will not include Mayor and City Council attendance, which is addressed in Section 3.06 of the Home Rule Charter.

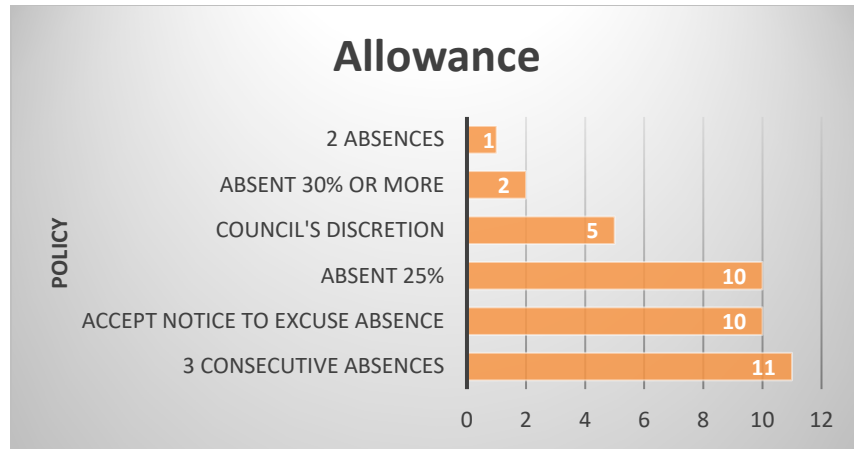
Background:

The current attendance policy for boards and commissions is as follows: **“If a board member is absent for three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, or if a board member is absent for 25 percent of the regularly scheduled meetings within a 12-month period, the position shall be declared vacant, and the vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the city council within 30 days after the vacancy occurs.”**

If a board member reaches their second absence, the City Secretary’s Office will send a letter to the member reminding them of the current policy. If a third absence or the 25 percent threshold is reached, it is at the discretion of City Council whether the member is removed from their board. Currently, there is no language in the City’s ordinances that allow for excused absences.

Analysis:

Staff queried surrounding cities regarding attendance policies. Based on the below chart, our current policy is used throughout the region, but some cities also utilize excused absences that are approved by the board or City Council in the following meeting. The excused absence will provide flexibility for those members who experience emergencies or unexpected obligations throughout the course of the year.



City Attorney Robert Hager has provided the following definition of an excused absence: “An excused absence means a failure to attend a regular or special called meeting of the board or commission that is a result of illness, medical condition or service, attendance of funeral for immediate family member, jury duty, vacation, participation in a religious or work-related activity.”

Based on past discussions, Staff is proposing a policy that will allow for excused absences. In summary, every calendar year, each board member is allowed two excused absences and one unexcused absence:

“A member whose absence is a result of illness, medical condition or service, attendance of a funeral for immediate family member, jury duty, vacation, participation in a religious or work-related activity, with prior notice to the liaison or Chair, shall have the absence excused by their board, commission, or committee at the next scheduled meeting. The absence will be placed on the meeting agenda for consideration by the board. The maximum number of excused absences is two per board member per calendar year.

If any member fails to provide such notification for a meeting missed, the absence will be considered unexcused. If a board member is absent for more than one unexcused absence for a regularly scheduled meeting within a 12-month period, the member shall, upon approval of the City Council, forfeit his or her position on the board, commission, or committee.

If a board member is absent for more than two excused absences for regularly scheduled meetings within a 12-month period, the member shall, upon approval of the City Council, forfeit his or her position on the board, commission, or committee.”

Staff is seeking direction on whether City Council is interested in amending the policy to allow for excused absences.

Legal Review:

Staff has collaborated with City Attorney

Fiscal Impact:

None