

## **Survey to Board Chairs and Staff Liaisons on Recruitment and Appointment Recommendations**

**February 2018**

### **Background**

In advance of the February 16, 2018 Council Committee on Boards and Commissions meeting, a survey was sent to board chairs and staff liaisons to gather information about how boards and commissions approach both the recruitment process and candidate recommendations to Town Council.

The survey was sent to 29 people and was open from February 7 – February 14, 2018. Eleven people responded.

### **Summary of Responses**

**1. What is your role?**

4 respondents were board chairs

7 respondents were staff liaisons

**2. Are board members typically engaged in recruiting new members? If yes, what methods or strategies do board members use to get others to apply?**

Seven respondents said yes. Two respondents said sometimes or occasionally. One said no, and one wasn't sure. Some respondents said their board members recruit by sending emails to list serves and other professional contacts, approaching people they know, and recruiting from their circle of friends.

**3. If your board is engaged in recruiting new members, does your board currently consider diversity among board membership? In other words, does your board consider what voices in the community are not currently represented?**

Five said yes. Four said no or not applicable. Two did not directly address the question. One said that diversity is a primary recruiting concern for the board, and another described it as their biggest challenge. One asked for the Town's help on reaching different groups of citizens. Another respondent said members have offered to step down to create room for diversity. One noted that African Americans are underrepresented. Of those who said that their board does not consider diversity when recruiting new members, one said they look more for people with particular skills or a keen interest.

**4. Please describe the process (structured or unstructured) that your board uses when evaluating applicants and arriving at your recommendation.**

Six respondents specifically stated that they interview applicants. Another said that high value is given to those who come to a meeting. Most described the process as reviewing applications prior to a board discussion and vote on recommendations.

**5. Does your board interview applicants? If yes, what kinds of questions does the board ask applicants?**

Four respondents described a formal or structured interview process, and three said they don't interview applicants at all. Several said they ask applicants why they want to be on the board and about their background and experience. One respondent said they ask applicants if they have time to attend all meetings, and another said they ask what kinds of pressing issues they feel the board should address. A few described a more informal meet-and-greet format where applicants are invited to introduce themselves and ask questions of board members.

**6. What are the most important considerations when thinking about who your board is looking for in new members? For example, is your board looking for people with a particular expertise, or members from a particular community?**

Three said diversity and representation are the most important considerations. Two named the applicant's interest and commitment as top considerations. Two respondents talked specifically about the applicant's expertise as being a top priority. One referenced mandates in state statute and local ordinance which compel the board to look for candidates with particular interest or expertise. Another said an applicant's community connections are a priority.

**7. Does your board consider diversity and representation when making its recommendations to Town Council?**

Seven respondents said yes, and four indicated that diversity and representation are not priorities when making recommendations to Council.