

Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

History

Richmond's Seniors have always been a vital and active part of our community. Over the past few years, this segment of the population has grown substantially. With the aging of the baby boom generation, the projection for the future is that seniors will form the largest proportion of our society.

In order to address the concerns of seniors today, and to plan for the future needs of this growing segment of the community, Richmond City Council endorsed the formation of a Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council. The first volunteer members of the Council were officially appointed by City Council in May of 1991. A City Councilor was also appointed to sit as an ex-officio member of the Seniors Council.

A name change, from "Richmond Seniors Advisory Council" to "Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee", is proposed to conform with the naming of other City Advisory Committees.

Intent

The Richmond Seniors' Advisory Committee (RSAC) will consider and evaluate issues referred to it by City Council, City staff and members of the community. It will also initiate studies on matters deemed to be of concern to seniors and will submit information, options and recommendations to City Council as necessary and requested.

Role

The role of the RSAC is to carry out the following functions:

- a. To act as a resource and provide advice on:
 - Long-term City policies and issues which may affect present and future Richmond seniors (e.g., transportation, housing), and
 - Short-term issues related to seniors (e.g., development proposals) and other issues as they may arise.
- b. To coordinate seniors' concerns, interests and views by receiving input from individuals and groups, and making recommendations to the appropriate bodies.

Responsibilities

The Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee provides the following assistance to Council:

- Provides input on City policies, programs and reports that affect seniors, e.g. Housing Guidelines, Accessible and Adaptable Design, through a variety of lens, including gender, cultural diversity, income levels, sexual orientation, age and levels of ability;
- Monitors and contributes to City programs to ensure that the needs of seniors are considered (e.g., sidewalk safety, crosswalks, pedestrian lights);

- Acts as a resource and provides information to staff doing work that involves seniors (e.g., public involvement processes);
- Provides input on the design of seniors housing applications referred by the City;
- Works cooperatively with other civic agencies and organizations whose activities affect seniors;
- Engages in outreach to the seniors' community to disseminate information and encourage participation;
- Acts as a conduit for feedback from seniors on civic matters affecting them;
- Supports groups endeavoring to initiate and develop valid projects to assist seniors;
- Attends City-sponsored public forums to provide information on City programs and receive public input on seniors' issues;
- Submits an annual report to Council, describing its accomplishments for the past year; and
- Produces an annual work program for the coming year with specific objectives and budget by no later than January of each year.

Membership

Up to 15 members of the general public, selected by City Council, will be appointed for a two-year term, and may be reappointed.

Those selected must be able to demonstrate relevant interest in the mandate of this Committee. City Council will appoint one Council Liaison to the Committee.

Membership Responsibilities

Members are expected to:

- Be familiar with the goals of the Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee.
- Attend monthly meetings with regularity and punctuality.
- Thoroughly familiarize themselves with all agenda materials in preparation for active participation in discussions.
- Raise any senior-related concerns which they have observed or which have been brought to their attention by community members.

Officer Responsibilities

The Chair

- Prepares the agenda and any necessary supporting material in time for preparation and distribution by City Staff.
- Assumes responsibility of signing or authorizing all correspondence arising from Committee or Subcommittee activities.

- Ensures decisions made by the RSAC are acted upon in a timely manner.
- Chairs meetings and, while demonstrating knowledge of the work at hand, facilitates discussions and decision-making processes in such a way as to ensure all members a full and equal opportunity to participate. Accurately presents the views and work of the RSAC to City Council as and when required.

The Vice-Chair

- Shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the latter, and shall perform and assume such other responsibilities and duties as are assigned by the Chair.

The Corresponding Secretary

- Shall prepare a draft of all correspondence and reports in consultation with the Chair and for final approval by the Chair.
- Shall support the Chair in facilitating meetings by keeping a list of speakers and acting as timekeeper during discussions.

The Recording Secretary

- Shall record the minutes and forward to the Policy Planning Department for preparation and distribution

Operation

Elections

- The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary are elected by members of the Seniors Advisory Council in January of each year.

Meetings

- The RSAC is required to hold a minimum of ten meetings per year, or to meet at the discretion of the Chair. All meetings are open to the public.
- The Chair or the Vice-chair, or in the absence of both, one of the members present shall preside as Chair of the meeting.
- A quorum shall be at least half the membership, not including the Chair, who shall have the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

Attendance at Meetings

- Members should inform the Chair if they cannot attend a meeting. Non-attendance at three consecutive meetings may constitute a request for resignation.

Sub-Committees

- Sub-committees are the work units of the RSAC, and shall be established in response to issues as they arise, in accordance with the terms of reference of the RSAC.
- Sub-committees shall be chaired by a member of RSAC, but membership is not necessarily limited to RSAC members.
- Sub-committee chairs shall report back regularly to RSAC meetings. No resolutions or recommendations shall go forward, or action taken without the approval of the RSAC membership. In the event that emergency action needs to be taken, the Chair of the Sub-committee, with approval of Subcommittee members, may take action, but only upon consultation with the Chair of the RSAC. Any action thus taken must be reported to RSAC members at the following meeting.

Reports

- The RSAC shall produce and submit an annual report for the past year and a proposed work program and budget for the coming year to City Council as noted above under Responsibilities.

Staff Support

- City staff support and liaison shall be coordinated through the Policy Planning Department.

Code of Conduct

Conflict of Interest:

- A conflict of interest exists if a Committee member is a director, member or employee of an organization seeking to benefit from the City or if the Committee member has a direct or indirect pecuniary (financial) interest in the outcome of Committee deliberations.
- Committee members who have a conflict of interest with a topic being discussed shall declare the conflict, describe the nature of the conflict, leave the room prior to any discussions and shall refrain from voting.
- Committee members are not permitted to directly or indirectly benefit from their participation on the Committee during their tenure and for a period of twelve (12) months following their term(s).

Professionalism:

- Committee members are expected to act in accordance with the City's Respectful Workplace Policy (Policy 6800), including being respectful towards other members.
- Committee members must devote the necessary time and effort to prepare for meetings, arrive at meetings on time and provide feedback consistent with the Committee's mandate. Any Committee member who is absent for three (3) meetings of the Committee without reason satisfactory to the Committee may be removed from the Committee.

Reporting and Social Media:

- The Committee members may not represent themselves as having any authority beyond that delegated in the Terms of Reference approved by Council. Items will be presented to the Committee if referred by Council or staff and the standard process of communication is through staff to Council. Committee members may communicate directly to Council or the media, if the Committee members identify themselves as an individual, and not as representatives of the Committee.
- Any use of social media must, as with all other forms of communication, meet principles of integrity, professionalism and privacy.

Should a Committee member violate the Code of Conduct or act outside the Terms of Reference, the Committee member may be removed from the Committee.