



County of Los Alamos

Council Meeting Staff Report

January 24, 2023

Agenda No.: 2)
Indexes (Council Goals):
Presenters: County Council - Work Session
Legislative File: 16643-23

Title

Follow up Discussion and Possible Action on Boards and Commission Discussion on 8/23/22 including CDAB, Animal Shelter Ad-Hoc Committee, LARES Task Force, and Racial Equity and Inclusivity Task Force

Recommended Action

I move that Council accept the staff recommendations and direct the County Manager to proceed and return with appropriate items to Council.

County Manager's Recommendation

The County Manager recommends that Council take the suggested action.

Body

There are currently twelve (12) standing Boards, Committees, and Commission (BCCs) and one Ad-hoc committee. In total, those thirteen groups utilize almost 100 community members who volunteer an estimated 250 hours a month in just attending meetings. Generally, the purpose of a board is to serve in an advisory capacity to the County Council, but some have statutory responsibilities as well. All BCCs are listed below:

Art in Public Places
County Health Council
Environmental Sustainability
Historic Preservation Advisory
Labor Management Relations
Library
Lodger's Tax
Parks and Recreation
Personnel
Planning and Zoning Commission
Transportation
Tourism Implementation Task Force (Ad-Hoc)
Board of Public Utilities

Recently, several issues have come up concerning BCCs. Council discussed several items at the August 23, 2022 Work Session. The list of topics discussed are detailed below along with a suggested path forward:

- **Update to BCC Application and interview questions:** This effort was started with the Council Work Plan Review committee. A draft of a revised application and interview questions is available and will be distributed to Council.
Staff Recommendation: *Staff will solicit feedback from Councilors, revise the application and interview questions, and implement these changes in first quarter of 2023.*

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- **BCC Handbook:** This orientation manual describes the role of BCCs and their relationships with Council, County staff, other BCCs and the community. It also contains the procedural rules for BCCs. The last update took place in 2020.
Staff Recommendation: *Staff to review and update this handbook with regards to hybrid meetings; and substitute member assignments. This handbook would be brought back to Council for approval the first quarter of 2023.*

 - **Substitute/Temporary Members:** The idea of possible substitute/temporary BCC members was discussed. This item would allow BCCs to maintain their total membership even if one member needed to take an extended leave. Council noted that it would be helpful if the Chair of the BCC could reach out to previous members to see if anyone would be interested in short term “substitute” appointment. This appointment would still need to be brought to Council for approval but could be placed on the Consent Agenda. It was also noted that for Ad-Hoc Task Forces in this circumstance, the Chair of the Task Force with consultation of Task Force and Council Liaison could reduce the number of members of the Task Force instead of trying to find substitute or new members.
Staff Recommendation: *BCC Handbook will be updated with procedural details and revised Handbook will be brought back to Council for approval in first quarter of 2023.*

 - **Recommendations for new Boards:** In general, staff is recommending to not add additional boards. The primary reasons for this are the current difficulties with board vacancies and impacts on staff time that would take away from service delivery. In addition, we have seen recently that certain activities may not be well served by the B&C structure and process.
 - LA Resiliency Energy and Sustainability Task Force’s Recommendation GR-6: Create an on-going body of (largely citizen) collaborative stakeholders to advise Council, Department and Board of Public Utilities, and other relevant County bodies on implementing the goals and strategies recommended in the climate action plan and monitor progress. The current ESB is focused only on solid waste sustainability while the language in code indicates “environmental sustainability policies, programs, and services.”
Staff Recommendation: *It is recommended that the ESB work with the new Sustainability Manager in support of implementing the recommendations of LARES. The charter language would not need to be changed but the Board staff Liaison would be the Sustainability Manager and ESB would then fall under the County Manager’s Office for support. Staff will work with ESB to update their work plan accordingly.*

 - Racial Equity and Inclusivity (REI) Task Force’s Recommendation #1: Develop and implement an active body (board or commission) of community volunteers.
Staff Recommendation: *For the reasons previously noted, a permanent board is not recommended. Staff will, as part of next year’s budget development process, consider implementation of REI training recommendations within appropriate County programs.*

 - Animal Shelter Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee’s Recommendation: A permanent county advisory committee should be established to review shelter policies and procedures and performance.
Staff Recommendation: *Staff have been working on implementing recommendations as appropriate. Chapter 6 of County Code is currently being evaluated for modifications. For the reasons previously noted, no permanent advisory committee is recommended.*

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- **Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB):** On December 6, 2023, Council adopted Code Ordinance 02-335 A Code Ordinance Amending Chapter 8 to Repeal Article XV of Chapter 8 to Remove the Community Development Advisory Board as a Permanent Board of the County. The ordinance was published on December 15, 2022, so effective on January 14, 2023, CDAB was removed as a permanent board of the County. At least one Councilor has asked that this removal be discussed as part of this agenda item and direction be given to the County Manager as necessary.

One of the reasons that CDAB was created was to provide a mechanism to evaluate the enforcement process of Chapter 18. CDAB created and deployed a public information campaign and a community survey to provide input to Council about what nuisances are most concerning. The enforcement process has been reviewed by CDAB and any issues raised or recommendations from them have been addressed by staff and incorporated into current practices. When Council directed the updating of Chapter 18, CDAB participated in collecting usage data, analyzing such, and providing input on updated processes and mechanisms that contributed to this rewriting. Now that the rewrite of Chapter 18 is complete, any future review of Chapter 18 related issues would be more appropriately be considered by a limited-term task force or work group rather than a permanent County board. The nature of the tasks assigned to CDAB did not lend itself to B&C structure and process formats as noted by a former CDAB member.

In the past year, eight CDAB meetings were held with several cancelled due to lack of quorum. It has been difficult to fill vacancies on this board. If Council had not already removed CDAB as a permanent board, staff would have recommended its removal as part of this item.

Staff Recommendation: *Staff recommends that no further action be taken at this time related to CDAB.*

- **Review of scope and support required for BCCs and Possible considerations for realignment of current BCCs:** Council asked that staff determine staffing resources necessary for current BCCs and if there could be any realignment of purposes or efficiencies gained by reconfiguring the current BCCs. In a conservative estimate of staff time necessary to support a Board, Commission, Committee or Task Force, it was found that approximately 12 -17 hours are needed each month of staff time. This time includes agenda preparation and publishing; meeting attendance by BCC support staff, liaison, and IM staff; and video trimming and generation of minutes. That translates to almost 3,000 hours of staff time in a year. In this evaluation, the subcommittee and Task Force structures have been examined. Staff feels that overhead costs of supporting these bodies could be significantly reduced and these bodies might also operate more efficiently if they were converted to working groups. This would include the Tourism Implementation Task Force and the Parks and Recreation Board subcommittees.

Staff Recommendation: *Staff will explore how a transition to working groups might be developed and implemented. Staff will return to Council with a more detailed plan later in the year.*

- **BCC Member Orientation:** The orientation of new Board members is left to the staff liaison and Chair of the Board. This approach should be evaluated to ensure that orientation is appropriate and adequate for each specific Board.

Staff Recommendation: *Staff will perform a review of BCC member orientation and training to ensure completeness and appropriateness. This review should highlight training that is needed for all boards and what specific training is needed for certain BCCs. Staff will return to Council for consideration of approval of an updated training plan.*

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- **Council Committee Assignment List:** Staff will be updating and reorganizing this list for 2023 as part of the next committee assignment process. The updated list with assignments is part of another agenda item at this meeting.

Fiscal and Staff Impact

There will be a moderate effort needed by staff to develop and implement the suggested changes. However, the long-term impacts are expected to be positive.