

Guidelines for Advisory Commissions



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Role of Advisory Commissions

City councils deal with many items; it is difficult to research each one in depth. Advisory commissions assist City councils by focusing on a particular area and making recommendations for the City council's action, including yearly budget items. It is not the role of the commissions to give directives to the staff on the City's day-to-day operations.

The City Council of Norwood Young America, Minnesota, has established the following standing advisory groups:

The **Planning Commission** is required by Minnesota State Statutes and reviews issues of land use planning, zoning, subdivision regulations, and requests for variances from existing regulations.

The **Parks and Recreation Commission** reviews issues related to the acquisition and development of parks and trails in the City.

The **Economic Development Commission** advises the City Council on matters concerning commercial and industrial development within the City and attracting new businesses and retaining existing ones.

The **Senior Advisory Commission** acts as a liaison for the senior community and advises the City Council on issues concerning senior citizens and recommends appropriate solutions.

The City Council cannot delegate its decision-making authority to advisory commissions. Therefore, occasionally the Council may decline to accept an advisory commission recommendation. This usually happens when the City Council has additional information about how the recommended action would affect the "bigger picture" beyond the advisory commission's purview and should not be perceived as lacking confidence in the commission. Residents are allowed to be on one board or commission at a time unless assigned to represent another commission.

Membership Rosters with Terms, Meeting Dates and Times

Planning Commission (3-year terms)

Name	Term Expires
Jerry Barr	January 1, 2025
Bill Grundahl	January 1, 2024
Mike Eggers	January 1, 2024
Paul Hallquist	January 1, 2025
Craig Heher	January 1, 2026
Open	
Charlie Storms, City Council	

The Planning Commission meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Parks & Recreation Commission (3-year terms)

Name	Term Expires
Sharilyn Feltmann	January 1, 2024
Bryan Rehnelt	January 1, 2024
Dan Stender	January 1, 2024
Karla Hormann	January 1, 2025
Jim Zellmann	January 1, 2025
Brooke Allen, City Council	
Bill Grundahl, Planning Commission	
Kelly Vossen (Community Education)	Advisory position

The Parks & Recreation Commission meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 5:15 p.m.

Economic Development Commission
(3-year terms)

Name	Term Expires
Andrea Gerth	January 1, 2026
Connor Smith	January 1, 2026
Jason Winter	January 1, 2024
Carol Lagergren, City Council	
Mike McPadden, City Council	
Mike Eggers, Planning Commission	
Open	
Open	
Kayla Dammann, NYA Area Chamber of Commerce	Advisory position

The Economic Development Commission meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Senior Advisory Commission
(3-year terms)

Name	Term Expires
Tom Simmons	January 1, 2026
LaVonne Kroells	January 1, 2024
Elroy Latzig	January 1, 2024
Mary Spille	January 1, 2024
Carolyn Durbin	January 1, 2025
Kay Hampshire	January 1, 2025
Lois Schultz	January 1, 2025
Betty Settergren	January 1, 2025
Cathleen Williams	January 1, 2025
Alan Krueger, City Council	
CDA Representative	Advisory position
Oak Grove Representative	Advisory position
Laurie Hilgers, Harbor Haven	Advisory position
Ranemma Walker, Harbor Haven	Advisory position
Brenda Schmitz, Peace Village	Advisory position

The Senior Advisory Commission meets on the third Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m.

Commission Administration

Selection of Chair and Vice-chair

The Chairperson shall be chosen from the commission membership annually to serve for one year; provided, however, that no Chairperson shall be elected who has not completed at least one year as a member of the commission.

If the commission deems it desirable to have a Vice-chair, the same procedure will apply.

Vacancies

Vacancies are filled in the same manner as expired terms, but an appointment only lasts until the end of the unexpired term.

Advertisement

Openings may be advertised in the *News & Times*, the City website, social media, and the City Newsletter. Advertisements include a contact number and application deadline, if applicable.

Application

Application forms are available at City Hall, 310 West Elm Street, or by calling 952-467-1800 and on the City website.

Appointment

Appointments are made by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Elected officials may consider applicants' education, expertise, and experience, as well as all that is already represented on the commission.

Compensation

Appointed members of commissions, but not ex-officio members, receive a financial stipend based on the number of meetings attended. An I-9 form must be completed for income tax purposes. Members must attend 75% of the scheduled meetings to receive their stipend.

Resignation

Commission members who cannot complete their terms for any reason should provide written notice to the mayor and send a copy of the notice to the appropriate City liaison.

Removal

The City Council may remove appointed commission members for misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in office.

Qualifications

Residency

All appointed members of the commissions shall be residents of the City of Norwood Young America. This excludes the Economic Development Commission.

City Employees

City employees may serve as regular or ex-officio members of commissions if there are no conflicts of interest.

Interest

Applicants should be interested in the commission activities for which they are applying. However, the interest is essential to be broader than one topic and encompasses most of the issues the commission reviews. A willingness to learn is more important than expertise in a particular field. A commissioner's responsibility is to make a recommendation to the Council for the betterment and benefit of the City. A commissioner cannot act in a manner that is self-serving and must recuse themselves from the conversation and vote when conflicts of interest are present. Conflicts of interest are broad, and commissioners should assess their conflicts from all available angles. Should a conflict of interest be found by a member of the commission or City staff member, it will be addressed.

Time Commitment

Commission meetings may only involve a few hours a month, but the time commitment for members can be substantially more. Preparation includes reviewing the agenda and City report, reading regulations related to agenda items,

visiting sites under consideration, learning about the issues, and developing a list of relevant questions prior to the meeting.

Duties & Responsibilities

Attendance

Consistent attendance at commission meetings is vital to discussion and action. Absence not only burdens the remainder of the commission but also shortchanges the people depending on the commission's decisions. Someone who cannot attend at least nine monthly meetings yearly should not apply. Members who cannot maintain that level of attendance should resign to allow the appointment of replacements who can make the appropriate time commitment.

Preparation

It is essential to review the agenda items and associated City reports before the actual meeting. That review may reveal a need for additional information or a site visit. At the very least, it will allow the commission member to think of relevant questions to ask. Commission members are also encouraged to contact the commission's City liaison with questions before a commission meeting to allow the City adequate time to provide a detailed response.

Participation

If the absence is unavoidable, a phone call or email to the City liaison is required before the meeting. The City will send a notice cancelling the meeting when there is insufficient attendance to provide a quorum. A quorum exists when half of the current commission seats are filled, plus one seat.

Each commission member's views are essential in reaching the best possible decision. The discussion raises issues and questions that improve the outcome. It is natural for new members to feel hesitant about looking foolish due to a lack of knowledge. The City liaison can help by answering questions before the meeting so new members can confidently speak.

Conduct

Commission members should be fair, firm, and factual as they review the issues before them. Members may hold different opinions and reach different conclusions than their colleagues, but such differences are not an excuse for disrespect. It is essential to listen to fellow commissioners and members of the public without interrupting or making derogatory personal remarks. Members should avoid letting occasional differences interfere with the ongoing working relationship among commission members.

Members of the public who become argumentative, disruptive, or abusive should be called to order by the commission chair. If a member of the public continues with disruptions, the commission chair shall ask them to leave the meeting so City business can continue.

Continuing Education

The City liaison can provide materials to assist commission members in learning more about the issues. There may be other learning opportunities through workshops and seminars. The City liaison can verify if funding is available and will arrange registration.

Dealing with the Public

Individual commission members should only speak on behalf of the commission if a majority of the members have authorized that role through a vote.

Commission members are encouraged to have contact with and gather information from the community. They may also be approached by neighbors or members of the public. When discussing issues outside commission meetings, commissioners should never promise that the commission or the City council will take a specific action.

Commission members should elevate public understanding and discourse by providing factual information about issues. They also can and should invite people to commission meetings so the entire commission can discuss topics. Where more information is needed, commission members are encouraged to connect members of the public with the City Administrator, who can often provide such information.

Meeting Procedures

Agenda

Agenda Preparation

The agenda packet is compiled by the City liaison and delivered the week before the meeting. It consists of an agenda with numbered discussion items and a written City or consultant report corresponding to each item. The City report contains background information and specifies what action, if any, is being requested. It usually includes a City recommendation, which the commission may or may not accept.

Getting an Item on the Agenda

Putting an issue on the agenda allows commission members to prepare for discussion, resulting in a more productive discussion. Commissioners are encouraged to bring relevant issues or topics they would like to discuss to commission meetings. At an appropriate time, the commissioner should propose that issue/topic for discussion at a future meeting. It is not the role of the commissions to give directives to the staff on the City's day-to-day operations.

Order of Business

Call to Order

At the scheduled start time, the Chair says, "The meeting will please come to order."

Roll Call

Absences are noted in the Minutes.

Approval of Agenda

Commission members or the City may request additions or deletions to the agenda before approval.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the last commission meeting may be approved “as presented” or corrected and approved “as revised.”

Public Comment

At Commission meetings, public comment is only allowed during prescheduled Public Hearings on specific items. Audience members who wish to speak on a topic may do so for up to three minutes after providing their name and address for the minute taker. If the audience is large, the chair may request that groups appoint spokespersons to represent them. The commission is not required to take action on issues raised during Public Comments.

Presentations for Information

Community groups or other government entities may present information that does not require commission action. Prior authorization from the City must first be obtained.

New Business

For agenda items not previously considered by the commission.

The chair asks for the City report. After City reports, commission members may ask questions for clarification, and commission opinions are not expressed.

The chair calls for a motion. The discussion may continue if a motion is made and a second is given. Motions may be made and seconded to amend the original motion. Debate may occur on the *amendment*, not the original motion.

The chair calls for a vote by repeating the motion.

The chair notes whether the motion is approved or fails.

Old Business

For agenda items previously discussed by the commission but not yet acted upon.

The chair asks for the City report. After City reports, commission members may ask questions for clarification, and commission opinions are not expressed.

The chair calls for a motion. The discussion may continue if a motion is made and a second is given. Motions may be made and seconded to amend the original motion. Debate may occur on the *amendment*, not the original motion.

The chair calls for a vote by repeating the motion.

The chair notes whether the motion is approved or fails.

City Council Member Update

Appointed City Council commission members can comment, ask questions, or request that an item be placed on a future agenda.

Commission Comment

Commission members can comment, ask questions, or request that an item be placed on a future agenda.

Adjournment

The chair states, "If there is no further business, I will entertain a motion to adjourn." If a motion is made and seconded, the motion is voted upon without debate.