

Sponsors: Knox and Himschoot

## **Discussion / Direction**

on developing options to consolidate or sunset certain boards, commissions, and committees.



# City and Borough of Sitka

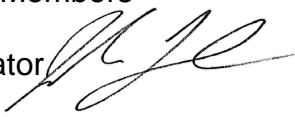
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*A Coast Guard City*

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

**Thru:** John Leach, Municipal Administrator 

**From:** Assembly Members Himschoot and Knox

**Date:** September 22, 2021

**Subject:** Discussion/Direction on City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) Boards, Commissions, and Committees

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### Background

The CBS has a long history of looking to its community to provide input on how we serve our citizens, and the role of the CBS boards, commissions, and committees is often at the center of that. There are twelve active boards, commissions, and committees, some outlined as requirements in the CBS Charter, others defined in the Sitka General Code and a few created through Assembly resolution – e.g. Climate Action Task Force.

The continuing struggle to fill seats on many boards and commissions may indicate a comprehensive review is in order. Working with chairs of boards and commissions the Administrator can determine whether there is room to streamline our boards and commissions to look for efficiencies in operations, including reducing city staff time.

A few notes about the current boards and commissions:

- Tree and Landscape has had a difficult time with membership the last few years. They're a seven-member board and currently have four members which is the minimum needed for a quorum.
- The Library Commission has also struggled with membership. They're a seven-member board and currently have five members.
- Historic Preservation has also had difficulty with membership at times. They're a seven-member board and currently have five members.
- Parks and Recreation has struggled with membership, however, at this time they're fully seated with seven members.
- The Planning Commission and Police and Fire Commission are listed in our Charter. Any changes to these Commissions would need to go to a citizen vote.

- Port and Harbors Commission and the Harbor Department are assuming more oversight of the resources at the Gary Paxton Industrial Park and associated infrastructure.

### **Analysis**

It has been over a decade since a thorough analysis has been conducted in how our boards and commissions serve our community, the governance and advisory of our services, and the invaluable work of providing guidance to our Assembly.

It may be prudent for some of the work tasked to various boards and commissions to be consolidated, as well as bringing together likeminded commissioners from various, currently separate commissions to better fill the seats on boards or commissions with historically low numbers.

Refining boards and commissions to meet the current and evolving advisory needs of the city and the assembly may provide more timely and useful guidance. Boards and commissions provide an essential pathway for community input, and therefore should reflect the needs and direction for the city to grow and address opportunities and challenges for our community.

### **Fiscal Note**

At this time, there is no intention to create a fiscal burden in addressing any changes to our board and commission structure. However, we do recognize that any changes made can have effects on the need for staff support to existing and future board and commission needs. It is the intent of having this discussion to optimize staff and community commitments.

### **Recommendation**

Direct the Administrator to work with staff and board and commission leadership to develop options for consolidation or sunset of certain boards and commissions.