

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 3, 2011

TO: Langley City Council and Mayor

FROM: The Council Process Committee (Abel and Gilman)

RE: Council Ad Hoc Committees

This memo builds on the discussion in our October 4, 2010 memo on Council Committees and our January 13, 2011 memo on Council Standing Committees.

At the next council meeting (February 7, 2011) we would like the council to consider council-based ad hoc committees with the goals of

- providing a means for the council, with the help of community members, to research policy issues and pursue innovative city projects
- establishing clear procedures for creating such committees

In preparation for that discussion, please read over *LMC 2.06.160 -- Creation of committees, boards and commissions*. (see Appendix A of this memo). LMC 2.06.160 gives the council very broad discretion in how it can create committees but provides little guidance. Some of our questions are:

- How will the purpose and scope of an ad hoc committee be determined?
- How will the chair for the committee be chosen?
- How will the other members of the committee be chosen?

These questions always need to be answered whenever a committee is formed.

Given the broad discretion in LMC 2.06.160 there is no need to make any code changes to proceed, but some agreed-upon responses to these questions would be helpful. We suggest that the council adopt, by motion, either the following procedure that addresses these questions or an alternative approach based on our discussion.

Possible procedure for creating ad hoc committees

Prior to a council meeting

A **council sponsor** proposes the **scope and description** for the committee. The **scope and description** will include:

- the name of the committee
- the purpose and scope of the committee
- the **chair** for the committee (normally the council sponsor)

The **committee scope and description** will be distributed as part of the council packet prior to the meeting at which it will be discussed.

At a council meeting

The **council sponsor** will move that an ad hoc committee be formed based on the **committee scope and description**. The council will discuss and then vote on the proposal.

Ad hoc committees cannot legally have more than two council members. The **council sponsor** may invite the participation of one other council member, with selection of that member to be determined by consensus.

After the council meeting

The committee **chair**, at his or her discretion, will invite interested community members to serve on the committee.

The energy and enthusiasm of staff is welcome, so long as staff time spent is with the mayor's blessing.

At subsequent council meetings

The **chair** will report back to the council on the committee's progress.

Appendix B gives an example of a **committee scope and description** for an ad hoc committee that one of us would like to propose the council create.

Thanks, and looking forward to our discussion.

Appendix A

2.06.160 Creation of committees, boards and commissions.

The council may create committees, boards and commissions to assist in the conduct of the operation of the city government with such duties as the council may specify not inconsistent with this code and the Revised Code of Washington.

A. Membership and Selection.

Membership and selection of members shall be as provided by the council if not specified by this code. Any committee, board or commission so created shall cease to exist upon the accomplishment of the special purpose for which it was created, or when abolished by a majority vote of the council. No committee so appointed shall have powers other than advisory to the council or to the mayor except as otherwise specified by the Revised Code of Washington or this code.

B. Removal of Members of Boards and Commissions. The council may remove any member of any board or commission which it has created by a vote of at least a majority of the council, except as referring to the design review board, planning advisory board and the civil service commission.

C. A list of all committees and appointees will be kept on permanent display for the public at Langley City Hall. (Ord. 559, 1990)

Appendix B

Proposed Ad Hoc Committee Scope and Description

Committee Name: Code Clean-up Committee

Council Sponsor: Councilmember Gilman

Purpose and Scope: The purpose of this committee is to systematically go through the Langley Municipal Code to identify places where:

- there are misspellings, typographic errors, and grammatical errors
- there are out-of-date references
- the language is ambiguous or otherwise unclear

The committee will serve as a collection point for information from staff, the public, and elected officials about such places in the LMC. The committee will also do its own review of the LMC.

Once identified, the committee will propose corrections or alternatives and provide these to the council, administration, and public for their review. The council can then use this material to update the LMC as needed.

Much of the work that committee members will do will be individually or in pairs. Meetings of the full committee will be only as needed.

Committee Chair: Councilmember Gilman

Number and Qualifications of Committee Members: Maximum of five members. Since the main work of the committee will be copy editing, members should have good editing skills.