

The City of North Kansas City, Missouri



**Boards and Commissions
Handbook**

May 25, 2016

PURPOSE

This Manual has been prepared to provide information for members of all City of North Kansas City boards and commissions to assist them in understanding the importance of their role in City government.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The City of North Kansas City is a third class city with a Mayor/City Council/City Administrator form of government. The eight member City Council is elected to two year staggered terms. The Mayor is elected to a four year term. The Mayor Pro Tem is elected annually by members of the City Council. The City Administrator is the chief administrative officer of the City and oversees the daily functions of the government. The City Administrator is responsible for implementing the policies set by the City Council and for effectively and economically operating the City.

The City Council is responsible for establishing policies and providing overall direction for the City's operation. As elected representatives, Councilmembers are directly accountable to the citizens of North Kansas City. Boards and commissions, composed of local residents, have been formed to assist the City Council in gaining a greater awareness of public sentiment. Boards and commissions expand the opportunity for citizen input and participation in policy development.

YOUR ROLE AS A BOARD OR COMMISSION MEMBER

Boards and commissions in the City of North Kansas City are an integral and important part of the City's government. Residents such as you, who serve on a board or commission, dedicate many hours a year without compensation to make the City of North Kansas City's government as reflective as possible of the attitudes and beliefs of all residents.

Board and commission members are *appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council*. A resident may express an interest in serving on a particular board or commission to a member of the City Council or through volunteer work within the community a resident may be asked to serve on a particular board or commission. The City Council seeks to appoint individuals who have the appropriate skills and interests for a given board or commission, and strives to select a representative cross-section of the North Kansas City community.

While some boards and commissions draw their authority from state statutes, others receive their authority from local ordinances. In either event, the City Council receives important recommendations and information from these committees, but retains the ultimate decision making authority.

Regardless of which board or commission you serve on, your role is of extreme value to the City of North Kansas City's municipal government. Without your help the City of North Kansas City could not be the quality community it is today.

BOARD AND COMMISSION SUPPORT

Role of Council Liaison

The City Council appoints at least one of its members to be a liaison to each board or commission within City government. Whether the Councilmember is actively involved in the group's discussions depends somewhat on the nature of the work that the board or commission performs, as well as the desires of its members.

It is not unusual to have a member of the City Council attend various board and commission meetings from time to time. Some members of the City Council do this solely to become more familiar with board and commission members, as well as the work of the group itself. Having the Mayor or a City Councilmember attend a meeting is usually just an expression of that person's interest in the work you are doing.

Role of Staff Liaison

Most City of North Kansas City boards and commissions have at least one City staff member assigned to them. Generally this will be a department director or division manager from the department most closely aligned with the activities of the particular board or commission. Unless a staff liaison is specifically designated by ordinance, the City Administrator selects the appropriate departmental support. City staff members assigned to assist the board or commission handle the required administrative duties. Generally the department that supports your board or commission will be responsible for providing an agenda to guide formal meetings, preparing staff reports and providing analysis and technical data needed to develop recommendations for the City Council. That department will also arrange for meeting space, handle correspondence and provide secretarial assistance, including taking and maintaining minutes to serve as the official record of a board's or commission's activities.

The role of City staff members is to support and advise board and commission functions. While staff may participate in discussion and may make recommendations to the board or commission, staff does not vote on matters being considered by the board or commission. Contacts with the staff members should clearly be in the framework of the board or commission assignment. Board or commission members should not ask for individual reports, favors, or special consideration from City staff members.

The board or commission should be aware of the staff member's responsibilities to provide advice to the board or commission, the City Council and the City Administrator. In the rare instances where the primary staff person disagrees with a board or commission recommendation, staff is obligated to advise the City Council, through the City Administrator, of the staff member's recommendation. The City Council, in making a final decision, will consider the advice of both the board or commission and the staff, as well as other interested individuals.

SPECIAL ISSUES

Minutes

Minutes of board and commission meetings are very important. In some cases, the minutes play a legal role in reviews by other boards or commissions, the City Council or the Circuit Court. Minutes of meetings are important in maintaining the City's archives and are required under City ordinances and state statutes. Depending on the nature of the group's work, available staff support, and the complexity of the minutes themselves, board or commission minutes may be kept by a staff secretary, a staff liaison, or by a committee-appointed recording secretary. In any case, minutes should be kept routinely and their nature and extent should be discussed with the chair person and staff liaison.

The Sunshine Law

All government entities and their boards and commissions must comply with the Missouri Sunshine Law. The law, somewhat complex, requires all meetings of boards or commissions to be open to the public. It also requires that meeting dates and times be posted at City Hall at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, exclusive of weekends and holidays. The staff liaison should be advised of any board's subcommittee meeting dates and times so that these meetings are also properly posted.

If a public announcement system is available at the meeting location, it should be used. The public should be able to hear what is going on; however, depending upon the rules and procedures of a given board or commission, the public does not necessarily have the right to participate in those discussions.

The law does provide for closed meetings, but only for very specific subjects such as the purchase of real estate, discussion of a specific law suit, or personnel issues. Except in very rare cases, these categories do not apply to City boards or commissions. If the board or commission has a reason to believe that it needs a closed meeting under the Sunshine Law, the meeting should not be held until the matter is discussed with the City Administrator and/or City Counselor.

The City of North Kansas City believes very strongly that all boards and commissions have the responsibility not only to honor the letter of the Sunshine Law, but to honor the spirit of the law, as well.

Meetings

City of North Kansas City meeting facilities are accessible to disabled board members and disabled residents who desire to attend meetings. When having meetings outside of City facilities, the City urges all board and commissions to use only facilities that are accessible to disabled citizens.

Attendance at board and commission meetings is critical. The City Council realizes that occasionally business and family commitments will prevent a member from attending a meeting. When this happens, please notify a staff liaison or staff secretary that you will

not be in attendance. By giving notice of absences sufficiently in advance of the meeting, quorums can be projected or agendas adjusted.

Sometimes a business or family situation becomes complicated, making attendance at meetings difficult, with little likelihood of changing for some time. If you experience such circumstances, discuss them with your board chair person and Council liaison. The City Council understands that these situations arise and your need to step down from serving, because of these eventualities, does not preclude you from a future appointment to another City board or commission when your schedule might be more accommodating.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest questions arise periodically at all levels of government and can be very complex. Generally, a legal conflict of interest occurs when you, as a member of the board or commission, are slated to vote on a matter (1) involving you or a member of your family by blood or marriage; (2) involving a business owned in whole or in part by you or a member of your family by blood or marriage; or (3) when the outcome could be economically advantageous to you or a member of your family, or to a business owned in whole or in part by you or a member of your family. In such cases, there is no question that you have a responsibility to disclose this information to the rest of the commission and to abstain from all discussions and votes on the matter.

In addition to those situations in which there is a conflict of interest, all members of boards and commissions must be aware of situations in which there is an appearance of conflict of interest. In some cases, a matter may be pending before a board or commission which will not benefit you or a member of your family in any way, but the general public may perceive that a conflict exists. In some cases, an individual's allegiance to an organization, group, employer, or institution may leave doubt in the public's mind as to that member's ability to make an objective determination. Although there may not be any legal preemption from voting under such circumstances, prudence should prevail. You should consider excusing yourself from discussions and votes in such circumstances, or disclose the circumstances and make a statement that the circumstances will not influence your decision.

Openness is the best policy. When issues arise, discuss them with the board or commission chair person and staff liaison, or if necessary, with the City Counselor. If you are in doubt, the safest course of action is to abstain from participating in any discussions on that particular issue. Abstention from an issue should include physically leaving the room where the board or commission is meeting during the period the matter is discussed or acted upon.

City Administrator's Office

The City Administrator's Office coordinates all staff activities for the boards and commissions. The City Administrator is represented at all board and commission meetings by a staff person who is appointed by and responsible to the City Administrator, through the appropriate department director. The staff liaison's principal role is to provide technical support to the boards and commissions and to facilitate the flow of information between the Mayor, City Council and the boards and commissions.

The staff liaison is responsible for keeping the City Administrator informed, through the department director, of all board and commission activities. If a board or commission member has a specific concern about the role of a staff liaison, he or she should contact the City Administrator.

City Counselor's Office

The City Counselor's office is available to all boards and commissions. Calling or meeting with the City Counselor is normally coordinated through the City Administrator to assist in obtaining the most efficient use of legal services. The City Counselor does not attend most board or commission meetings. However, when legal questions arise and the need to confer with the City Counselor presents itself, the matter should be rescheduled to a subsequent meeting and referred to the staff liaison who can arrange for the City Counselor's involvement.

ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- ❖ Board of Zoning Adjustment
- ❖ City Planning Commission
- ❖ Hospital Board of Trustees
- ❖ Housing Advisory and Appeals Board
- ❖ Library Board
- ❖ Liquor Control Board of Review
- ❖ Parks and Recreation Board
- ❖ Police and Fire Personnel Board
- ❖ Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Commission

AFFILIATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- ❖ N.K.C. Levee District
- ❖ N.K.C. Special Road District

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

Members and Organization

- The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall consist of five (5) Members, who must be residents of the city.
- Three (3) alternate Members may be appointed in the absence or the disqualification of the regular members.
- Those Members shall be appointed for terms of five (5) years each.
- The Board shall elect its own Chair who shall serve for one (1) year.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings of the board shall be held at the call of the Chair and at such other times as the Board may determine.

Powers and Duties

- To consider variances to the strict application of either the zoning or sign regulations.
- To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by the enforcement officer in the enforcement of the zoning or sign ordinances.
- Decisions may be appealed to the Circuit Court of Clay County.

Staff Support

- Assistant City Administrator
- Recording Secretary

Authority

- North Kansas City Municipal Code Chapters 2.44, 17.96 & 15.44
- Chapter 89, Revised Statutes of Missouri

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Members and Organization

- The Planning Commission shall consist of seven (7) members composed of five (5) Citizen Members, the Mayor, and one (1) City Council person selected by a majority of the City Council.
- All of the Planning Commission Members shall be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council.
- The term of each of the Members shall be for four (4) years, except that the terms of the Members first appointed shall be for varying periods so that succeeding terms will be staggered.
- The Planning Commission shall elect its Chair and Secretary from among the Members. The term of Chair and Secretary shall be for one (1) year with eligibility for re-election.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
- The Planning Commission shall hold regular meetings and special meetings as they provide by rule, and shall adopt rules for the transaction of business and keep a record of its proceedings. These records shall be public records.

Powers and Duties

- The Planning Commission holds public hearings making recommendations for amendments to the zoning ordinance and zoning map to the City Council.
- The Commission holds public hearings and makes recommendations for zoning amendments (rezoning) and the authorization of conditional use permits.
- The Commission may hold public hearings and make recommendations for subdivision plats.
- The Commission will periodically review and update the Master Plan for the city.
- On occasion, the Commission may coordinate or participate in planning or community development studies planning for the future of the community.

Staff Support

- Assistant City Administrator
- Recording Secretary

Authority

- North Kansas City Municipal Code Chapter 2.40 (Planning Commission), Title 16 (Subdivision Ordinance), and Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance)
- Chapter 89, Revised Statutes of Missouri

HOSPITAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members and Organization

- The Hospital Board of Trustees shall consist of twelve (12) Members, a majority of such trustees shall be citizens of the City of North Kansas City, Missouri and the remaining trustees need not be residents of the City, but shall be citizens of the Counties of Clay, Platte, or Ray in the State of Missouri.
- Members serve four-year terms.
- The Mayor of North Kansas City, Missouri, with the approval of the City Council of North Kansas City, Missouri, appoints the Board of Trustees.
- The Mayor is a non-voting liaison.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month, except the month of December, and at any other time as the Board may deem necessary.

Powers and Duties

- Pursuant to Section 96.150, the Board of Trustees has the authority to operate, maintain, and manage the Hospital.
- Pursuant to Section 96.190, the Board of Trustees controls the expenditures related to the Hospital and the construction, leasing, equipping, operating, and maintaining the facility and grounds and other property, real and personal, belonging to the facility.

Staff Support

- Not Applicable.

HOUSING ADVISORY AND APPEALS BOARD

Members and Organization

- City Council serves as members of the Housing Advisory and Appeals Board.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held as needed.

Powers and Duties

- The Board shall adopt reasonable rules and regulations for conducting its business and shall render all decisions and findings to the Chief Building Inspector.
- Appeals to the Board shall be processed in accordance with the provisions contained in the 2006 International Building Code.

Staff Support

- Recording Secretary

Authority

- 2006 International Building Code

LIBRARY BOARD

Members and Organization

- The Library Board consists of nine (9) Citizen Members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. Members must be residents of the City/Library District.
- Members serve three (3) year staggered term. There is a limit of three (3) consecutive terms. Members can be re-appointed twice. Members can be re-appointed to three (3) additional consecutive terms after being off the Board for two (2) years.
- One (1) Councilmember as non-voting liaison.
- Officers: Members of the Library Board shall elect a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary to serve for a term of one year each. There is not a limit on the number of one year terms an Officer can serve.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
- Special Meetings are held when necessary.

Powers and Duties

- The Board sets the Library's policies, approves the annual budget, and hires, and performs the performance reviews of the Library Director. The Board shall consider those issues which relate to the City and shall make recommendations to the City Council as such times as the Board may see fit or as the Council may direct.

Subcommittees

- The Board has the authority to create a subcommittee to deal with strategic planning, building projects, or other tasks as needed.

Staff Support

- Library Director

Authority

- North Kansas City Code Section 2.52.010 and 2.52.020, et seq.

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF REVIEW

Members and Organization

- The Liquor Control Board of Review consists of three (3) Members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.
- Members serve three (3) year staggered term.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held as needed.

Powers and Duties

- The Liquor Control Board reviews appeals of decisions by the Liquor Control Director such as denials of an application for a liquor license or permit, suspensions or revocations of a license or permit, or other interpretations by the Liquor Control Directors of the City Code as it relates to alcoholic beverages.

Staff Support

- Public Works Director
- Recording Secretary

Authority

- North Kansas City Municipal Code 4.08

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Members and Organization

- The Parks and Recreation Board consists of nine (9) Citizen Members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.
- Members serve three (3) year staggered term.
- One (1) City Councilmember as non-voting liaison.
- Officers: Members of the Parks and Recreation Board shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary to serve for a term of one year each. The Chair and other officers may serve up to three consecutive terms in a specific office, and thereafter, may be re-elected to their previous position after a lapse of one year.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Special meetings are held when necessary.

Powers and Duties

- To study, make plans and recommendations for the development and maintenance of facilities and activities for a progressive parks and recreation system within the City. The Board shall consider those issues which relate to the City parks and shall make recommendations to the City Council as such times as the Board may see fit or as the Council may direct.

Staff Support

- Parks and Recreation Director

Authority

- Chapter 90, Revised Statutes of Missouri

POLICE AND FIRE PERSONNEL BOARD

Members and Organization

- The Police and Fire Personnel Board consists of five (5) members to be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council.
- Members serve four (4) year term.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on an as needed basis with proper posting. Minutes of meetings are maintained.

Powers and Duties

- The Police and Fire Personnel Board shall have prepared examinations and shall give or cause to be given examinations to all candidates for appointment or promotion and shall certify a list of eligible candidates to the City Administrator who shall be the appointing authority. The City Administrator is required to appoint or promote from a list of eligible candidates so certified.
- The Police and Fire Personnel Board shall be authorized to prepare recommendations as to the personnel structure of the Police Department and Fire Department of the City and to cause such recommendations to be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration in connection with the adoption of ordinances regulating the size and structure of the Police Department or Fire Department.

Staff Support

- Chief of Police
- Fire Chief
- Recording Secretary

Authority

- North Kansas City Municipal Code 2.24.040, et seq.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) COMMISSION

Members and Organization

- The Tax Increment Financing Commission consists of six (6) Commissioners, appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.
- Members serve four (4) year staggered term.
- Officers: Members of the TIF Commission elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary to serve for a term of one year each at the Annual Meeting. Two (2) offices may be held by the same person. A recording secretary is provided from the City as staff support.

In addition to the standing membership noted above, for each specific development proposed, there shall also be:

- Two (2) voting representatives appointed by the North Kansas City Schools for a term coinciding with the approval process for the redevelopment plan.
- Two (2) voting representatives appointed by the Clay County Presiding Commissioner with the consent of the Clay County Commission for a term coinciding with the approval process for the redevelopment plan.
- One (1) representative to represent all other taxing entities affected by a specific project, to be appointed in a manner to be agreed upon by the taxing authorities involved, for a term coinciding with the approved process for the development.

Meetings and Reports

- Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.
- Special Meetings are held when necessary.

Powers and Duties

- Hold public hearings and make recommendations to the City Council concerning the adoption of (or amendment to) TIF projects.

Special Provisions

- Quorum for public hearings and votes thereon shall consist of a majority of the Commissioners and representatives, except such quorum must include at least four members of the Commission appointed to represent the City.
- If a quorum is not present at any meeting of the Board of Commissioners, a majority of the Commissioners present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum is present.

Staff Support

- Assistant City Administrator
- Recording Secretary

Authority

- Ordinance No. 6674
- By-Laws of the Tax Increment Financing Commission, adopted August 13, 1996.
- Revised Missouri Statutes 99.800 – 99.865

N.K.C. LEVEE DISTRICT

Members and Organization

- The Levee District consists of five (5) members, comprised of owners of real estate in said district.
- Members shall annually elect a Chair and Secretary to serve a term of one year.

Meetings and Reports

- Special Meetings are held when necessary.

Powers and Duties

- The Levee District is a separate legal and financial reporting entity.

Staff Support

- Not Applicable.

Authority

- Chapter 245, Revised Statutes of Missouri

N.K.C. SPECIAL ROAD DISTRICT

Members and Organization

- The Special Road District is composed of three (3) persons, elected by NKC and Harlem area residents.
- Members serve three (3) year terms.
- Members select a Chair and a Clerk.

Meetings and Reports

- Special meetings are held when necessary.

Powers and Duties

- The Road District is a separate legal and financial reporting entity.

Staff Support

- Not Applicable.

Authority

- Chapter 233, Revised Statutes of Missouri