

TOWN COMMITTEE(S) POLICY (Draft 3)

From time to time, the Mayor and Council may deem it necessary to appoint a committee to address certain issues and concerns that affect the quality of life of our citizens or other subjects of interest to the community as a whole. The following are guidelines for appointments to Town Committees.

Committee Purpose:

Committees will be directed by the Council to address a specific issue or related issues. Each committee will be tasked to develop well-thought-out recommendations for viable balanced solutions.

Committees will be established by Resolution.

Committees may be either ongoing or established for a specific length of time as specified by Resolution.

Committee Makeup:

Members will be recruited through community e-mails, the Town website, cable TV announcements, announcements at public meetings, posting on the Town bulletin board and personal outreach.

Committee members should be legal Town residents and, when beneficial, persons with a direct interest or expertise should be allowed to participate.

Committee Members should be appointed from a broad geographic range within the Town. They should be ethnically diverse and gender balanced.

Ideally, Committees should be from 7-9 members.

The Mayor and Council may appoint a particular person to Chair a committee if one individual has certain expertise/qualifications that make him or her best suited to lead. Otherwise, the committee members shall elect a Chairperson at the first meeting, who thereafter will call the meetings and set the agenda.

One member of the committee will be responsible for taking notes at each meeting so that the process will be recorded and transparent. This job can be rotated.

Committee Procedures:

Committees should establish a schedule based on members' availability.

Committees should meet in the Town Hall and schedule dates and times with the front office.

Meetings should be posted on the outside bulletin board.

The Committee meetings are subject to the State's Open Meetings Act.

At the time a Committee has a need to report to the Mayor and Council, the Chair should schedule to be on the monthly Council Worksession through the Town Clerk. This should be done the by the Wednesday prior to the meeting.

All proposed changes to law, policies, and other directives must be approved by the Mayor and Council through a motion, resolution, or ordinance, as appropriate.

Patricia McAuley

From: Susan McCutchen <tkdmccutch@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2014 10:20 AM
To: Patricia McAuley
Cc: John Moss; Jr. Walter Lee James
Subject: Comments on Draft Town Committee(s) Policy (Draft 2)
Attachments: Town Committee Policy Draft--S. McCutchen Comments 1st page.jpg; Town Committee Policy Draft--S. McCutchen Comments 2nd page.jpg

Hi, Pat!

Thanks for the opportunity to read this policy and make comments. Mine (and a few suggested edits) are noted on the attached. I hope you do not consider my input intrusive.

I asked the questions in the margin because I think it would be a good idea in the current rancorous climate to fill in and spell out more clearly the membership selection steps prior to the first meeting and the powers of the chair, if selected by the Mayor and Council, prior to the first meeting. Otherwise, there might be complaints if, say, 20 people volunteered, but only 7-9 were selected, which I would assume would take place prior to the first meeting. While the text indicates that broad geographic range, diversity, and gender must be considered in member selection, stating who officially determines that these guidelines are met (thereby making it clear that the membership is not a matter up for public debate/input/control, rather an above-board internal procedure) and who determines the general membership at the start would be wise.

Just my thought to head off people crying foul or charging that committees are hand-picked to suit the council. We had this kind of hassle from time to time at the National Academy of Sciences, but balanced membership, as you set out and including expertise (because our committees gave specific policy advice), was set in the books as officially internal, with assurances of proper vetting by officially stated, step-by-step procedures.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Susan

Susan R. McCutchen

We Lead By Example, Inc./Tae Kwon Do Ramblers Self-Defense Systems

website: www.ramblers-tkd.org

e-mail: tkdmccutch@yahoo.com

TOWN COMMITTEE(S) POLICY (Draft 2)

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dash comma

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residents

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Ideally, Committees should be from 7-9 members.

The Mayor and Council may appoint a particular person to Chair a committee if one individual has certain expertise/qualifications that make him or her best suited to lead. Otherwise, the committee members shall elect a Chairperson at the first meeting, who thereafter, will call the meetings and set the agenda.

How is the membership winnowed down if, say, 20 people volunteer? Who does the select?

One member of the committee ^{will} ~~should~~ be responsible for taking notes at each meeting. This job can be rotated.

So that the process will be recorded and transparent.

Committee Procedures:

Committees should establish a schedule based on members' availability.

Committees should meet in the Town Hall and schedule dates and times with the front office.

Who corresponds w/ members before the first meeting?

should be posted ^{on the} in the outside bulletin board.

Committee Meetings are subject to the ^{Maryland's} State's ^{LC} Open Meetings Laws.

When a Committee has a need to report to the Mayor and Council, the Chair is to be on the monthly Worksession through the Town Clerk. This should be done Wednesday prior to the meeting.

Council

Proposed changes to law, policies, and other directives must be approved by the Mayor through a motion, resolution, or ordinance, as appropriate.

Patricia McAuley

From: Chris Melendez <acmrarefinds@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 03, 2014 4:57 PM
To: pmcauley@bladensburg.net
Cc: John Moss; Steve Weitz; Darrell Wesley; Virginia Lockmuller; Jan Rivera; Carlyncia Peck; John B. Carlson; Chris Melendez
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT: Community Input on the Draft Town Committee Policy
Attachments: MML RESOURCE - Citizen Boards Commissions and Committees.pdf; SAMPLE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION for APPOINTMENT - Calvert Couty MD - Board Commission or Committee.pdf

To: Patricia McAuley, Town Clerk

From: Chris Melendez

Date: December 3, 2014

RE: COMMENTS to the "TOWN COMMITTEE(S) POLICY (Draft 2)"

Here are my recommendations related to the above draft document:

- 1. TOWN APPOINTED BODIES - Commissions, Boards, and Committees:** The proposed Town policy should encompass Town APPOINTED BODIES - "Commissions, Boards, and Committees". I am attaching an MML PDF file resource file information about the purposes of each of these bodies and THEIR COMMON guidelines. Some of the language of this PDF could be used to inform the Town's draft.
- 2. Draft Review by Town Attorney:** As this proposed policy must comply in language and intent with those laws which govern "appointed bodies", such as the Maryland Open Meetings Act, the Maryland Public Information Act, and Maryland and Town ethics laws, I recommend that this policy language be reviewed by the Town Attorney before being finalized into a proposed "Resolution".
- 3. Volunteer - Work group:** I am willing to volunteer to participate in a work group to work on revisions to the draft language and body of this policy.
- 4. Best Practices:** I propose that a work group gather best practices examples of policies to inform work group members, as this policy will require the generation of Town materials to support the recruitment and function of "Appointed Bodies". As an example I am attaching a sample of Calvert County, MD's "Application for Appointment" which includes language related to compliance with ethics law.
- 4. Final Proposed Draft:** I recommend that the final proposed draft of any policy be posted for Public Comment prior to proposed enactment by the Mayor and Council.

I look forward to hearing back from the Town on these comments.

Chris Melendez
4902 Taylor Street

Bladensburg, MD 20710

443-975-8446

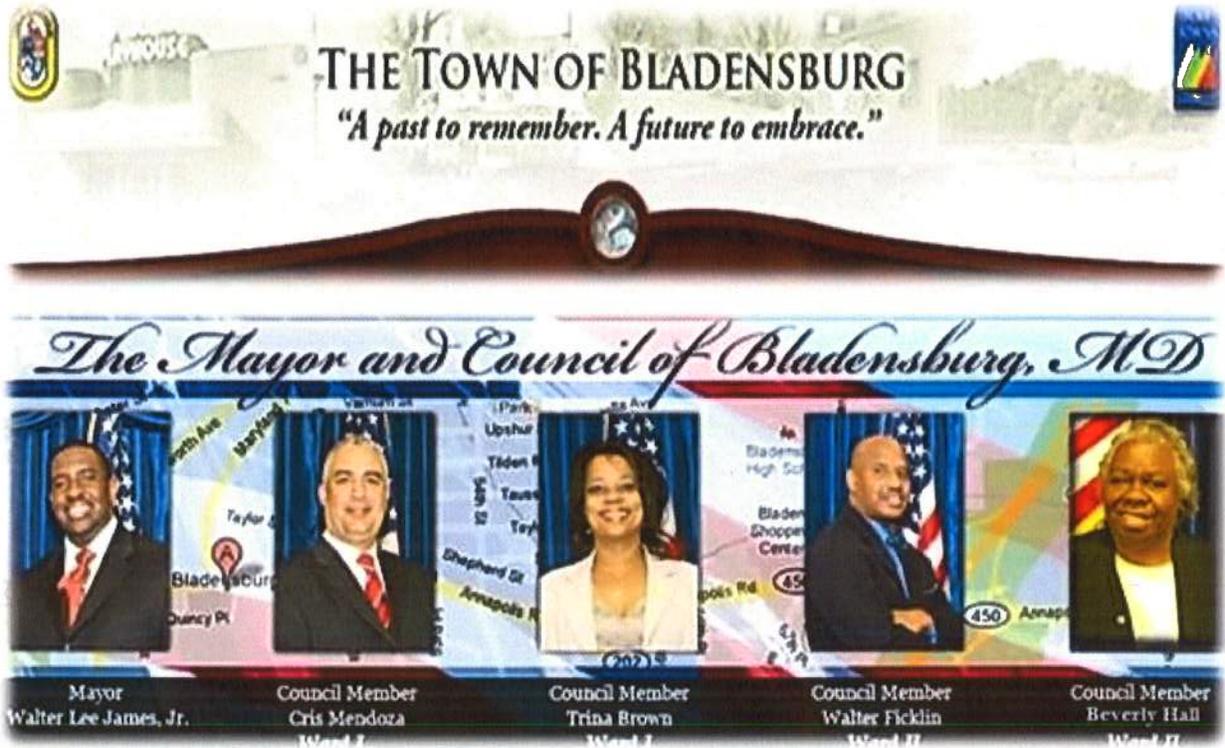
From: John Moss <jmoss@bladensburg.net>

To: jmoss@bladensburg.net

Cc: dgriffin@bladensburg.net; pmcauley@bladensburg.net

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 3:12 PM

Subject: RE: COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION - Community Input on the Draft Town Committee Policy



November 19, 2014

Good Afternoon Community Member:

You are receiving this notice as you have submitted your information to the Town of Bladensburg for community information notices: **Community Input on the Draft Town Committee Policy**

From time-to-time the Town requests the community's input on policy that is contemplated to be discussed or is in the process of evolving or being updated. In this case, the Town is in the process of crafting a policy that reflects the process of how it enacts and composes a community committee. If you are interested in seeing this *first draft* of this document please **click on this link: Draft Town Committee Policy to download the PDF document. If you have comments, please do email them to the Ms. Patricia McAuley (pmcauley@bladensburg.net)**, Town Clerk, for consideration by the Mayor and Council in anticipation of their deliberation and discussions during the next upcoming work session (*scheduled for December 8th, 2014.*) *This information can also be accessed by going to the Town "Minutes" page and accessing the link from there as well.* **All reply's**

should be in writing and submitted no later than Close of Business on Wednesday December 3rd, 2014.

Thank you for your anticipated feedback. Should you desire more information, please contact the Town Hall at 301-927-7048.

Best Regards,

John Moss

John Moss, CPM, ICMA-CM

Town Administrator

Town of Bladensburg

"Responsible and Responsive Government"

4229 Edmonston Road

Bladensburg, Maryland 20710

Office [\(301\) 927-7048](tel:3019277048), [\(301\) 927-7962](tel:3019277962)

fax: [\(301\) 927-5257](tel:3019275257)



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Citizen Boards, Commissions and Committees

Maryland's municipalities have the authority to establish advisory boards, commissions, and committees through Article 23A, Section 2 of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*. In addition, a municipal charter may include the general power to create boards, commissions, and committees. In Article 66B of the *Annotated Code*, the state government authorizes the creation of certain committees such as the Planning Board, Board of Appeals, and Historic District Commission. Other boards, commissions, and committees, such as the Senior Citizens Housing Advisory Committee, are created by municipal ordinance or resolution, or they are appointed by the mayor and council.

Most local governments have committees that oversee and advise in a number of functional and policy areas such as planning, housing, human relations, ethics, transportation, economic development, and public safety. A citizen committee may be called a board, commission, or committee, depending on its function. However, the terminology used is often a matter of local preference.

Boards. A board is a formal committee with structure, duties, and powers established by ordinance. A board usually performs a quasi-judicial or adjudicative function such as licensing or regulation. For example, the Board of Appeals is an adjudicative committee that hears and decides appeals to the zoning ordinance. A Personnel Appeal Board is an adjudicative committee that hears city personnel management grievances and renders a binding decision on each case.

Commissions. Commissions are formal, standing Committees with structure, duties, and powers established by ordinance. A commission often has an administrative or functional responsibility, such as performing a review of economic development or preparing a land use plan. The Housing Commission, for example, may study the community's supply of low to moderate income housing and administer a program to supplement the housing supply.

Committees. A committee is advisory in nature and can be either a formal (standing) committee established by ordinance or resolution, or an informal (ad hoc) committee created by the mayor and council. The committee may oversee and advise in service areas, such as housing or transportation, or it may advise the mayor and council on issues and recommend policy. A Downtown Development Committee, for instance, would advise the mayor and council on commercial development in the downtown area. An ad hoc committee is sometimes called a task force to emphasize its temporary nature. A municipality may create a Gypsy Moth Committee, for instance, to advise the town on how to deal with a seasonal gypsy moth infestation.

Thus, a committee can be a continuing body created formally by ordinance or resolution or it may be a group appointed by the mayor and/or council to advise them on a temporary basis. These distinctions between board, commission, and committee notwithstanding, the term used is often strictly a matter of local preference and custom. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "committee" henceforth is used generically to refer to boards, commissions, and committees.

Uses of Committees. While committees may perform different functions, in general, they can be an effective way of involving citizens in the decision-making process of local government. The citizens who volunteer to serve on committees bring diverse skills and talents, new perspectives and, often, a strong interest in subject matter to their task.

In addition to involving citizens in local government, mayors and councils find a number of uses for committees. The committee is an effective sounding board for new policies and programs. It can react to mayor and council proposals and give them an immediate sense of community reaction.

A municipality can use a committee to dilute opposition to a particular program. Committee support may suggest that the program has popular support, or a committee may give the program the status of

association with prestigious local citizens. For example, a blue-ribbon committee may recommend a location for government subsidized, low-income housing. The community may accept more readily the recommendation of the blue-ribbon committee than a decision announced by the mayor and council. The prestige of the town citizens serving on the committee lends legitimacy to the committee's recommendations.

Committee Procedures. A formal (standing) committee may adopt rules of procedure, such as bylaws, for its internal organization. Bylaws generally define procedures for the selection of committee officers, set limits on absenteeism, set quorum requirements, and define procedures to fill a vacancy should one occur. Bylaws may also specify the use of parliamentary procedure according to *Robert's Rules of Order* in conducting committee business. Adjudicative committees are formal committees that have formal rules of procedure. These rules adhere to legal standards of due process and are usually determined by statute or regulation.

The ad hoc committee operates informally and is usually appointed to serve in an advisory capacity. For example, the mayor and council may appoint a Cable Television Committee to advise them in selecting a cable franchise. Once the municipality chooses a franchise, the committee may be dissolved. These committees are more flexible because they do not require the structure, organization, and rules of procedure appropriate for standing committees. However, appointment to an informal committee may lack the prestige and visibility of appointment to a formal committee.

Guidelines for Effective Committees. Committees can be most useful to the mayor and council and to the general public if they follow certain guidelines. Primarily, the committee should have a clearly written mission statement which describes the function the municipality expects the committee to perform. The mission statement should be included in the ordinance that creates the committee and should define the committee's goals, responsibilities, and legal obligations. The ordinance for a standing committee should also define the number of members, terms of office, and criteria for membership (if any).

A number of other factors, such as attendance, member vacancies, and committee budget, directly affect a committee's productivity. A municipality with several committees may find it advisable to adopt a general policy on boards, commissions, and committees which addresses these issues. The policy should consider the following:

- the method of appointing members to the committee
- the method of appointing members to the committee representation (how representative committee members are of the community at large, if this is important)
- rules of procedure
- attendance requirements
- how vacancies on the committee are filled
- terms of office for members
- staffing (should the municipality assign a town staff member to provide support)
- budget
- compensation (should the town pay committee members for their time)
- reimbursable expenses
- open meeting and reporting requirements.

Appointments. When appointing citizens to committees, the municipality should have guidelines for advertising the position and a process for selecting an applicant who meets the criteria for the committee, if there is stated criteria. The criteria may or may not be highly selective. Some committees require only that its members reside in the municipality and demonstrate an interest in the committee subject matter. However, committees charged with oversight or licensing responsibilities may be required to include persons with special expertise. For example, a Neighborhood Health Services Board should include members who possess some medical expertise or public health training.

Representation. The principle of equity suggests that committee membership be representative of the community at large in terms of sex, race, ethnicity, and geography. A committee such as the Public Education Advisory Committee or the Open Space Citizens Task Force should represent the community at large. However, important exceptions to this goal are those committees that require special expertise of their members, such as a Building Code Board of Appeals.

Rules of Procedure. Rules of procedure provide guidelines to keep the committee discussion running smoothly, guarantee everyone an opportunity to be heard, and provide a method of decision making. Bylaws may specify the use of parliamentary procedure as defined in *Robert's Rules of Order*. Parliamentary procedure is particularly useful for large committees. Smaller committees may operate with a few simple agreed-upon rules.

Attendance. Requiring attendance is a method of keeping members active and keeping the committee productive. For example, if a committee meets monthly, it is common to limit absenteeism to a maximum of three or four meetings per year. If the committee does not enforce this rule, it can become a group of inactive members who rely on a handful of active members to do the work of the whole. However, persistent absenteeism may be a symptom of a serious committee problem, such as lack of leadership or undefined purpose, which needs attention.

Vacancies. The mayor and council should act quickly to replace a vacancy on a committee, lest the committee lose momentum and become inactive. An excessive number of vacancies on a committee may render a committee incapable of taking action because a quorum is lacking.

Terms of Office. Attention has been focused on the advantages of limiting the length and number of terms which members should be allowed to serve on committees. The advantage of limiting terms is that it provides the opportunity to keep the committee representative of the community and avoids over-representation of interest groups. The disadvantage of limiting the number of terms is that the committee members having the most experience will be lost when their term expires. Using staggered terms is a way to ensure that members with new ideas and perspectives are on the committee and to provide the committee with an institutional history.

Staffing. The municipality may provide staff support for a committee through a related department. For example, the Planning and Zoning Commission may receive staff support from the Planning Office. The municipality may need to have a policy which defines the relationship between the committees and the town personnel assigned to serve the committee in order to clarify roles and responsibilities. Committee members need to understand what demands and requests they may reasonably make of town personnel so that they do not interfere with a staff person's primary responsibilities.

Budget. A municipality may provide the committee with operating funds to pay for telephone use, mailing costs, travel, training and conferences, and, in certain cases, compensation of members. A general town policy on committee expenses incurred in the line of duty will prevent misunderstanding on the subject.

Compensation. Compensation is payment for services rendered as a committee member. A municipality may have a compensation policy that defines which committees are to be compensated. The policy should

also establish rates of compensation for those committees. In practice, local government policies for compensating committee members vary greatly. Most committee members serve without compensation; however, some members receive compensation, usually those on adjudicative committees. An adjudicative committee such as a Zoning Board of Appeals requires long hours of its members and the result of its efforts is to reduce the burden on the court system. Therefore, municipalities usually compensate members of these committees for the time they spend in meetings.

Advisory committee members are not usually compensated. One way to reward volunteers is to give them formal recognition, such as a certificate or plaque, in lieu of compensation. The hours that volunteers spend in labor for the community save the town large amounts of money. Periodic recognition of these efforts also serves to publicize their work and attract other citizens to do service for their community.

Reimbursable Expenses. Reimbursable expenses may include mileage, parking fees, trips, meals, training, day care, and others. Local governments vary on their policy of reimbursing the expenses of committee members. Generally, the city reimburses members for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of a committee function.

Reporting Requirements. Committees communicate with governing bodies and with the public as part of their responsibility to be accountable and as part of their mission to advise and to educate. Committees usually communicate with the governing body and the public by means of written reports, public hearings, and oral communication. In this way, they educate the public and local government officials about the issues they address.

The Maryland Open Meetings Act also requires all public bodies to keep written minutes of their meetings. These minutes are public record and shall be accessible to the public.

Committee Teamwork. Volunteer committees, despite their good intentions, often founder for lack of direction, lack of appropriate structure and organization, and lack of committee management skills. The above guidelines address the problems of structure and organization. However, committee management/teamwork skills also play an important part in committee productivity. These skills include goal-setting, agenda-setting, time management, and conflict resolution and are important techniques for committee members to learn. An orientation for new committee members is a good method of introducing these techniques.



**CALVERT COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Courthouse, 175 Main Street
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678
410-535-1600 • 301-855-1243
www.co.cal.md.us

Board of Commissioners
Gerald W. Clark
Pat Nutter
Susan Shaw
Evan K. Slaughenhoupt Jr.
Steven R. Weems

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT
Board, Commission or Committee**

Name: _____
Home Address: _____
(on file w/Board of Elections) _____
Mailing Address: _____
Work Address: _____

You must be a Calvert County registered voter to apply

Please indicate the district in which you are registered to vote: 1 2 3

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Please indicate: New Application Reappointment Term Expiration _____

Name of Board, Commission, or Committee (BCC): _____

Interest and/or experience to be of benefit to this BCC: _____

What is your interest in serving on this BCC? _____

Please list any Current BCC membership: _____

Are you currently applying for any other Boards, Commissions, or Committees? YES NO
If yes, please list: _____

If appointed, I will be able to attend regularly scheduled meetings. YES NO

Do you authorize the release of address/telephone number to the press/public? (if requested) YES NO

Brief educational/work history: *(New applicants, resume is required):* _____

Members are expected to attend meetings in accordance with the committee's bylaws.

I certify that the above information is correct.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Please return to Lisa G. Tolomel: Courthouse, 175 Main Street, Prince Frederick, MD 20678 or tolomcea@co.cal.md.us
Questions: Phone: 410-535-1600 or 301-855-1243, extension 2214 Fax: 410-535-5594

Applications remain on file for six months from date of receipt.

Maryland Relay for Impaired Hearing or Speech: 1-800-735-2258