



## **City of Groveland**

### **Policy for Advisory Committees & Advisory Boards**

An advisory committee or board (ACB) is a structured way for individuals to share their knowledge and skills, perspectives and opinions in order to develop and provide recommendations to the City Council. The ACB does not have formal authority to govern the organization, that is, the ACB cannot issue directives which must be followed. Rather, the ACB serves to make recommendations to the City Council. The primary purpose of an ACB is to provide considered advice from a citizen perspective.

Groveland's advisory committees/boards have terms of service where members are appointed to a specific term and often times there are also term limits. It is also important to ensure the ACB has a clear purpose and guidelines for membership. How the ACB contributes knowledge/skills to the City Council should also be formalized, as well as how it interacts with members of its own committee/board.

Additionally, ACBs benefit from having policies; for example: meeting attendance, conflict of interest, and ethics policies.

A properly composed and structured advisory committee/board can be a tremendous complement to the effectiveness of the City Council as the Council works to carry out specific initiatives that are in the best interest of the City of Groveland and its residents.

#### **Section 1 - Purpose and Application**

This document outlines a fair and equitable approach and process for the establishment and operation of ACBs. The policies set forth in this document shall guide the establishment of ACBs within the City of Groveland.

#### **Section 2 – Expectation of Committee/Board Members**

All advisory committee and board meetings are to be conducted in an open public session and noticed in accordance with state law, unless otherwise advised by the Groveland City Attorney.

Individual members and the collective group will be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, staff, and each other.

Members will respect the limitations of their individual and collective authority.

The role of the committee/board is to advise the City Council. A committee/board appointment does not empower a member to make final decisions or to supervise staff.

Members will strive to appreciate differences in approach and point of view, whether from each other, the community, the City Council, City Manager, or staff.

Each member will participate in the group's discussions and work assignments without dominating the discussion or activity of the committee/board.

The committee/board chair will ensure that all members have a fair, balanced, and respectful opportunity to share their knowledge and perspectives.

The committee/board will attempt to reach consensus on issues.

### **Section 3 - Rules of Decorum**

1. Enable the committee/board to conduct its deliberative process without interruption in a manner that can be heard and viewed by all in attendance.
2. Facilitate committee/board meetings with public comments relating to the business of the City and to be addressed to the committee/board as a whole.
3. Facilitate transparency in the conduct of committee/board meetings so that all persons have the opportunity to observe and hear all of the committee/board discussion and votes.
4. Limit interruptions, unreasonable delay, or duplication of comments, presentations, or discussion.
5. Develop an atmosphere of civility that is respectful of diverse opinions and allows presentation of positions that vary from the position of others at the meeting without insults or intimidation.
6. Balance the need for the committee/board to conduct effective meetings without the meetings extending for an unreasonable length of time.
7. Focus on the issue being discussed rather than disagreement of ideas and avoiding personal attacks or assuming motives of another.
8. Consider the committee/board goals, staff work plans, and limited resources when making requests for delay or additional information.

### **Section 4 – Staff Liaisons**

Each Groveland advisory committee/board has an assigned staff liaison. In general staff liaison are responsible to:

- Ensure that meeting notifications and recordkeeping occurs consistent with applicable State laws.

- Serve as a communication link between the committee, administration, departments, and the Mayor and ~~Commission~~ **Council**, as appropriate.
- Provide professional guidance, issue analysis and recommendations.
- Assist the committee with research, report preparation, and correspondence in keeping with the committee's approved charge and depending on their work load and time availability.
- Assisting the advisory committee in staying on track and focused.
- Presenting ACB recommendations to the City Council, if requested to do so by either the ACB or the City Council.
- Maintaining a positive working relationship with the Chair and committee members.

The liaisons are staff professionals with significant work responsibilities in addition to their committee liaison activities. The liaisons do not work "for" or "at the direction of" the committee. They are professionals who work with the committee to develop information and recommendations for the City Council's consideration.

### **Section 5 – Vacancies/Recruitment**

The City Clerk, in consultation with the appropriate ACB Liaison and applicable department head will advertise advisory committee/board vacancies in accordance with this policy. The department head will provide to the City Clerk, a brief statement of duties of advisory committee/board members, term of office, and qualifications of members. This process applies to the creation of the advisory committee/board, appointments, and the filling of vacancies.

Vacancies are usually announced in advance of the term expiration. ~~Two-weeks~~ **Ten (10) business days** is allowed for submittal of applications. Openings are announced and monitored through the following measures.

- City Clerk posts package to the City of Groveland website.
- PIO posts to City of Groveland Facebook page and on City messaging sign.
- PIO prepares a general media release.
- Media announcement thru newspaper articles and/or public service radio.
- Eligible incumbents receive a letter advising they are eligible to reapply.
- City Council is notified and encouraged to have interested citizens apply. They are notified well in advance as the schedule is being developed.
- ACB Liaisons and department heads are asked to share the information with their current board(s) so they can encourage applications. They are also notified well in advance since, prior to advertisement, we ask them to verify the accuracy of the clerk's record as to the incumbent position and whether or not he/she is eligible for reappointment.
- City Council, ACB Liaisons and affected department heads receive periodic reports as to who has applied.

Positions within the different ACBs may have requirements regarding residency (live within the city, own property within the city, reside in a specific district, own a business within the city, etc.) or specific skill sets (engineer, architect, Lake County School District, etc.). Such candidate specific requirements will be noted for each vacancy advertised.

Applicants shall be required to complete and submit to the City Clerk an application form (Exhibit "A") that is available on the City's website at ~~Citizen Advisory Boards and Committees Application Form~~ [www.groveland-fl.gov](http://www.groveland-fl.gov), and enter in the search bar "Citizen Advisory Boards & Committees Application Form"; or one may be requested via the City Clerk at virginia.wright@groveland-fl.gov, (352) 429-2141, ext. 9171.

Applications will be accepted for a minimum of ten (10) business days. Application periods may remain open additional time in order to increase the applicant pool. Applications will be maintained on file for one year from the date of submittal.

### **Section 6 – Selection**

Once the application period has closed, all applications that meet the requirements for the vacancy will be emailed to the Mayor and Council Members, along with a ranking form (Exhibit "B").

The Mayor and Council Members shall individually rank the applicants with 1 being the highest, using the ranking form. For example, if 5 applications are received, the applicants will be ranked 1-5, with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest. Where a vacancy requires a candidate to reside within a specific district, and the appointment to that vacancy is reserved for the council member representing that district, the ranking of the candidates for that vacancy shall only be done by the council member charged with making that appointment.

Within five (5) business days of receipt of the applications, the Mayor and Council Members shall provide their rankings to the City Clerk.

The City Clerk will tabulate the rankings and place the highest ranked application on an upcoming City Council meeting agenda for Council consideration and approval. In the case of a tie, those applicants will be identified on the agenda for further discussion by Council prior to the selection and approval for appointment. All applications along with the vote tally will be included in the agenda packet. All applicants will be invited to the meeting and City Council may call upon applicants to speak and/or ask questions of the applicant.

### **Section 7 – Appointments/Reappointments**

After appointments are made the City Clerk shall forward a letter to all applicants and appropriate department informing them of Council's decision.

## **Section 8 – Training**

The appropriate department shall ensure that any new advisory committee/board members are provided appropriate orientation and training, regardless if the appointment was made part way through the appointment term.

## **Section 9 – Absences**

All excused/unexcused absences of advisory committee/board members will be recorded in the official meeting minutes. Any member who misses three (3) consecutive meetings without being excused by the advisory committee/board, may be removed by City Council upon an affirmative vote of the majority.

## **Section 10 – Resignation**

Staff liaisons are responsible for notifying the ~~Clerk of Commission's Office~~ City Clerk when a member resigns, or a vacancy exists for other reasons.

## **Section 11 – Removal of Board Members**

The City Council retains the right to remove committee/board members for such reasons as absenteeism, conflict of interest, or other actions that the City Council deems to accrue to the detriment of the City of Groveland.

## **Section 12 – Minutes of the Meetings**

Minutes of advisory boards/committees will be shared with City Council.

## **Section 13 - Current Advisory Committees and Boards**

- Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
- Planning & Zoning Board (P & Z)
- Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC)
- Retirement Advisory Committee
- Youth Council

## **Exhibits**

- A. Advisory Committees and Boards Application Form
- B. Advisory Committees and Boards Ranking Form