



Item No. 12

Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

FROM: ANTHONY SUBER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER/ CITY CLERK

DATE: JUNE 19, 2024

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF AND APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS
TOWN COMMITTEES AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

1. Review the applicants for the Town Committees and Planning Commission and make appointments to fill vacant positions;
 - Appoint one (1) applicant to the Audit and Finance Committee to fill a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028;
 - Appoint one (1) applicant to the Environmental Programs Committee to fill a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028;
 - Appoint two (2) applicants to the Parks and Recreation Committee. One applicant will fill a regular seat for a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028, and one applicant to the Foundation seat for a 2-year term expiring on June 30, 2026;
 - Appoint two (2) applicants to the Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee to fill 4-year terms expiring on June 30, 2028;
 - Appoint one (1) applicant to the Planning Commission to fill a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028; and
2. Consider reducing the Transportation, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Safety Committee to five (5) or six (6) members.

BACKGROUND

Recruitments were conducted for the following vacancies:

1. Audit/Finance Committee (1 Vacancy)
2. Environmental Programs Committee (1 Vacancy)
3. Park and Recreation Committee (2 Vacancies - 1 Regular seat, and 1 Foundation seat)

4. Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee (3 Vacancies)

5. Planning Commission (1 Vacancy)

Recruitment for terms expiring in June 2024 began in late April. All committee members eligible for reapplication were contacted and 6 out of 7 remained interested in continuing to serve. The recruitment has been featured in reoccurring messages in Atherton Online and announcements at noticed Town meetings. Staff advertised vacancies across social media platforms, in print and digital news outlets, Town Center outreach materials, banners along Watkins Avenue, and hosted information tables at Town events.

Audit and Finance Committee (1)

The Audit and Finance Committee has one (1) vacancy to fill a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028. There is one (1) incumbent applicant for the Committee for consideration.

- Scolnick, Kate

Environmental Programs Committee (1)

The Environmental Programs Committee (EPC) has one (1) vacancy to fill a 4-year term expiring on June 30, 2028. There is one (1) incumbent applicant for the Committee for consideration.

- Farrell, Amy

Parks and Recreation Committee (2)

The Parks and Recreation Committee has two (2) vacancies. One vacancy is a regular 4-year seat expiring June 30, 2028 and the other is a Foundation appointment for a 2-year term expiring on June 30, 2026.

There is one (1) applicant for the Committee for consideration for the regular seat.

- Hunter, Dorothy

There is one (1) recommendation and applicant for the Foundation appointment.

- Merrill, Frank

Transportation, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Safety Committee (3)

The Transportation, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Committee has two (2) vacancies to fill 4-year terms expiring on June 30, 2028. There is one (1) vacancy to fill a mid-term vacancy that expires on June 30, 2026. There are two (2) incumbent applicants for the Committee for consideration.

- Jones, David

- Owen, Tom

Appointment of both incumbents will bring membership on the Committee to six (6).

Planning Commission (1)

The Planning Commission has one (1) vacancy for 4-year terms expiring on June 30, 2028.

There is one (1) applicant for the Commission for consideration. The incumbent (Nancy Lerner) has served two consecutive terms and will be eligible to be reappointed to the Commission following a minimum two-year hiatus.

- Blazer, Andy

There are a total of 7 vacancies across all Committees and Commissions. Nearly each of the eligible incumbents chose to reapply for reappointment. If Council chooses to appoint all applicants, nearly each committee will be at full capacity with the exception being the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transportation Committee.

Appointment Process

It is recommended that the Council consider appointments to the longest term first for each vacancy where possible. The City Council should announce the term for which an appointment is being considered and then vote for the particular appointment for that term. The City Clerk shall assist with voting sheets and voting shall continue until an applicant is selected for the particular term.

Transportation, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Safety Committee Membership

There has been a vacancy on the Committee since 2022 when an incumbent chose not to reapply. The Council has previously supported reducing Committee membership through attrition. The Council could choose to leave the vacancy and continue to recruit or reduce the size of the 7-member Committee to five (5) or six (6). The quorum to hold meetings would be three (3) for a five-member Committee and four (4) for a six-member Committee. If the Council opted for a six-member Committee, there would be the possibility of a tie vote on issues. For a six-member committee, the Council would be able to appoint both applicants. For a five-member committee, the Council would only appoint one applicant.

If Council supports a reduction in the number of committee members staff will revise the Committee Governing Resolution as directed.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal Area E – Strengthen Community Engagement and Transparency
- Goal Area F – Be Forward-Thinking, Well-Managed, and Well-Planned

POLICY FOCUS

The Council is not obligated to appoint any of the candidates to any of the positions and may choose to extend the candidate recruitment process as it deems necessary. The Council reserves complete discretion in appointments.

Town Commissions and Committees represent a key component of civic engagement within the community. The participation of the members is a vital part of the Town's public engagement and review process. These groups have the ability to gather public input on an issue and provide feedback and recommendations to the City Council for consideration.

When evaluating applicants for Commissions and Committees, the City Council should consider the role of each committee, the amount of oversight needed, cost effectiveness, efficiency in decision-making, and the desire of the City Council for direct policy involvement on particular issues.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders –to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item has not been before a Town Committee or Commission

ATTACHMENTS

1. Committee Applicants
2. Commission and Committee Roster
3. Committee Governing Resolution No. 23-20