

In February Mayor Blake requested that Councilor Linscott and I pull together a committee to review the recruitment and appointment process for South Portland Boards and Committees. An email was sent out to all Board and Committee members and the following individuals expressed an interest in assisting with this process;

Karen Callaghan  
Marilyn Reilly  
Linda Eastman  
Bill Laidley

Bill Van Voorhis  
Caroline Hendry  
Bob Foster

The following areas were discussed and these suggestions are submitted from the Committee for discussion and implementation;

### **Appointment Committee**

Committee members did not feel that an appointment committee is necessary. A suggestion to remove “years of residency” from the application form was made. The only committee requiring a length of residency is the Board of Assessment Review. The online application has been modified to note that requirement next to the Board name. If the Council decides that length of residency is not important it will be removed from the application. Marilyn Reilly has submitted a flow chart outlining a process that was discussed for making an appointment. See Attachment A.

### **Board member recognition**

It was decided that the annual event to recognize people who have served during the year on a committee should continue. There is a recommendation to hold a reception at a local restaurant every other year with appetizers and a cash bar. On the off year continue with a breakfast/cookout theme with Councilors serving tables. No “entertainment” should be scheduled to allow committee members and their guest to socialize. The small token gift is appreciated and this should continue.

Most of the committee members expressed that plaques do not extend a message of gratitude and are a waste of money. They did agree that a letter of appreciation signed by the Council at the end of a term would be appreciated. The member being recognized could be invited to attend a meeting and be recognized. There was discussion about whether gift certificates should be presented for extended service and it was agreed that the annual recognition event and a letter of thanks was sufficient. The individual Boards could recognize a particular member for extended years of service.

### **Transparency**

More information needs to be provided to the public so they are aware of what is being accomplished and what is involved in being a committee member. Information on all School and City Board and Committee web pages should include agendas, minutes and a description of the duties of the Board. Web pages could also highlight projects currently underway.

If there is not a city staff representative for a city committee or board, a Council liaison should be assigned to that committee. The Councilor liaison would attend at least one meeting a year and once a quarter provide a quick verbal summary to the public during "Petitions and Communications" outlining what the committees are working on so that the public learns more about them. City staff members could provide either a written or verbal summary for the committee that they provide liaison support for at that same quarterly meeting. For committees that meet on an "as needed" basis, such as the Board of Assessment Review, a short summary could be provided in January of each year.

#### Civil Service

Community Development Advisory Committee Jon Jennings or Jim Gailey

#### Conservation Committee

Economic Development Committee Jon Jennings  
Energy & Recycling Committee Doug Howard  
Harbor Commission Tom Meyers  
Library Advisory Board Kevin Davis

#### South Portland Housing Authority

Board of Appeals Pat Doucette  
Board of Assessment Review Elizabeth Sawyer  
Planning Board Tex Haeuser

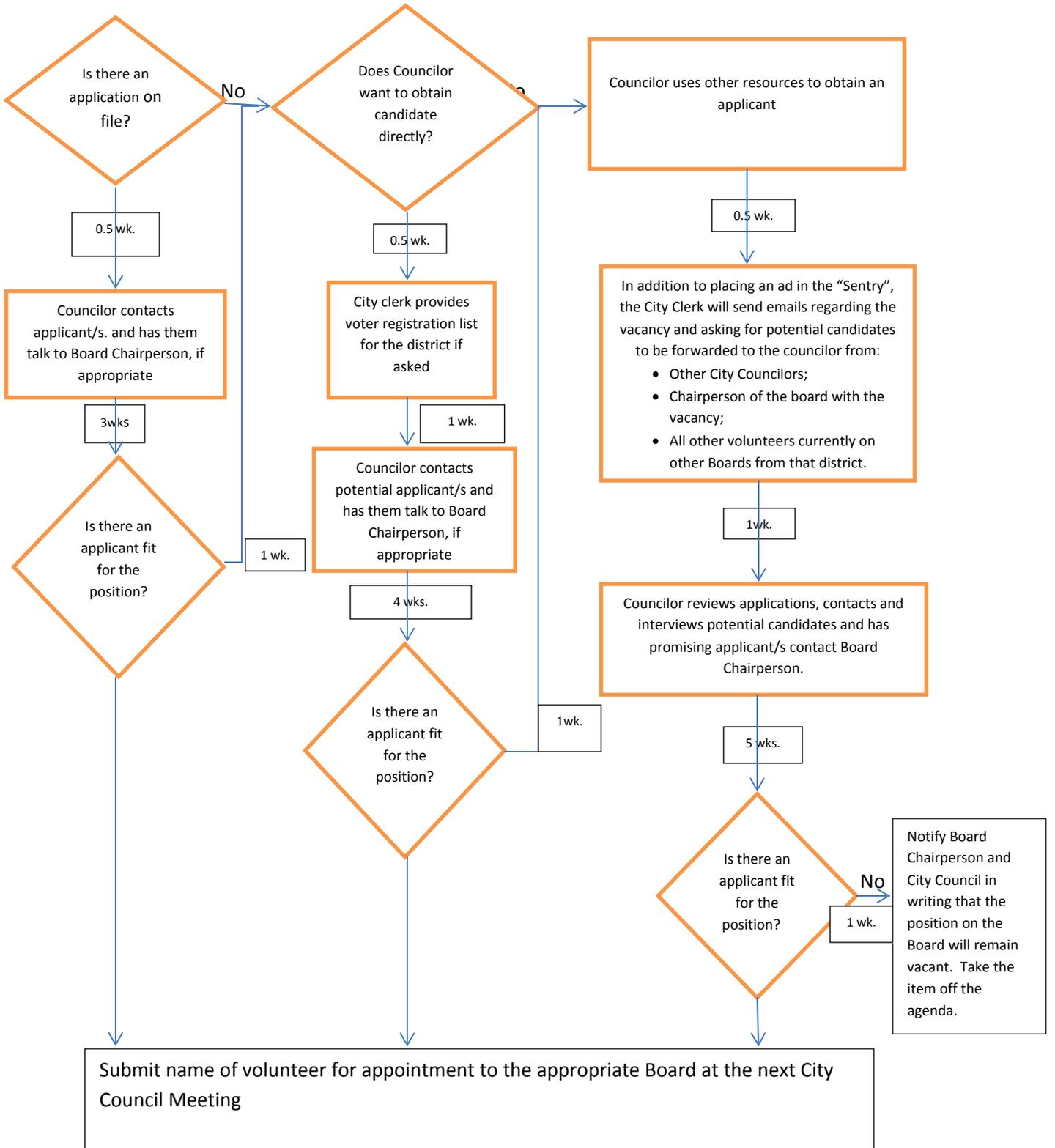
The City Clerk will contact the Chair of one Board or Committee each month and have them submit a paragraph or two highlighting that particular committee in the City E-newsletter.

From our discussions, Marilyn has also developed a flowchart of interactions between the City Council and various groups and a one page outline of Citizen Volunteer Boards and Committees which provides a brief description of each Board and Committee. These can be handed out for recruiting purposes. See Attachments B & C.

## Process Flow for obtaining a volunteer for a board opening

The attached flowchart gives the visual proposal for obtaining volunteers to city council boards. The process has two major components: whether there are applicants for the position or not. If there are no applicants for the position, the councilor decides whether they want to independently search for an applicant or have help from the city clerk searching for a candidate. The flow chart also assigns a proposed timetable for each portion of the process. The maximum time a board should have a vacancy is 16weeks. If no volunteer is found, the council is required to write to the board chairperson and mayor that the seat will remain vacant.

Proposal for recruiting Volunteers to South Portland Boards and Commissions



## Flowchart of interactions between City Council and various groups-current and proposed

In dealing with the recruitment of volunteers to boards and commissions, the committee felt that those groups needed more exposure to the citizens. The following two flow sheets show the interaction/communication between the city council and various groups. The part of the flow chart within the black box represents the interaction portion the committee was tasked by Mayor Blake to recommend improvements.

Currently (see Current flowchart), the groups obtain little to no exposure to the citizens. The only time committees in general are mentioned is when their minutes are accepted during the city council meetings and when there is a vacancy on the board. There is no communication from the city council to the boards.

The group proposed that more interaction and communication between the boards and city council occur. They are recommending that the following items be adopted (see Proposed flowchart):

From the boards to the city council:

- Send minutes in meeting monthly or as group holds a meeting;
- Yearly visit to city council by a board member (or councilor liaison) to give a report to the city council and answer question from the body. With twelve boards, this means one board per month will present to the council.

From the city council to the boards:

- Liaison primary and alternate assigned to 4 of the groups\*(see below for explanation);
- Quarterly update during council meeting by liaison councilor;
- Feedback/questions after monthly board presentations.

In addition, the group recommended the following additional exposure of the committees:

General Communication:

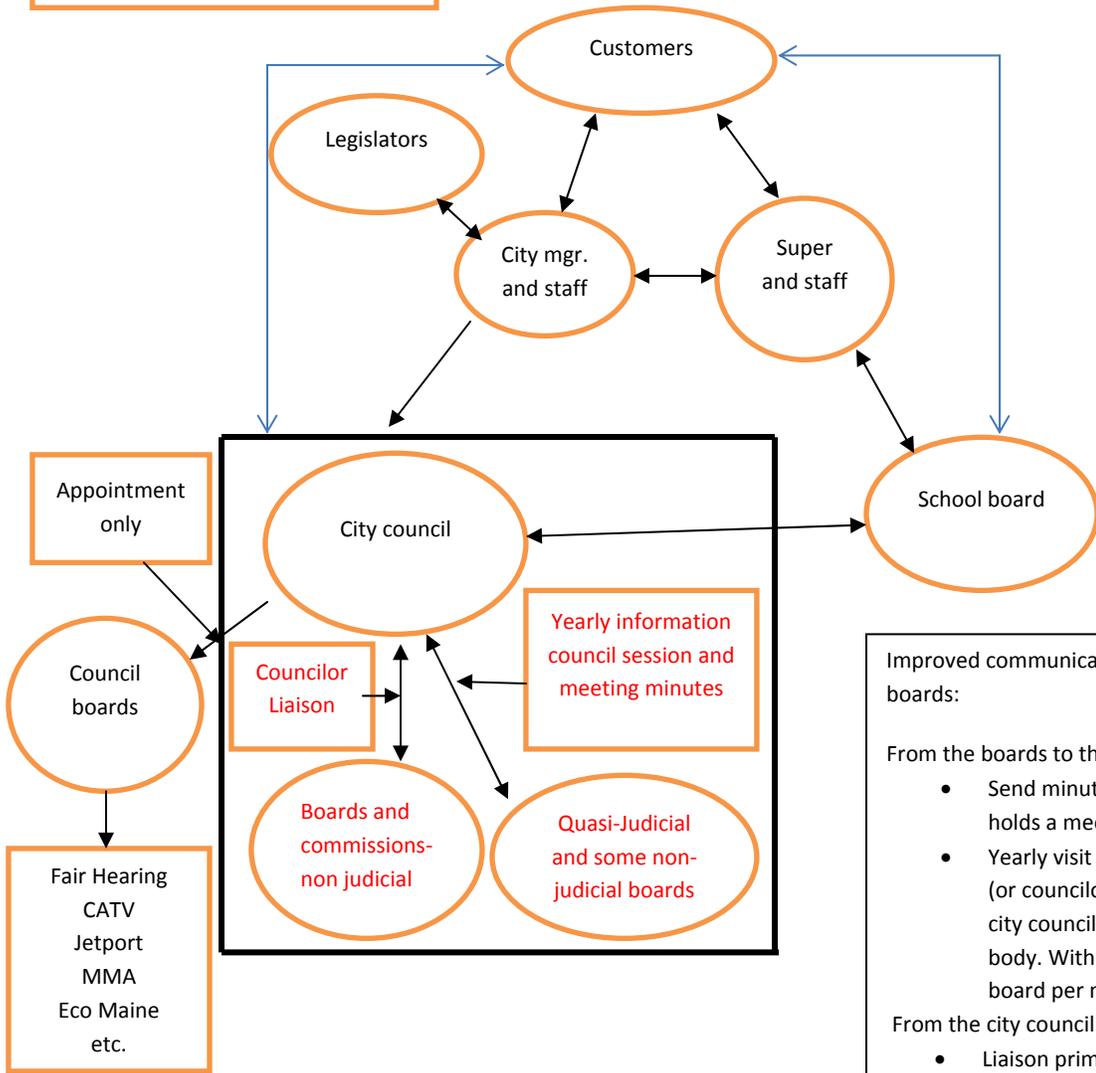
- SP e-newsletter will highlight one board per month;
- One page sheet outlining basic duties of each board will be distributed to councilors for distribution to citizens;
- Improve board web sites;

Opportunities for “meet and greet” sessions to be explored (Art in the Park?) for publicity.

\*The committee recommends that the city council appoints primary and alternate liaisons to the conservation, economic development, energy and recycling, and library advisory committees. They felt that the nature of the work done by the Quasi-Judicial committees and the Civil Service Commission should not have a representative of the council present during their deliberations. The Community Development Advisory and Harbor Commission have city staff on the boards who can act as liaisons. With five appointments total, and one appointment per year, the committee felt that the SP Housing Authority didn't need to have a councilor liaison at this time.

SP City Council  
Interaction/communication  
Model

Proposed-model plan-  
edited April 1, 2013



Improved communication regarding volunteer city boards:

From the boards to the city council:

- Send minutes in meeting monthly or as group holds a meeting;
- Yearly visit to city council by a board member (or councillor liaison) to give a report to the city council and answer question from the body. With twelve boards, this means one board per month will present to the council.

From the city council to the boards:

- Liaison primary and alternate assigned to 4 of the groups;
- Quarterly update during council meeting by liaison councillor;
- Feedback/questions after monthly board presentations.

General Communication:

- SP e-newsletter will highlight one board per month;
- One page sheet outlining basic duties of each board will be distributed to councillors for distribution to citizens;
- Improve board web sites;
- Opportunities for "meet and greet" sessions to be explored (Art in the Park?) for



## Citizen Volunteer Boards and Commissions

**Civil Service Board**-Seven residents serving for five years meet as needed and deal with all matters relating to the appointment, promotion, demotion, layoff, reinstatement, suspension and removal of members from the police and fire administration.

**Community Develop Advisory** –Seven residents serving for three years are authorized by the Federal Code of Regulations under the Housing and Community Development Act (1974) to advise the City Manager and City Council on the needs and priorities of the social, economic, housing, and neighborhood revitalization needs and allocate funding received under the Housing and Community Development Program.

**Conservation Committee**- Fourteen residents (seven voting and seven alternate) serving a three year term act as a research, advisory and advocacy group on environmental issues relating to the city. Some activities include: keeping an index of all open areas within the city and recommending programs for the better protection, development or use of those areas; prepare and distribute books, maps, charts, pamphlets, etc. that is pertinent; promotion of its open space and park plans.

**Economic Development Committee** –Seven residents serving a three years term assists in fostering a robust economy in South Portland so as to maintain and improve employment opportunities, retain existing business, attract new commercial investment, support a superior level of municipal services, and advance the general prosperity.

**Energy & Recycling Committee**- Fourteen residents (seven voting and seven alternate) serving a three year term focus on increasing recycling efforts; energy conservation, renewable energy, and greening city operations through a variety of approaches such as education, programs and studies, data analysis, ordinance modification, and public/private collaborations.

**Harbor Commission**- Two members from South Portland serving for three years are part of a five member body charged with the responsibility of regulating navigation and commerce within Portland Harbor.

**Library Advisory Board**-Seven residents serving a three year term advise municipal officials regarding the furnishing of quality public library services, and collaborates with the Library Director to develop and determine library policies, long range plans, and other pertinent initiatives.

**South Portland Housing Authority**- Five residents (and two residents from the housing units) serving a five year term work to provide housing for elderly, handicapped, disabled, and low income citizens, where they can feel safe and live in dignity.

### Quasi-Judicial Boards

**Board of Appeals** - Seven residents serving a three year term hear zoning appeals from either the city ordinance or required by law.

**Board of Assessment Review**- Seven residents, who have resided in the city for at least three (3) years and serve for three years, review disputed property tax assessments for possible abatement as granted to the board by statute.

**Planning Board**-Seven residents serving a three year term who review and approval new development or redevelopment projects.