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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To: Town Council**

**From: Evan Ross, Chair, Outreach, Communications, & Appointments Committee (OCA)**

**Date: 09-20-2019, for 09-23-2019 Town Council meeting**

OCA has begun deliberating on a revised process to bring forward recommended appointees to multiple-member bodies appointed by the Town Council [Charter Sec. 2.9] in accordance with the OCA charge. On September 9, 2019, OCA began by discussing Community Activity Forms (CAFs), their utility in selecting appointees, and potential future revisions to the CAFs based on OCA's experiences to date. The discussion concluded with the following vote:

**OCA voted 4-0-0 with one absent to recommend the Town Council vote to separate the existing CAF for the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the non -voting resident members of the Finance Committee as a separate CAF that is automatically distributed to all Town Council members.**

### **Background**

During spring 2019 OCA worked to bring forward recommended appointees to five multiple-member bodies to the Town Council for appointment. During this time the process of receiving CAFs, scheduling interviews, and sharing CAFs with Councilors followed this sequence:

- All CAFs submitted for all multiple-member bodies are received by Town Manager staff.
- Town Manager staff collect CAFs submitted for multiple-member bodies appointed by the Town Council.
- Town Manager staff schedule interviews with all applicants.
- CAFs for candidates are distributed to the OCA designee by Town Manager staff after interviews are scheduled, and 48hrs before interviews begin.
- CAFs for candidates are distributed to all Councilors with an interview schedule.

OCA encountered the following problems with this process:

- Because all CAFs are received by Town Manager staff, OCA had no knowledge of the status of the applicant pool until after all CAFs for that multiple-member body were received. This meant that OCA had no sense of the size or diversity of the pool ahead of time, and no way to assess whether additional outreach and recruiting was needed.
- Given that OCA received all CAFs after interviews were scheduled, OCA was not able to assess the sufficiency of the applicant pool prior to moving ahead with interviews.

- A clerical error resulted in one CAF for a Town Council-appointed body not being distributed to Town Councilors, opening questions regarding what constitutes “the full pool”.
- Because applicants can select multiple committees on a CAF, which may have differing appointing authorities, Councilors saw a partial pool of applicants for some multiple-member bodies appointed by the Town Manager. The Town Manager has opted not to share CAFs with Councilors for Town Manager-appointed bodies, but some applicants became known to Councilors by coincidence of having also applied to Town Council-appointed bodies. This blurs the line between appointing authorities.

### **Rationale for OCA’s recommendation**

OCA believes that separating the CAFs for Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the non-voting resident members of the Finance Committee as a separate CAF that is automatically distributed to all Town Councilors has the following advantages:

- OCA and the Town Council have complete control over the appointment process for appointments made by the Town Council.
- Because all Town Councilors will receive CAFs immediately, it reduces the chances of errors resulting in missing CAFs.
- Because Councilors will see CAFs as they are received, OCA can assess whether recruiting efforts are successful and be more proactive in recruiting if needed.
- OCA can assess the sufficiency of the applicant pool before interviews are scheduled, allowing OCA to decide whether to move forward with interviews based on the status of the pool.
- The Town Council will only see CAFs for multiple-member bodies appointed by the Town Council, creating a clearer line between appointing authorities.
- Because there will be a separate CAF for Town Council-appointed bodies, the Town Council can revise and update the CAF to meet the needs of the Town Council without requiring the consent of the Town Manager. OCA is in the process of discussing recommended revisions to CAFs.

### **Outreach, Communications, & Appointments Committee Membership:**

Evan Ross, Chair, Town Councilor District 4  
Alisa Brewer, Vice Chair, Town Councilor at-Large  
Darcy DuMont, Town Councilor District 5  
George Ryan, Town Councilor District 3  
Sarah Swartz, Town Councilor District 1