

Procedure Manual

For Boards, Commissions, and Committees In the Village of Oak Park

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Oak Park has a broad range of advisory boards and commissions established by Federal law, state statutes and local ordinances to advise the Village Board¹ on many issues. These laws, statutes and ordinances define the role of each commission² and its composition, along with any specialized requirements of members.

Each year these commissions prepare detailed work plans based on this legislation to advance the work of their commission in support of the Village and may be asked by the Village Board to provide recommendations on policy issues before them.

Citizen involvement helped create the character and values that have made the Village of Oak Park the community it is today. The Advisory Boards and Commissions are one of the Village's most effective tools for tapping one of its greatest natural resources – its residents. Elected officials and administrative staff have come to depend upon these advisory commissions as vital sources of information critical to sound policymaking.

Citizens who enjoy working with others toward these common goals and who are willing to share their experience and talents in the service of the Village are invited to submit an application to the Citizen Involvement Commission indicating their interest, relevant background, experience on other boards, and willingness to serve. They³ should select two or more commissions they would be willing to serve on. They should also attend at least one meeting of each board or commission they have selected. Commissioners may be appointed to only one regular commission at a time.

This manual of procedures for Commission Chairs provides additional details about administration of these commissions and guidance in dealing with issues which may arise in the course of their activities.

¹ When reference is made to the elected Oak Park Trustees, the term used will be "Village Board."

² The various volunteer bodies which are part of the Oak Park government are designated as "board," "committee," or "commission." This manual will use the term "commission" throughout for a general situation but the full name will be used when referring to a specific group. Thus "a commission" but "the Board of Health."

³ To avoid awkward constructions such as "he/she" and "(s)he," this document uses the neuter plural pronouns "they" and "them."

Chapter 2: Commission Functions

This chapter explains the general functions of commissions. The legal foundation of most commissions is established by the village code. Some commissions are established by Federal or state statute. The Federal, state or local code establishes the purpose of the commission and its composition, including any special qualifications for membership, if applicable. Citations for this “enabling language” for each commission is provided in Appendix B

2-1 Commission Projects and Initiatives

Commissions are assigned responsibilities in the enabling language of the commission. The Village Board may assign additional tasks to commissions.

Responsibilities may include one or more of the following:

- ◆ Gathering of information
- ◆ Public Hearings
- ◆ Unbiased public education
- ◆ Organization of a public event

The Village Board may veto any specific tasks undertaken by a commission. If and when this occurs, the veto must be acknowledged in an open meeting of the commission, and noted in the minutes of that meeting.

2-2 Annual Work Plans

Each commission develops an annual work plan listing its projected activities for the coming year, along with any budget requirements necessary to accomplish these tasks. The village staff will provide a template for the format of commission work plans.

The work plan lists major projects and initiatives proposed by the commission. As a rule, any initiative which will occupy more than five percent of a commission’s time during the year should appear on the work plan.

The initial draft of the work plan shall be composed by the chair (or a commission member appointed by the chair) outside of the commission meetings, submitted to the commission, discussed, amended if necessary, and approved.

The Village Board reviews these work plans and holds at least one meeting each year to discuss and approve them. At this meeting, commissions may be invited to present this work plan, along with any budget requirements (if applicable) and answer questions from the Village Board. Each commission is represented by its chair at this meeting, or by a member designated by the chair.

Although a commission’s work plan is expected to be an honest projection of activities for the year, it is understood that a work plan is not a fully detailed description of all activities or an exact schedule of when work plan items will be completed.

Staff Support

Each Commission is assigned a staff liaison to coordinate any approved commission recommendations with Village staff and to provide certain administrative support such as completion of minutes and communications requests. Commissions should recognize that they may request staff support, but may not delegate the responsibilities to staff that extend beyond their standard administrative roles in supporting the commission.

Questions or concerns about staff liaisons shall be addressed to the Office of the Village Manager. Under no circumstances should a commissioner contact a staff member other than a staff liaison or the Office of the Village Manager and attempt to direct that employee's work.

2-3 Chair Meetings

A chair meeting is a meeting of the chairs of commissions. The goal of a chair meeting is to make every commission aware of the current activities of the other commissions. This meeting facilitates cooperation among commissions.

The Citizen Involvement Commission (CIC) shall call a meeting for all chairs at least once a year. At the first such meeting after the commission work plans have been submitted for the year, the chairs shall receive copies of all the work plans. At the CIC's discretion, additional meetings of smaller groups of chairs may be called, often but not always with groups of related commissions.

These meetings shall be open meetings. It is expected that chairs will attend as many of these meetings as possible. When attending, a chair should be prepared to summarize and discuss the current business of their commission.

The chair of a chair meeting is the chair of the CIC, or a delegated substitute from the membership of the CIC. The "members" of a chair meeting are the chairs of all commissions whose new members are recruited by the CIC. Chairs of other commissions, such as temporary commissions, will be invited to attend, but will not be accorded member status in the event of a vote. A chair may delegate a member of their commission to attend a chair meeting as a substitute. A Chair Meeting is not authorized to take action of any kind, and therefore requires a quorum of only three commission chairs to proceed with the meeting.

2-4 Publications and Publicity

Any publication on behalf of a commission, regardless of printing charges, must be approved by the Communications Department and any expenses for publications should be included in the work plan budget.

A commission may, without cost, request space in the village's OP/FYI publication. Space is available at the discretion of the Communications Department.

Arrangements for recording of meetings should be made with the Office of the Village Clerk, and the Communications Department, subject to availability.

2-5 Public Hearings

Certain commissions are required by ordinance to conduct public hearings so that the commission may make final administrative decisions; decisions subject to appeal to the Village Board, or recommendations to the Village Board.

Notice, publication, and hearing requirements for the commission charged with conducting the hearing and the subject matter of the hearing are found in the enabling language of the commission. If there is any doubt about the propriety of a commission holding a public hearing, the chair should contact the Office of the Village Clerk.

The Office of the Village Clerk should be notified of all hearings in accordance with statute. The Office of the Village Clerk and the Communications Department are responsible for the posting, dissemination to the media, and publication of all notices of a public hearing.

2-6 Public Events

A commission may hold a public event in accordance with enabling language, Village Board direction and the annual work plan using any free public space, such as some of the areas of Village Hall or the Public Library. Expenses for the use of other public spaces should be included in the work plan budget. A public event arranged by a commission must be part of the established duties and responsibilities of the commission and must not be used in any way by the commission (or any member) to pursue personal or political goals.

A public event is considered to have permission from the Village Board if the event appears on the annual work plan that has been approved by the Village Board.,

Publicity for a public event held by a commission must be approved by the Office of Communications even if it will not be funded by the village.

2-7 Complaints

On becoming aware of a complaint about the operation of a commission, the chair of that commission must direct the complainant to the Village Board. This includes complaints from commission members and members of the public.

Chapter 3: Board and Commission Expenditures

3-1 Budget Preparation

As part of its oversight of Village Boards and Commissions, the Office of the Village Clerk will have general oversight over Board and Commission budgets.

Each board or commission which requires expenditures in support of the annual work plan should prepare an annual budget detailing such expenditures and submit it with the work plan. This budget will be included in the fall budget discussions of the Board of Trustees. When approved, this budget should guide expenditures by each board or commission. The Village may curtail expenditures from approved commission budgets at any time during the budget year.

3-2 Payment of Expenses and Reimbursement

Commissions should formally approve at a meeting expenditures detailed in the budget before payment. The staff liaison may authorize budgeted expenses for payment with prior approval of the commission. No expense should be incurred without specific authorization at a meeting.

Any expense not specifically included in the annual budget must be referred by the commission to the Village Clerk for review prior to expenditure. Such expenses should demonstrate the expense's relation to the board work plan and the justification for payment. If funds are available within the budget, the Village Clerk may authorize payment.

If any expense is incurred without proper authorization by the staff liaison or the Village Clerk, this expense may not be paid.

3-3 Free Village Services Provided to Commissions

The village supports commissions by providing certain goods and services. To access these services, speak to a commission's staff liaison or to the Office of the Village Clerk. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- ◆ Photocopying original documents which are required for commission business
- ◆ Use of public space at Village Hall
- ◆ Audiovisual equipment when needed for meetings
- ◆ Space in the village FYI publication (on the approval of the Office of Communications)
- ◆ Preparation of minutes for meetings (except where other provisions are required by state statute)
- ◆ Publication of educational flyers (with approval from the Village Board and the Office of Communications)

3-4 Allowable Expenses

Expenses related to minutes preparation, including purchase of a recording device for use at meetings, reference materials, printing of materials related to the work plan, and costs for certain events hosted by a board or commission as part of work plan responsibilities, may be budgeted and paid or reimbursed with authorization of the staff liaison.

3-5 Non-Allowable Expenses

Expenses for food and drink at regularly scheduled meetings are not reimbursable. Travel and educational/conference expenses are not reimbursable. Other expenses not directly related to the work plan are not reimbursable.

3-6 Grants

The Board approved work plan should guide commission activities and any grant ideas should be clearly linked to advancing approved tasks.

Commissions who wish to pursue grant opportunities should get approval from their respective staff liaisons prior to making contact with any grant-making entity/authority, and the liaison should discuss with appropriate VOP staff to verify value in pursuing the potential opportunity.

Generally, if authority to pursue the opportunity is granted, the commission advancing the suggestion should be responsible for developing the application – not the staff liaison or other VOP staff.

Generally, the commission proposing the grant should be prepared to verify, prior to submission of the grant application, that they can provide support sufficient to fulfill the grant deliverables, e.g., if the commission is contemplating applying for a grant to install bird houses in locations throughout the community, then the commission members must be prepared to handle all aspects of executing the program unless the Village has agreed as part of the process to commit resources for same.

Authorized grant applications should be reviewed by appropriate Village Manager's Office staff prior to submittal, and the applicant should be the Village of Oak Park rather than the individual commission.

If a commission wants to create a letter of support for a grant to an outside entity or agency, such as a not-for-profit, the proposed letter of support should be reviewed and approved by VOP staff prior to its inclusion in any outside organization's formal application.

3-7 Soliciting Bids

A commission must solicit bids from businesses if both of the following are true:

- ◆ The goods or services in question are available from more than one source.
- ◆ The price of the goods or services varies by quantity purchased.

At least three bids must be solicited, or two if only two sources exist. A solicitation must be restricted to a description of the goods or services to be provided; it must not give a target price. The sole exception is solicitations for expenses associated with annual events. Such solicitations may additionally give the price of the winning bid of the previous year, if the desired goods or services are identical to those desired the previous year.

Bids must be submitted by a medium which leaves a record, such as e-mail or fax. Bids cannot be submitted by telephone.

A business may decline to make a bid. If there are additional sources of the desired good or service, additional bids must be secured to make up the necessary three.

A commission must vote to select the winning bid. The commission shall attempt to select the lowest responsible bidder. The decision must not strictly be determined by whether or not the bidder is located within Oak Park. The commission may, however, consider the locations of bidders if there is a discernible benefit involved, such as a reduced cost of transport. The minutes of the meeting must contain the bid or bids selected, as well as a list of all the bids. For each bid, the minutes shall list:

- ◆ The name, address, and telephone number of the business which submitted the bid
- ◆ The price quoted in the bid
- ◆ The precise goods or services for which prices were quoted

The minutes shall also record the names of any businesses which declined to submit bids.

3-8 Charging Fees

A commission may desire to charge a fee to members of the community for some good or service. This may be done only if all of the following are true:

- ◆ The fee is estimated to be no more than the incremental cost of the good or service
- ◆ Members of the community may refuse the good or service (and thus not pay the fee)
- ◆ Those paying the fee are notified that there is a fee before they accept the good or service
- ◆ A village employee collects the money
- ◆ The Village Board has voted to approve the fee

The fees are credited to the General Fund of the village.

Chapter 4: Holding a Meeting

4-1 Meetings and Public Hearings

For purposes of this manual, a public hearing is not a meeting. The requirements for a public hearing are distinct from those for a meeting. Some commissions hold public hearings frequently. (The Plan Commission, for example, holds public hearings on changes to zoning.) Some commissions only hold meetings.

4-2 Meeting Space

Public meetings must be held in locations which are open to the public. Ordinarily, this means Village Hall, but other venues (such as the Public Library) are acceptable. The Office of the Village Clerk is responsible for scheduling space for meetings at Village Hall. If a meeting will be held in some other venue, it is the responsibility of the chair to make sure that the use of the space is cleared with the proper authorities. All public meetings held at other locations must be cleared with the Building and Property Standards Department to assure compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Regardless of the location of a meeting, the Office of the Village Clerk must be notified of the meeting.

4-3 Open Meetings and Closed Meetings

Commission meetings are usually open. Any member of the public may attend an open meeting, and may record the meeting by any means which does not intrude on the business of the meeting.

Members of the public are excluded from closed meetings, which must be announced in advance under the same rules as open meetings. A closed meeting must be restricted to the discussion of property disposition, labor, litigation or personnel, and only certain commissions will ever consider these topics. No final action shall be taken in a closed meeting – any vote resulting from consideration during a closed meeting must be held during an open meeting.

[M]embers of a commission must vote to make a segment of a meeting closed, if the subject of that portion of the meeting requires it. The vote must be taken during an open meeting or open meeting segment. It is acceptable to have an open meeting segment after the closed meeting segment, during which any votes required for final action are made.

4-4 Regular Meetings and Special Meetings

Most commissions have one regular meeting per month. Of these commissions, most hold their regular meeting on a fixed date. This date shall be specified by position in the month, such as “first Tuesday of the month.” Some commissions hold periodic regular meetings which have no fixed date. These commissions must set the date of the next regular meeting at the end of each regular meeting.

A special meeting is any meeting which is not a regular meeting. Any commission may hold a special meeting on any day on which Village Hall is open for business. Although a special meeting is conducted in much the same way as a regular meeting, certain differences exist.

Special meetings must not be open-ended: any topic to be discussed must appear on the agenda. Regular meetings may include discussion of topics not specifically listed on the agenda through the use of a “New Business” agenda item. Topics which are not listed on the agenda cannot be the subject of a vote, but the commission may vote to include a discussed topic on a future agenda.

Both regular and special meetings must be arranged in advance. Although the date of a special meeting must be set in advance, the date of a special meeting is not required to be set during a regular meeting.

4-5 Public Comment

Public comment is a recurring agenda item. During a public comment segment, any member of the public who wishes to may speak on matters under the commission’s jurisdiction

Members of the public who wish to speak may notify the chair before the meeting, or may come forward at the time of the public comment segment. Each speaker must begin by giving their name and address. This information must be noted in the minutes of the meeting along with a synopsis of the comments. The order of the speakers is left to the chair, but all speakers must be heard except as limited below.

A commission may limit public comment segments only in certain specific ways:

- ◆ A commission may limit the time devoted to a single comment. This limit must be at least 3 minutes. It must apply to all speakers, and must be announced before the public comment segment begins.
- ◆ A commission may limit comments on a single subject to three speakers in favor and three against. In this case, it is recommended that the commission ask all attending members of the public to indicate by some method (such as show of hands) which side represents them.
- ◆ Any speaker who is not in the room at the announced time for public comment may be skipped at the discretion of the commission.

All open regular meetings must begin with an agenda item for general public comment immediately after the “Call to Order” item. If this is the only public comment to be planned in advance, it shall appear on the agenda as “Public Comment.” Otherwise, it shall be headed “Non-Agenda Public Comment.” When there will be public comment on a specific agenda item, that item shall appear as early on the agenda as possible. It is recommended (but not required) that such items include an estimated time when the item will be reached. If such an estimate is included, the agenda shall include a note that the times are merely estimates. If an open special meeting will have general public comment, the agenda item must likewise appear immediately after “Call to Order.” An open special meeting may omit the agenda item for general public comment if and only if both of the following are true:

- ◆ The special meeting is held between two regular meetings with general public comment. Every agenda item in the special meeting has its own public comment session.

When a meeting is canceled through lack of quorum, any speakers must be notified of the date and time of the next meeting, and invited to speak at that meeting instead. Optionally, they may submit their comments in written form. These comments will then be read out and submitted as a public document at the next meeting. If a time limit is imposed on public comment at the meeting, the

reading of the written comments may be truncated to fit in the time limit, but the full comments must be submitted.

4-6 Advance Requirements: Agendas and Prior Notice

All meetings, open or closed, must have an agenda which is made public in advance, and must be announced at least 48 hours in advance. The Office of the Village Clerk is in charge of making these announcements and publishing the agendas.

The chair may delegate agenda creation to any commission member or the staff liaison. The chair is, however, responsible for making sure that an agenda is submitted in time.

A chair may also delegate a commission member or the staff liaison to notify the Office of the Village Clerk of the date and time of the meeting. The chair retains responsibility for making sure the notification is received.

4-7 Agenda Formatting

An agenda shall contain one line for each item. The agenda shall be as brief as possible, but more importantly it shall give an idea of the topics of the meeting. Agenda items shall not use code numbers or abbreviations (unless accompanied by explanations). References to discussions at previous meetings shall mention the topic of the discussion.

An agenda must list every item with which the meeting will deal and which is known in advance. This includes every item in a special meeting. Regular meetings may include a “New Business” item in the agenda. This must only be used for items which were unknown at the time the agenda was composed. Oak Park commissions must either automatically adopt the agenda submitted in advance by the chair, or follow the agenda procedures laid out in *Robert’s Rules of Order*. If the latter procedure is to be used, the submitted agenda must be titled “Proposed Agenda”.

It is permissible for a commission to amend a meeting’s agenda during the meeting by moving items around. This must be done via standard parliamentary procedure. Agenda items may be removed. New agenda items must not be added during the meeting.

An agenda must begin with “Call to Order” and end with “Adjournment.” Regular meeting agendas must provide for public comment.

An agenda for a regular meeting of a commission with active subcommittees must also have an entry for “Subcommittees”, with a sub-entry for each subcommittee.

Every agenda must also include required ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) language. A sample agenda is available from the Office of the Village Clerk.

4-8 Minutes

Under the Open Meetings Act, all meetings, whether open or closed, must record minutes. Minutes are not direct transcripts. Minutes must, under the Open Meetings Act, contain at least the following:

- ◆ The date and time of the start of the meeting

- ◆ The location of the meeting
- ◆ The members of the commission present
- ◆ The members of the commission absent
- ◆ A summary of all discussion on matters proposed, deliberated, or decided A record of any votes taken

The Village may send an employee to take minutes at a commission meeting. If no employee is present, a member of the commission or the staff liaison to the commission must take the minutes.

The minutes of open meetings must be approved by official vote at the next meeting of the commission, and made available to the public within 7 days of their approval. (The publication is the responsibility of the Office of the Village Clerk. Minutes may be submitted to the Office of the Village Clerk in person either as hard copy or via e-mail.) If a set of minutes are found to be inaccurate, then the commission shall make any necessary amendments before voting for approval. In such a case the vote is to approve the minutes as amended.

The minutes of closed meetings are not immediately made public, and should be limited to a brief summary of discussion.. (All topics discussed must still be listed.) The minutes must include at the beginning a note that the meeting was closed, and must be submitted to the Office of the Village Clerk even as the minutes of open meetings. These minutes do not automatically become part of the public record.

Closed meeting minutes should be reviewed and approved at the next closed meeting. If every topic considered in a closed meeting has been resolved with a vote, then the minutes of that closed meeting must be made public. The decision of which minutes should be made public shall be confirmed by a vote at an open meeting and reported to the Office of the Village Clerk.

A commission must hold a meeting to discuss the publication of the minutes of a closed meeting within six months of that meeting. Furthermore, as long as the commission still has minutes which are not part of the public record, it must hold meetings to review these minutes at least every six months.

A sample of a standard minutes format is available from the Office of Village Clerk.

4-9 Quorum Rules

An official meeting shall not begin until a quorum of commission members is physically present. Unless the enabling language of a commission specifies otherwise, a quorum is the minimum number of members needed to be greater than one half of the currently-appointed membership. (There is a special additional requirement which may also apply for large commissions; see below.)

For example: the enabling language of Commission X specifies that it may have up to 13 members, but it currently has 11 members. Half of its current membership (11) is 5½, so it must have 6 members present to achieve quorum. If it gains a member, it will then have 12 members. Half of its membership would then be 6 members, so 7 members would have to be present to achieve quorum.

If the membership of a commission falls below 5, the number of commissioners required for a quorum does not fall below 3. This rule applies only to commissions which have a potential

membership greater than 5. (For example, the Police and Fire Commission has a maximum of 3 members, so 2 members constitutes a quorum. On the other hand, the maximum number of members of the Forestry Commission is greater than 5. Even if the number of appointees falls below 5, a quorum will always be at least 3 commissioners.)

Although it is permissible for a member to “attend” a meeting by technological means (such as by teleconference), only members physically present at the meeting may be counted towards quorum requirements. Any member who is not physically present must have the method of their attendance noted in the minutes.

4-10 Canceling a Meeting

If no quorum is present, the meeting must be canceled. In that case, commission members must not discuss commission business. The only permissible action is the setting of a date for a special meeting to discuss items from the agenda. Such a special meeting must still conform to the rules for special meetings.

If it is discovered in advance that it will be impossible to establish a quorum, the meeting may be canceled in advance. The Office of the Village Clerk must be notified of the cancellation, and if the meeting was to be held in a location other than Village Hall, appropriate notification must be made available at the meeting site. (For example, a sign might be posted on the door of the room.) If the location is one which has an official staff present, such as the Public Library, then that staff must also be notified.

If a quorum is not present at the time for which the meeting was scheduled, the chair must wait at least 10 minutes for members to arrive before canceling the meeting. This period may be lengthened at the discretion of the chair. If the chair (or an acting chair delegated by the chair) is not present, then the meeting cannot be considered officially canceled until 10 minutes after the scheduled time.

4-11 Loss of Quorum

A quorum lasts only as long as sufficient commission members are physically present. If the number of members present drops below the number required for a Quorum, other than during a declared recess, the official meeting is over. No further votes may be made. The forced adjournment must be noted in the minutes.

4-12 Parliamentary Procedure (Motions and Voting)

Where not constrained by law or this document, it is recommended that meetings proceed using *Robert’s Rules of Order*, also known as *The Rules of Order Newly Revised*. The precise level of adherence to these rules is determined by the chair, the only general requirement being consistency. (For example, it would not be consistent to require some members to be recognized before speaking, while allowing others to speak at will.) It is, however, always required that a commission follow standard procedure when making any decision which might impact citizens of Oak Park. (For example, no vote is necessary to ask staff to collect information, but a vote is needed to make a recommendation to the Village Board.)

Standard procedure requires a motion to go through three steps. First, a motion must be made by a member. It must then be seconded by a different member. Finally, a vote must be taken by those

members of the commission who are present. A chair must not make or second a motion, but may vote on it.

Items which are not listed explicitly on the agenda cannot be the immediate subject of a vote. Instead, members must vote to include the item on the agenda of the next meeting.

4-13 Declaring a Recess

A commission may declare a recess by passing a motion. During the recess, the commission cannot conduct (or even discuss) business, but may leave the meeting room. When the recess is declared, a time must be specified as the end of the recess. At that time, the meeting will begin again. A recess shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting with one line stating that the commission took a recess. Commissions cannot declare a recess of more than half an hour.

4-14 Documents

Any document received, created, or used by a commission must be submitted with the minutes of the meeting in which it appeared and retained by the Office of the Village Clerk. The minutes should contain a list of all documents submitted. The following (optional) exceptions apply:

- ◆ A document which is used without revision in multiple meetings may be submitted once, with the minutes of the first such meeting. In this case, the minutes of subsequent meetings must list the document and the date of the first meeting.
- ◆ A publication by a third party may be merely cited rather than submitted. In this case, the title, authorship, publisher, and publication date must be listed in the minutes.
- ◆ Documents created by subcommittee may be omitted until a draft is submitted to the commission for approval.

When in doubt about whether or not to submit a document, submit it.

4-15 Joint Commission Meetings

Two or more commissions may hold a joint meeting. In such a case, all the ordinary rules must be obeyed, with certain modifications.

The chair of a joint meeting must be one of the chairs of the participating commissions. If all the chairs are unable to attend, one of them must select a member of their commission as acting chair.

A joint meeting only has a quorum if each of the participating commissions has enough of its members present to have a quorum. Members from one commission cannot be substituted for members of another commission.

A joint meeting cannot be considered the regular meeting of any participating commission. Commissions wishing to hold a regular meeting on the same date as a joint meeting shall schedule the regular meeting immediately before or after the joint meeting.

A vote undertaken during a joint meeting must belong to a specific participating commission, and only members of that commission may vote. To pass a motion of the entire joint meeting, the same motion must be made, seconded, and voted upon by each attending commission.

4-16 Conflicts Between Commissions

Even in cases where a topic might reasonably be addressed by two different commissions, commissions' procedures are distinct. A member of one commission has no official standing in another commission, except where specified in the enabling language of that commission.

If a member of one commission is invited to a meeting of another commission, then they attend as an expert. If a member of one commission attends a meeting of another commission without being invited, then they attend as a member of the public. Either way they shall not make motions, second motions, or vote. CIC Liaisons shall, for procedural purposes, be treated as either experts or members of the public at the discretion of the commission chairs.

In the event of a conflict between two commissions, a commission with final legal authority shall have authority over a strictly advisory commission. (This is determined by the enabling language of the commissions.)

Chapter 5: Subcommittees

5-1 Definition of a Subcommittee

A subcommittee is a group formed to undertake some specific task or tasks which fall within the purview of the commission and which are expected to require three or more months of work. A subcommittee must not take official action on behalf of a commission without first getting specific approval from the commission.

A subcommittee may be active or inactive.

5-2 Creating a Subcommittee

A subcommittee is created by a commission during an open meeting using the standard motion-second-vote parliamentary procedure. (A permanent subcommittee may also be specified in the enabling language of a commission.)

At least one task must be assigned to a subcommittee at the time of its creation. The subcommittee should be named after its tasks, whatever they may be.

When creating a subcommittee, a commission must specify certain aspects of the subcommittee's structure.

5-3 Tasks and Completion

A subcommittee must have a specific task or tasks to perform. Additional tasks may be given to an existing subcommittee by a vote of its commission. Tasks may be removed from a subcommittee upon completion, or by formal vote of its commission.

A task given to a subcommittee falls into one of two categories. It either has definite criteria for completion, or is open-ended. A task which has definite criteria for completion shall be automatically removed from the subcommittee once those criteria are fulfilled. All other tasks shall be retained until the commission explicitly removes them or disbands the subcommittee.

If a subcommittee has no remaining tasks, then this shall be reported to its commission. If that commission has regular meetings, this notification shall take place at the next regular meeting. Otherwise, this notification shall take place at the next meeting.

5-4 Limitations of a Subcommittee

A subcommittee must report back to its commission when taking any action which would influence anyone outside of the subcommittee, unless otherwise specified in the enabling language of the commission. This action must be approved by a vote of the commission.

A subcommittee must not communicate directly to the Village Board, unless permission is granted in advance. This permission may arise through the commission's enabling language or through vote of the commission.

A subcommittee must not give itself extra tasks outside those assigned by the commission. A subcommittee may, however, vote to ask for extra tasks from the commission at its next regular meeting.

5-5 Structure of a Subcommittee

Every subcommittee must have a chair. The chair has the same responsibilities to the subcommittee that the chair of a commission has to that commission, except as modified below.

The other members of the subcommittee are drawn from the membership of the commission which formed the subcommittee. The chair of a commission may join a subcommittee without being the chair of the subcommittee. If the subcommittee holds a vote, all such members may vote. Each subcommittee must have some specific number of members, which must be specified at the time of creation. In order to resolve tie votes, this number – when not counting the chair – must be a multiple of two.

A subcommittee may only hold meetings when a quorum of its members are present. A quorum for a subcommittee, unless specified otherwise in the enabling language of the commission, is defined the same way that a quorum is defined for the commission itself. (That is, more than half the members of the subcommittee.)

A subcommittee may also have experts and citizen assistants, just as a commission may have them. In a normal subcommittee, anyone participating in the business of a subcommittee who is not a member of the commission necessarily falls in this category. They are not members, and shall not vote on subcommittee business. Subcommittees which are created through a commission's enabling language may have members who are not members of the commission if the enabling language specifies this.

Unless specified in its enabling language, a commission may replace the chair of a subcommittee or alter the number of members by vote at any meeting.

5-6 Reporting on Subcommittee Status at Regular Meetings

If a commission has any extant subcommittee, the agenda of that commission's regular meetings must reflect this. Such agendas must have an item titled "Subcommittees," with a subheading for each subcommittee. When this item is reached, the status of each subcommittee must be announced.

If a subcommittee is inactive, the responsibility for the announcement of the status of the subcommittee falls to the chair of the commission, or their delegated replacement.

If a subcommittee is active, then the chair of the subcommittee must announce its status. This task may be delegated. It is also acceptable for the chair of the subcommittee to submit the status in writing, to be read out by the chair of the commission. The announcement must contain, at a minimum:

- ◆ The number of meetings held by the subcommittee since the previous regular meeting of the commission

- ◆ A list of any votes taken by the subcommittee since the previous regular meeting of the commission
- ◆ A list of any documents used by the subcommittee (the documents themselves do not need to be submitted to the commission)
- ◆ The date of the next subcommittee meeting to be held, if that date is known
- ◆ A list of any recommendations made by the subcommittee to the commission
- ◆ Notification of any completed tasks, including a list of any tasks remaining

5-7 Agenda, Advance Notice, and Minutes

Subcommittees must obey the same requirements for agenda, advance notice, and minutes as the commission itself. In addition, subcommittees are subject to the Open Meetings Act just as commissions are, and must follow the rules on open and closed meetings.

5-8 Subcommittees Creating Documents

Subcommittees creating documents are not required to submit each intermediate draft to the commission. The document does not become final, however, until a version is submitted to the commission and approved by vote.

5-9 Subcommittees Planning Events

At a minimum, the following aspects of an event must be approved by a vote of the commission:

- ◆ The date and time of the event
- ◆ The location of the event
- ◆ The schedule of the event
- ◆ Any expenditures associated with the event

When the date of the event passes, the subcommittee must meet at least one more time to discuss the event. The task of planning the event will not be considered complete until after this meeting. The report on this meeting must include a fiscal summary of the event if any money was collected at or spent on the event.

If the event is an annual (or otherwise recurring) event, the subcommittee retains the task of planning the event. Otherwise, the task is automatically removed from the subcommittee.

5-10 Inactive Subcommittees

A subcommittee with tasks may be made inactive by vote of its commission. An inactive subcommittee cannot meet. It does not give status reports, and appears on the agenda with the word "Inactive" after its name.

A subcommittee whose chair has ceased to be a member of the subcommittee's commission is automatically inactive. A new chair must be appointed by vote of the commission before the subcommittee is made active again.

A subcommittee is made active again by vote of its commission.

5-11 Disbanding a Subcommittee

When a subcommittee is disbanded, it ceases to exist and must not meet again without being re-created by its commission.

A commission may disband a subcommittee by vote at any meeting, unless the subcommittee is specified in the enabling language of the commission. Such a subcommittee can only be disbanded by vote of the Village Board, in which case the enabling language of the commission would be revised.

A subcommittee which completes all of its assigned tasks shall report this fact to its commission. At that time, the commission may choose whether or not to assign any new tasks to the subcommittee. If no new tasks are assigned, the subcommittee shall be automatically disbanded without a vote of the commission.

Chapter 6: Establishing New Commissions

This section describes the establishment of new commissions, and the normal procedure for elimination of a commission.

6-1 Creation of a New Commission

Commissions are created exclusively by the Village Board or by Illinois State Statute.

When a new commission is created, the Office of the Village Clerk shall keep and maintain records of:

- ◆ The date of creation of the commission
- ◆ The location or locations of the enabling language of the commission
- ◆ A copy of the complete enabling language of the commission
- ◆ The membership of the commission, including dates of appointment of each member

Unless specified otherwise in the enabling language of the commission, new commissions must obey the rules in this document.

6-2 Temporary or Ad Hoc Commissions and Formalization

The Citizen Involvement Commission (CIC) does not recruit members for temporary commissions unless this is requested by the Village Board. The CIC will only assign a liaison to a temporary commission after the temporary commission has existed for one year.

Unless specified otherwise in its enabling language, any newly created commission is considered temporary by the CIC for three years. Any commission which is declared to be “*ad hoc*” is necessarily temporary.

If a temporary commission continues to exist for three years, the CIC will ask the Village Board to formalize the commission. The process of formalization regularizes the form of a temporary commission to conform to those of existing commissions. This process involves:

- ◆ Specifying a term length (3 years by default)
- ◆ Specifying a maximum number of members
- ◆ Staggering the term expirations of existing commission members so that new members are introduced gradually
- ◆ Application of term limits
- ◆ Recruiting of candidates for membership in the commission by the CIC
- ◆ Assignment of Village Board, staff, and CIC liaisons

The Village Board may choose to leave a temporary commission unformalized. In this case, the CIC shall renew the request for formalization every year until the commission in question is formalized or dissolved.

The Village Board may also choose to formalize a temporary commission at any time, or formalize the commission at the time of creation.

6-3 Initial Membership

The Village Board has complete control over the initial membership of all new commissions. Depending on the urgency of the task or tasks assigned to a new commission, they may choose any combination of the following methods to find these members:

- ◆ Appointing members without reference to the CIC
- ◆ Giving the CIC a list of specific candidates to interview as soon as possible
- ◆ Asking the CIC to recruit members through the usual process

6-4 Resizing a Commission

The size of most commissions may change over time. Changes in the size of a commission are accomplished by revision of the enabling language of that commission. This means that the Village Board is the final authority over the size of most commissions. (The few which are not in the control of the Village Board are set by state statute.)

The CIC shall monitor all formalized commissions for indications that the size of the commission should be reconsidered. Indications shall include (but not necessarily be limited to):

- ◆ Persistent difficulty in attaining quorums
- ◆ Persistent difficulty in filling positions
- ◆ Persistent abundance of volunteers in excess of the size of the commission
- ◆ Requests from the chair for more or fewer members
- ◆ Complaints of overwork of a type which could be relieved by additional members

The CIC shall collect this information through its system of liaisons and through chair meetings, as well as through any other means which may be available.

If the CIC determines that there is cause to reconsider the size of the commission, the chair of the CIC shall submit a recommendation to the Village Board and to the chair of the commission in question.

6-5 Dissolving a Commission

A commission may only be dissolved by a vote of the Village Board, or by changes to state statute. A commission cannot dissolve itself, but may make a recommendation to the Village Board that such a dissolution be carried out.

If a commission is suspected to be superfluous, or to have significant overlap with another commission, the Village Board may request a study on the matter. The undertaking of such a study is a function of the CIC in cooperation with village staff of any departments associated with the commission or commissions in question.

Chapter 7: Composition of a Commission

7-1 Chair

The chair of a commission must:

- ◆ Ensure that meetings have been announced by the Office of the Village Clerk
- ◆ Ensure that an agenda has been submitted to the Office of the Village Clerk for each meeting, and that meeting space is reserved
- ◆ Enforce parliamentary procedure
- ◆ Ensure that meeting minutes and associated public documents are submitted after being approved, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
- ◆ Represent the commission before the Village Board when necessary
- ◆ Suggest at least one candidate as their successor
- ◆ Appoint an acting chair when unable to attend a meeting

Any or all of these tasks may be delegated to members of the commission, or to the staff liaison of the commission. It remains, however, the responsibility of the chair to make sure that the tasks are carried out. A chair otherwise has the same rights and responsibilities of any member of the commission.

7-2 Ex Officio Members

An ex officio member of a commission holds that position on that commission because of their official designation, rather than from personal interest. For example, the Chief of Police is an ex officio member of the Emergency Telephone System Board – this membership does not continue if they leave that position. Unless otherwise specified in the enabling language of the commission, ex officio members have all the same rights and responsibilities of any other member of the commission, including voting on commission business.

7-3 Members

A member of a commission is expected to attend meetings, to pay attention and participate, to deliberate and vote as necessary, and in general carry out the business of the commission as laid out in the enabling language of the commission.

Members may be removed from a commission under certain circumstances.

7-4 Student Members

Some commissions may accept a member who is a high school student. Such a member has all the rights and responsibilities of a member, but serves for terms of a single year. A student member must be in high school at the time of their appointment. A student member may serve a second one-year term if (and only if) they are still in high school at the end of their first term. A student member who leaves high school during their term may serve the remainder of that term, but cannot have another term.

7-5 Staff Liaisons

Every commission has a staff liaison who is an employee of the village government. The liaison provides official information and services as needed. Unless the enabling language of the commission makes them an ex officio member, they shall not vote on commission business.

7-6 Village Board Liaisons

Every commission has a liaison selected from the Village Board. This trustee is the first recourse when a commission needs contact with the Village Board, and should be attending meetings of the commission if possible. The liaison assignments are made relatively early in the tenure of a specific Village Board, and may change. Village Board liaisons shall not vote on commission business.

7-7 Citizen Involvement Commission Liaisons

Staff liaisons are provided for each commission in an administrative role to support the commission; however, all commission work plan activities should be handled by members of the commission and other volunteers, as appropriate, rather than delegated to staff. The CIC liaison to a commission usually attends at least one meeting every three months. If unable to attend, the liaison shall stay aware of the current affairs of the commission. They shall not vote on commission business.

The CIC liaison will:

- ◆ Accept recruiting requests
- ◆ Help coordinate efforts between commissions
- ◆ Help answer questions about the application of this manual

7-8 Experts and Citizen Assistants

A commission may request a nonmember to attend a meeting to give its members aid in some fashion. Such nonmembers may help in whatever fashion the commission deems necessary, but shall not vote on commission business.

7-9 Members of the Public

Members of the public who are not members of the commission may attend open meetings. They may speak or present to the commission during the meeting as determined by the commission. They shall not vote on commission business.

Chapter 8: Commission Members

Most commission members serve at the pleasure of the Village Board, the exception being ex officio members who serve by virtue of their jobs. The Citizen Involvement Commission (CIC) is responsible for coordination of recruitment of candidates for most boards and commissions, for maintaining records of commission members and vacancies, and for interviewing and recommending to the Village President candidates for boards and commissions.

8-1 Eligibility

The members of most commissions must reside in Oak Park. A few commissions explicitly accept members who do not live in Oak Park but own businesses located in Oak Park, or who hold some specific position within Oak Park. Nonresidents who are employed by a nonprofit organization located in Oak Park may apply. Their nonresidency must be noted on their application and on any recommendation made to the Village Board.

In addition, some commissions require members who have some particular profession or training — attorneys, architects, engineers, et cetera. Any such rules are contained in the enabling language of the commission. These commissions must always either meet these requirements or else have sufficient vacancies to meet these requirements in the event that qualified candidates become available.

8-2 Announcing and Advertising Vacancies

Chairs of commissions shall, on a monthly basis, notify the Office of the Village Clerk or their commission's CIC liaison when a vacancy occurs or is anticipated. The Office of the Village Clerk will maintain a list of current and anticipated vacancies. This list may be:

- ◆ Posted on the kiosk at Village Hall
- ◆ Added to the agenda packet at regular commission meetings
- ◆ Brought to prospects' meetings to distribute to candidates

Recruiting applicants for volunteer positions shall occur by means of a variety of media and methods, including:

- ◆ Announcements in the local press
- ◆ The village FYI publication
- ◆ The Volunteer Center
- ◆ Targeted outreach to minorities, renters, low and moderate income citizens, and persons with disabilities
- ◆ Distribution of brochures and flyers describing commissions and their duties
- ◆ Recruitment booths at special events (or other event participation)
- ◆ Word of mouth
- ◆ Personal recommendations
- ◆ Distribution of vacancy list to commission staff liaisons

8-3 Recruiting and Application Forms

The CIC is charged with recruiting new members and making application forms available, but all commission members are encouraged to recruit applicants. Application forms may be available at many locations – particularly at the Public Library buildings and the Township Office – but shall always be available at the Office of the Village Clerk, and at the kiosk at the front of Village Hall.

Existing commission members and chairs may recruit new members for their commissions, but the recruits must go through the standard CIC interview process described below. If a commission is in need of a particular type of member, the commission chair shall notify the CIC of this fact.

The CIC recommends that all prospective new members do one or both of the following:

- ◆ Attend at least one open meeting of the commission(s) in which they have interest.
- ◆ Read the enabling language of the commission and any other rules and regulations applicable to the commission. (Any such documents may be obtained by application to the Office of the Village Clerk.)

Applications shall be received by the Office of the Village Clerk at least one week before the meeting of the CIC at which the applicant desires to be interviewed. No application received less than 72 hours before the meeting will be considered at that meeting. Any applications received too late for a given meeting may be held until the next meeting.

8-4 Scheduling of Interviews

The CIC shall hold regular meetings to interview candidates for commission membership following their regular meetings in the months of February, April, June, August, October, and December. They may, at their discretion, hold interview meetings after their other regular meetings. These meetings are generally called “prospects’ meetings” within the CIC. Typically, these meetings begin one hour after the CIC meeting of the month has begun; ordinarily this means 8 P.M. on the first Wednesday of the month. (The exact scheduling information shall be available from the Office of the Village Clerk.) A prospects’ meeting must not begin before the scheduled time.

The CIC may also hold special prospects’ meetings when circumstances warrant. This is usually done in order to make recommendations in time for a particular meeting of the Village Board.

Either the Office of the Village Clerk or a representative of the CIC shall notify candidates of their upcoming interviews a minimum of 48 hours before the interview. This notification shall take place by telephone or by a combination of mail and telephone.

If a candidate will be unable to attend any regular prospects’ meeting because of permanent scheduling conflicts, they may request a special prospects’ meeting. The date of such a meeting shall be determined by discussion with the chair of the CIC.

8-5 Commission Input

Commissions in need of new members with specific qualities shall communicate this need to the CIC. This is done by submitting a written description to the Office of the Village Clerk, to the CIC liaison to the commission, or to the chair of the CIC at a chair meeting.

A member of a commission may encourage a citizen to apply for the commission system. Chairs and members of commissions play a critical role in recruitment of qualified and interested candidates for boards and commissions. The chairs and commissioners are expected to inform interested residents of opportunities to serve and share their own experiences of board service with others.

A commission shall not request a new member who would be:

- ◆ Given an implied guarantee of appointment to any commission.
- ◆ A violation of the enabling language of the commission
- ◆ Filtered by some aspect of their personality, politics, or any quality which cannot be considered by the CIC.

A commission member may attend a prospects' meeting, but they shall not take part in the conversation unless queried by CIC members, and must leave for the deliberations.

8-6 The Interview Process

Interviews shall be structured to provide applicants with information about the current work of the commissions and the expected duties of an appointee. The interview shall also ascertain the applicant's:

- ◆ Background and experience
- ◆ Understanding of the duties and responsibilities of appointment
- ◆ Level of interest
- ◆ Views of the community and its values
- ◆ Potential for contribution to the work of the group
- ◆ Ability to fulfill the time commitments of the appointment
- ◆ Reasons for seeking appointment to the commission

Interviews are open meetings of the CIC. For interviews only, the quorum requirement of the CIC is reduced to 4 members, or the entire CIC if at any point there are fewer than 4 members.

Interviews shall be done in a group. The candidates shall first listen to some general information from the CIC about the system and about the commitments involved in commission membership. They shall then be interviewed one at a time by the attending CIC members as a whole.

The order of the individual interviews is determined on an *ad hoc* basis, and may be adjusted to allow any candidates who must leave early to be interviewed first.

In general, an individual interview begins with the candidate giving some background about themselves and their reasons for wanting to be on the particular commissions in which they have expressed interest. After this, the CIC will ask the candidate any questions they may have – in particular, questions related to the available openings on commissions. Finally, the candidate shall be given a chance to ask any other questions which occur to them. Once this is finished, the candidate may leave.

8-7 Failure to Attend an Interview

When a candidate fails to attend a scheduled interview, a representative of the CIC or the Office of the Village Clerk shall attempt to find out whether the candidate is still interested in serving. This may involve merely leaving a message on a telephone answering machine or other service. The candidate shall be informed of the date and time of the next prospects' meeting. Unless the candidate gives advance notice of their inability to attend, they shall be rescheduled for that date. A candidate who misses two consecutive prospects' meetings without advance notification shall no longer be considered eligible, and must fill out a new application form.

8-8 Deliberations

Deliberations on candidates shall be held as a closed meeting of the CIC. Usually, this shall be done immediately after the prospects' meetings. Other than members of the CIC, the only people who may be present at these closed meetings are the members of the Village Board and the Village Clerk. All others must leave.

At least 3 of the CIC members present during deliberations on a candidate must have been present at that candidate's interview.

The recommendation of the CIC to the Village Board will be determined in the same way as any issue discussed at a closed meeting, and must be confirmed by a vote during an open meeting. (Any attending members of the Village Board shall not vote, although they may join in the discussion.)

The CIC may choose not to recommend a candidate for the commission or commissions of their choice. This may be because of a perceived conflict of interest. In such a case, the CIC shall attempt to contact the candidate in order to seek other preferences or to investigate the perceived conflict of interest.

The CIC must make one of the following five choices for each candidate considered during their deliberations:

- ◆ Recommend the candidate for placement
- ◆ Seek further information from the candidate
- ◆ Hold the candidate for future openings on a specific commission or commissions
- ◆ Hold the candidate for a future opening to be determined
- ◆ Refuse to recommend the candidate for any commission at all

The decisions made during deliberations are neither final nor public until approval is voted in an open meeting or open meeting segment of the CIC. The chair of the CIC shall not communicate recommendations to the Village Board which were made during deliberations but not approved by vote.

8-9 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a commissioner's unique interests, or those of a small group of which the commissioner is a member, might benefit as a direct result of commission business. For further information on conflict of interest, see the Village Ethics Ordinance, which is Chapter 2, Article 25 of the Village Code.

Certain exceptions are explicitly allowed through the enabling language of some commissions. During the interview process, the CIC shall attempt to discover potential conflict of interest, and may decline to appoint a candidate to a particular commission as a result. If the potential conflict would be relatively minor, the CIC may recommend the candidate on condition that they recuse themselves from any vote involving their own interests. In this case, the CIC will disclose the perceived conflict to the Village Board and to the Village Attorney at the time the recommendation is issued. Even a candidate who is accepted by the CIC may be rejected by the Village Board or the Village Attorney on the grounds of conflict of interest. In such a case, the CIC shall contact the candidate, explain the rejection, and offer to reconsider them for a position on another commission.

8-10 Qualifications

The CIC must fulfill any membership requirements which are set by law in the enabling language of the commission. (For example: if a commission currently has only one opening and that opening requires an attorney, the CIC shall not recommend a non-attorney for the opening.)

Beyond this, the CIC may consider many qualifications for candidacy, including but not limited to:

- ◆ Length of residency in Oak Park
- ◆ Professional or educational experience
- ◆ Experience working in groups
- ◆ Attendance at meetings of the commission or commissions of interest to the candidate
- ◆ Location of residency within Oak Park
- ◆ Any quality mentioned in the Diversity Statement of Oak Park

Qualities from the Diversity Statement must be considered only for purposes of increasing diversity on a commission.

During the interview, the CIC shall not ask questions whose answers might be used to filter candidates by opinion. If the candidate feels strongly about an issue, they may share their feelings, but the CIC shall not request this information. The CIC must not filter candidates by the candidates' opinions on issues related to the commission system or by the candidates' membership in political organizations.

The CIC shall not delay a recommendation because the recommendation would result in a less-diverse commission. They may, however, notify the Village Board that a particular recommendation would result in a lack of diversity. Any further discussion on such a recommendation shall be undertaken by the Village Board rather than the CIC.

8-11 Disqualification

If in any circumstance a candidate is to be disqualified completely from holding any commission membership, a reason must be given. This reason shall be communicated to the candidate, and to the chair of the commission in question or to members of the Village Board on request. At present, the only two reasons held to be legitimate are known prior abuse of authority and deliberate misstatements made during the interview process or on the application form. Others may be added to the list as needed, and must be added to this document as they are found.

Disqualification may be overruled by appeal to the Village Board. This has not occurred yet, because the list of disqualified candidates has been very short. Ideally, this process would involve a closed meeting-between the CIC, the Village Board, and the candidate.

8-12 Voting on Recommendations

The deliberations of the CIC are closed, and therefore can make no final decisions. The recommendations arising from deliberations must be confirmed by vote during an open meeting (or open meeting segment).

Recommendations must be read aloud before a vote is taken and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The votes may be undertaken either one at a time or in a block, at the discretion of the chair.

The decision approved by vote for each candidate must be communicated to the candidate within a week of the vote, either in person, by mail, or over the phone. (A message left on a telephone answering machine is a valid notification.)

8-13 Recommendation Process

Most candidates will be recommended for a commission, although possibly not immediately. The recommendation shall be communicated to the Village Board and the chair of the commission in question. This notification may be done through the Office of the Village Clerk or by the chair of the CIC, and may be in the form of an e-mail or telephone message.

The Village President determines which recommendations of the CIC will be put to a vote by the Village Board. At any given Village Board meeting, all candidates for commission membership put forward by the Village President shall be considered in a single agenda item.

If the Village President does not forward a recommendation of the CIC, the chair of the CIC should be notified of the decision as quickly as possible, so that other candidates can be sought. Candidates not forwarded by the Village President for membership on one commission may be recommended for other commissions at the discretion of the CIC. The candidate shall not be recommended to the same commission again until the membership of that commission has altered.

If the Village President does not forward a candidate within two months of recommendation by the CIC, this shall be considered equivalent to notification that the candidate will not be forwarded.

8-14 Term Length and Term Limits

The length of a single term on a commission is given in the enabling language of the commission. Members completing their first terms may be offered a second term, which they may accept or decline. This reappointment must be approved by the Village Board.

Members who are appointed to complete the term left incomplete by a previous member may have a shortened initial term. This shortened term does not count towards their term limit.

A commission member who is not also a chair shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. After two terms, they shall not serve on the same commission again until a full term of that commission has passed. (Usually this is three years.)

A member whose second term has expired may continue to serve on the commission if (and only if) no replacement can be found. This service is not compulsory. When a replacement is found, the member must no longer serve on the commission, although they may be retained as a citizen assistant to complete any ongoing projects.

8-15 Attendance

Commission members must attend a majority of meetings in order to maintain quorums. Therefore a chair may recommend the removal of commission members who fail to do so to the Village Board, under the following guidelines. (Removal for any reason requires permission from the Village Board.)

A commission member may be considered for removal from a commission after being absent without prior notice from 3 regular meetings in any 12-month period. (Special meetings only count against this limit if the member in question both indicated in advance that they would attend and failed to give advance notice that they would not attend after all.) The removal process must be initiated after a meeting which the member failed to attend.

Before initiating the removal process, a chair must make at least three attempts to contact the member in question. Upon successful contact, the reasons for the absences and the likelihood of further absences shall be discussed. If the cause of the absences is the frequency or schedule of meetings, the chair may offer to approach the CIC about reassigning the member to a more suitable commission. If circumstances suggest that the member will be unable to attend the meetings of any commission, the chair may suggest resignation as an alternative to removal.

If the member cannot assure regular attendance yet is unwilling to resign, or cannot be contacted after three attempts, the chair may proceed with the removal process.

If a member fails to attend six consecutive regular meetings, their removal from the commission may be recommended without prior notice from the chair.

8-16 Resignations

A member may resign at any time without advance notice. A resignation may be submitted by letter or e-mail. Resignations may be submitted to either the Office of the Village Clerk or to the commission chair. A resignation received by one of these two shall be forwarded to the other.

A chair receiving a resignation must write a letter of acceptance to the resigning member, and submit it to the Office of the Village Clerk. The Office of the Village Clerk will retain a copy and mail the letter to the resigning member, and also notify the CIC of the resignation.

The resignation of a commission member becomes final when the Office of the Village Clerk receives the letter of acceptance from the chair of the commission.

8-17 Removing a Member

Other than poor attendance, covered above, commission members may be removed for the following reasons:

- ◆ Constant conflict of interest – when a member is recused for a majority of the commission's business

- ◆ Failure to recuse – when a member remains active in commission business despite conflict of interest
- ◆ Change of residency or employment (out of Oak Park) – when a member no longer has the connection with Oak Park which qualified them for membership
- ◆ Disruption of meetings – when a member prevents a commission from doing its business (except via standard parliamentary procedure)
- ◆ Abuse of authority – when a member attempts to use their membership on the commission for private benefit
- ◆ Misrepresentation – when a member claims, without specific authorization, to speak or act for the commission or makes significant claims to the commission which prove to be verifiably false
- ◆ Public commentary on matters under deliberation by the commission – when a commission member issues statements about matters under deliberation, particularly to the press

As in the case of poor attendance, a member whose performance has caused concern should be contacted by the chair, and the issue should be discussed. If the member agrees to leave the commission, they should submit a resignation.

A chair who wishes to have a member removed involuntarily shall contact the commission’s Village Board liaison and the Office of the Village Clerk. The chair shall explain in writing the reason or reasons why they feel that the member should be removed. The Village Board liaison shall then be responsible for the removal of the member, which is accomplished by a vote of the Village Board.

A member who was a resident of Oak Park and has moved out of town may serve out the rest of their current term if and only if permission is granted by the Village President.

In addition to the reasons above, members of the CIC may be removed for the following reasons:

- ◆ Subversion of the interview process – any member of the CIC who persistently attempts to ask questions during interviews which are explicitly disallowed by this document
- ◆ Prejudice – any member of the CIC who verifiably attempts to consider qualifications for commission membership which are explicitly disallowed by this document

8-18 Multiple Membership

With a few ex officio exceptions which are specified in the enabling language of the commissions, an individual person must serve on a maximum of one commission at a time. This limitation applies only to “formalized” commissions, not temporary ones.

If a commission member wishes to serve on a different commission, they must reapply to the CIC. It should be noted, however, that the CIC recommends that currently-sitting members finish their terms before seeking new appointments. (It is perfectly acceptable for a currently-sitting member to apply for a new appointment on another commission immediately before the end of their term. In this case the chair of their current commission must be notified that the member will not be serving beyond the end of their current term.)

8-19 Exit Surveys

The Office of the Village Clerk and the CIC shall cooperate to administer exit surveys to commission members who leave commissions for any reason. The exit survey shall assess the commission member's experience in serving on a commission and reason for resignation (if applicable).

When informed of a departure, the Office of the Village Clerk shall send an exit survey within 30 days. Completed surveys shall be collected by the Office of the Village Clerk and forwarded to the CIC.

The CIC shall revise the exit survey as necessary and analyze the results. The design of the exit survey must be such that the answers remain anonymous upon publication, and all specific responses to the survey by individuals must remain confidential. Information gathered from the exit survey shall be periodically reported to the Village Board. In the event that no exit surveys are returned in a six-month period, this fact shall be reported to the Village Board.

Chapter 9: Chairs

This section covers only the process of selecting, removing, and replacing a chair.

9-1 Chair Terms

A chair can serve two consecutive terms as chair, which will be of the same length as standard member terms, provided that he has not served more than one term as a member. These two terms may be in addition to a single term served as a standard member.

No commission member may serve more than three consecutive standard terms on any single commission in any combination of member and chair. Partial term appointments are not included in this calculation.

9-2 Nominating a Successor

Outgoing chairs – whether because of the end of a term or for other reasons – shall if possible nominate at least one candidate for their replacement. The candidate or candidates should be chosen from the membership of the commission. Any nominated candidates shall be notified of their candidacy, so that they may decline if they feel unable to take on the responsibility. The list of willing candidates shall be reported to the Office of the Village Clerk and the Village President.

Commission members other than the chair may nominate themselves, or other members of the commission. Such nominations shall also be reported to the Office of the Village Clerk and the Village President. The nominees shall be notified of their candidacy, as above.

9-3 CIC Involvement in Recommending a New Chair

The appointment of Commission Chairs is recommended by the Village President and approved by the Village Board. The CIC may recommend candidates for the position of Chair to the Village President for consideration. First consideration should be given to other members of the commission and then to other candidates.

The process followed by the CIC when looking for a chair candidate is similar to that used when looking for a new commission member. The major differences:

- ◆ Candidates shall not be asked for secondary placement preferences.
- ◆ Candidates already on the commission may, in addition to the usual criteria, be judged by attendance history, familiarity with this document, familiarity with *Robert's Rules of Order*, and general understanding of the responsibilities of a chair.
- ◆ Candidates who fail to attend their interview without prior notice shall no longer be considered.

9-4 Resignation

A chair should resign under any of the conditions under which a standard member should resign. When a chair resigns, they may choose to become a standard commission member. This is allowed if and only if both of the following are true:

- ◆ After the change in membership and appointment of a new chair, the membership of the commission would not exceed the limit set in the enabling language of the commission.
- ◆ The resigning chair would not serve more than two terms total, including both standard membership and time served as chair.

The resignation of a chair is final when accepted in writing by the Village President, or upon the appointment of a new chair, whichever comes first.

9-5 Removing a Chair

A chair may be removed for any reason for which a standard commission member may be removed. They may also be removed for failure to perform the duties of a chair. The Village Board determines when and if a chair will be removed. Commission members or members of the public who feel that a chair should be removed shall lodge their complaints with the Office of the Village Clerk, which shall forward them to the Village Board.

9-6 Joining Another Commission

If a chair, after their last possible term has expired, wishes to serve again, they may do so, but not on the same commission. The CIC will not recommend an ex-chair for membership in the commission which they chaired until at least two full terms of that commission have passed since the ex-chair was last on the commission in question.

9-7 Chair Vacancies

In the event that a Commission Chair has resigned, and no new Chair has been appointed by the Village President and confirmed by the Village Board of Trustees, the commission may elect by majority vote a serving member of the commission to serve as Interim Chair until a new Chair is appointed. Serving as Interim Chair is not a guarantee of becoming the permanent Chair. No vacancy will be created by this interim position.

Chapter 10: Appendixes

10-1 Appendix A: Topics for Closed Meetings

This appendix lists some topics which may be discussed during closed meetings (or closed meeting segments). If there is *any* doubt about whether a meeting should be open or closed, the Office of the Village Clerk should be consulted.

Please note that a closed meeting must be limited to allowable topics. That is, if there are three topics to be discussed, and only two of them are permissible topics for closed meetings, then the closed meeting may address only those two topics. The third topic must be discussed at an open meeting.

Topics which are acceptable for closed meetings include:

- ◆ Personnel
- ◆ Labor negotiations
- ◆ Property Disposition
- ◆ Litigation

10-2 Appendix B: Locations of Enabling Language and Other Relevant Laws

Oak Park village government commissions are created by law, and the law determines the categories of the tasks to be undertaken by the commission as well as any special rules about its composition. The following list gives the locations where the enabling language (and other relevant laws) may be found for the list of commissions as of the date of issuance of this document.

This table uses the following abbreviations:

- ◆ Citations to the Oak Park Village Code are given as “OPVC x-y” or “OPVC x-y-z,” where x is the article, y is the section. The Oak Park Village Code may be found online through the village website or at the Office of the Village Clerk.
- ◆ Citations to the Illinois Compiled Statutes are given as “a ILCS b/c-d,” or sometimes as a range “a ILCS b/c-d-e,” where a is the chapter, b is the act, and c, d, and e are subsections. The Illinois Compiled Statutes may be found online through the website of the Illinois General Assembly, or at the Office of the Village Clerk.
- ◆ Resolutions of the Oak Park Village Board of Trustees are given as “OPVBR y-m-d,” where y is the year, m is the month, and d is the day of the passing of the resolution. These resolutions are not online, and may only be obtained through the Office of the Village Clerk.
- ◆ Citations to the Zoning Code of the Village of Oak Park are given as “ZCVOP a.b.c,” where a is the article and b is the section. The Zoning Code may be obtained through the Office of the Village Clerk.

Commission	Relevant Laws
Board of Health	OPVC 20-2
Building Codes Advisory Commission	OPVC 2-20
Citizen Involvement Commission	OPVC 2-35; Manual for Chairs
Citizen Police Oversight Commission	OPVC 2-30
Community Design Commission	OPVC 2-18; OPVC 7-7-6
Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee	OPVC 2-34; OPVC 13-2-4
Community Relations Commission	OPVC 2-19
Emergency Telephone System Board	OPVBR 1991-2-19
Environmental and Energy Advisory Commission	OPVC 2-21
Farmers Market Commission	OPVC 18-2-11
Fire and Police Commission	OPVC 2-28; 65 ILCS 5/10-2
Fireman’s Pension Commission	OPVC 9-1-3; 40 ILCS 5/4-121-140

Commission	Relevant Laws
Forestry Commission	OPVC 25-1-3
Historic Preservation Commission	OPVC 2-23; OPVC 7-9
Housing Programs Advisory Commission	OPVC 2-31
Liquor Control Review Commission	OPVC 3-2-2; OPVC 3-7
Plan Commission	OPVC 2-17; ZCVOP 2.1.3
Police Pension Commission	OPVC 19-1-3; 40 ILCS 5/3-128-143
Public Art Advisory Commission	OPVC 2-22
Retail Support Commission	OPVBR 1990-6-18
Telecommunications Commission	OPVC 2-26
Transportation Commission	OPVC 2-15
Universal Access Commission	OPVC 2-33
Zoning Board of Appeals	OPVC 2-24; ZCVOP 2.1.4

10-3 Appendix C: Online Resources

The URLs of all websites mentioned in this document are given here, in order to ensure that they may all be properly verified at once. (Last date of verification: Saturday, October 18, 2008.)

- ◆ Illinois General Assembly main website: <http://www.ilga.gov/>
- ◆ Illinois Compiled Statutes: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs.asp>
- ◆ Village of Oak Park main website: <http://www.oak-park.us/>
- ◆ Village of Oak Park Office of the Village Clerk website:
http://www.oak-park.us/Village_Clerk/Village_Clerk.html
- ◆ Village of Oak Park Village Code: <http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/IL/Oak%20Park/>
- ◆ Diversity Statement of Oak Park:
<http://www.oak-park.us/public/pdfs/2003%20diversity%20statement.pdf>
- ◆ Village of Oak Park Office of Communications:
http://www.oak-park.us/Village_Manager/VMO_Communications.html
- ◆ Oak Park Village Township: <http://www.oakparktownship.org/>

10-4 Appendix D: Standard CIC Interview Material

Unless the answers are self-evident, or given in the application form, the CIC shall ask these general questions during interviews.

- ◆ Do you foresee any potential conflict of interest which might arise if you were appointed to [commission name]? (Alternately: do you do any work in Oak Park?)
- ◆ Have you attended any meetings of [commission name]?
- ◆ What qualifies you for [commission name]? (Alternately: what past accomplishments do you feel are relevant and would contribute to [the specific commission]?)
- ◆ What do you envision you would be gaining from being involved with [commission name]? Or more generally, a board or commission?
- ◆ What specifically do you see yourself contributing to [commission name]?
- ◆ Why do you want to volunteer at this particular point in your life?
- ◆ How did you find out about the volunteer opportunities with the Oak Park commissions and commissions?
- ◆ Do you have any weeknight conflicts that might interfere with regular attendance at the meetings of [commission name]? (If the commission in question has regular meetings on some specific day of the month, the day of the month will be given with this question.)
- ◆ If there aren't any openings on the boards and commissions of your choice, would you be interested in serving on another commission where we felt your qualifications were a good fit?

At the interview, the following information must either be read to candidates or be given to them in writing.

Welcome to this prospects' meeting hosted by the Citizen Involvement Commission. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to ascertain your interests and qualifications for serving on one of Oak Park's many boards and commissions. The Citizen Involvement Commission is an advisory commission to the Oak Park Village Board, and its main charge is the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

We will be looking for the following information from you:

- ◆ A completed volunteer data sheet
- ◆ An introduction to your professional and personal interests, as well as any qualifications that may serve you well on a particular commission.
- ◆ Your availability on a monthly basis.

After you leave here tonight, we will review your application and attempt to match you to a vacancy on a board or commission on the basis of current needs and your skills and experience. You may be contacted by the chair of CIC, the Office of the Village Clerk, or a representative of one or more of the commissions in which you are interested.

You will be notified when your appointment is being added to the Village Board agenda. We make every effort to place volunteers as soon as possible, but it may be several months before a suitable

opening is available. Either the Office of the Village Clerk or the chair of the CIC will keep you apprised of your status. After the Village Board meeting at which you are appointed, you will receive official paperwork from the Office of the Village. You will also receive communication from your new commission about the next meeting.

You should be aware of the following:

You are expected to attend at least 85% of the board or commission's meetings. If you become unable to attend meetings at any point during your tenure, please resign your appointment to allow another volunteer to take over.

The term of an appointment is either three or five years, depending on the commission. When your first term is over, you may be given an option to serve a second term.

Boards and commissions meet on at least a monthly basis, with some meeting multiple times per month. Most commissions meet on weekday evenings, but a few meet on weekday mornings instead.