

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Curtis E. Hawk, City Manager
Date: September 17, 2013
Subject: Resolution No. 415-13 Creating Committees of the Council

City Council Action Requested:

Consider Resolution No. 415-13, Creating Committees of the Council

Background Information:

The City Council currently has one standing committee of the Council, the Council Finance Committee. (The Council also currently has an ad hoc committee that includes two members of City Council and several other board members, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.) City Council approved Resolution No. 412-13 creating the Finance Committee of the Council on April 11, 2013. In approving the resolution Council appointed two (2) members of the Council to serve on the Finance Committee, Council members Roland Goveas and Ed Lopez. The purpose of the Council's Finance Committee as stated in Res. 412-13 is to periodically meet with staff to review certain items that impact the City's current and future finances and budget. The agenda item page memo for Res. 412-13 pointed out that the typical matters to be reviewed by the Finance Committee would include the annual audit, proposed and current City budgets, utility rate studies, and capital improvement projects. Since its creation the Finance Committee has had several meetings relating to the budget and water/wastewater utility rates.

The discussion of Committees of the Council grew out of discussions regarding Chapter 10 of our Code of Ordinances, particularly as it relates to roles and responsibilities of the boards, committees, and commissions (and staff), and the question of overlapping

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responsibilities of some boards as well as the question of whether or not some duties assigned to the various boards, committees, and commissions require more direct involvement by city management staff and/or city council.

The question of whether or not it would be appropriate to include Council members on some of the various boards, much like the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee which includes members of the Council and several boards, had a legal answer. The short answer is that it **would not be appropriate** due to the common law doctrine of incompatibility which would prohibit a governing body from appointing one of its members to serve on a board it has created. The difference from what the Council has done with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and the boards, committees and commissions set out in Chapter 10, is that the Steering Committee is an **ad hoc** (special purpose) **committee of the City Council**, with others besides council members appointed to serve on the committee with the council members.

Some of the City's boards are required as currently constituted, e.g., the P&Z by City Charter, the ZBA and the Animal Shelter Advisory Board by state law. Others were established by City Council to assist Council (and thereby staff) in different ways – some by recommending policies (e.g., Economic Development Advisory Board), some by recommending events (e.g., Special Events Committee), some by recommending activities (e.g., Keep Richland Hills Beautiful).

For a number of reasons, particularly policy considerations and budget impacts, Council has discussed whether it might be appropriate, and the community perhaps better served, if Council were to consider transitioning some of the specific boards, committees and commissions set out in Chapter 10 to where they would no longer exist, and instead create committees of the council that would consist only of sitting Council members (much like the Council's Finance Committee) instances where the The purpose of this agenda item is to have a discussion with Council about Chapter 10 and

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the notion of committees of the council (with citizen volunteers working with the committees) contrasted with council appointed boards, and whether or not there are.

Over the course of the last few months Council has discussed adding additional standing committees in order to give Council members direct participation in the subject matters that currently are attended to by the various boards and committees. At the September 3, 2013 meeting Council was presented with a proposed list of Committees that included, in addition to the **Finance Committee, a Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Public Safety Committee, Community Enrichment Committee, and a Community Development Committee.**

The proposed **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee** would look at issues with the T, roads and streets, drainage structures, and water and sewer lines as they relate to physical issues. The proposed **Public Safety Committee** would look at issues dealing with Fire, Police, Animal Control, Code Enforcement, and Public Health (mosquito abatement, etc.). The **Community Enrichment Committee** which could focus on Parks, Library, Open Space and medians, the Community Center, Special Events, and other quality of life issues. The **Community Development Committee** would look at issues that relate to growth and development matters, for example, when a developer has something to run by the committee and staff before taking the matter forward.

Resolution No. 415-13 before you for consideration would create these four additional standing committees, thus giving Council five (5) standing Committees of the Council. The resolution does not provide for appointments to the five committees. These appointments will be made by separate Council action. All meetings of the Committees Council will be required to adhere to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Ideally any one councilmember would not have to serve on more than two standing Committees of the Council. (Doesn't include whatever ad hoc committees Council may from time-to-time appoint.) In looking at the potential committees, there is always the

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possibility that the Council might want to bifurcate the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, creating a sixth committee. Also, there could be some overlap on what the Committees would focus on at any given time; for example, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee would look at physical issues relating to a topic, but the Finance Committee would look at these same topics from a fiscal perspective.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: No additional funds will be required.

Staff Contacts:

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Attachment: Proposed Resolution 415-13

RESOLUTION NO. 415-13

CREATING STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the City Council on April 16, 2013 created a standing committee of the City Council to be called the City Council Finance Committee, to assist city staff in reviewing matters impacting current and future budgets and the financial planning of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Richland Hills believes it would be in the best interest of the community to create additional standing committees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS THAT:

Section 1. In addition to the **Finance Committee** of the Council, the Standing Committees of the Council shall also include the following: a **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee**, a **Public Safety Committee**, a **Community Enrichment Committee**, and a **Community Development Committee**.

Section 2. The responsibility of the additional standing committees shall be as follows: **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee**, to address issues with the T, roads and streets, drainage structures, and water and sewer lines as they relate to physical issues; **Public Safety Committee**, to address issues dealing with Fire, Police, Animal Control, Code Enforcement, and Public Health; **Community Enrichment Committee**, to address issues relating to Parks, Library, Open Space and medians, the Community Center, Special Events, and other quality of life issues; **Community Development Committee**, to address issues that relate to growth and development matters in the community.

Section 3. Each Committee of the Council shall consist of two members of the Council to be appointed by majority vote of the Council, and each member of the standing committees shall serve until their successor is appointed. Following the initial appointment, members of the Committee shall be appointed annually, at a date to be determined by City Council, following the election of Council members in the General Municipal Election.

Section 4. The Committee will meet periodically when called by the City Manager, at a time and place agreed upon by the Council appointees to the Committee, or upon request of the two members, for the purpose stated above.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE 17TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2013.

APPROVED:

Bill Agan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Linda Cantu, City Secretary