

**ADVISORY
BOARD
AND
COMMISSION
MANUAL**

JANUARY 2011

CITY OF ST. CHARLES



ILLINOIS

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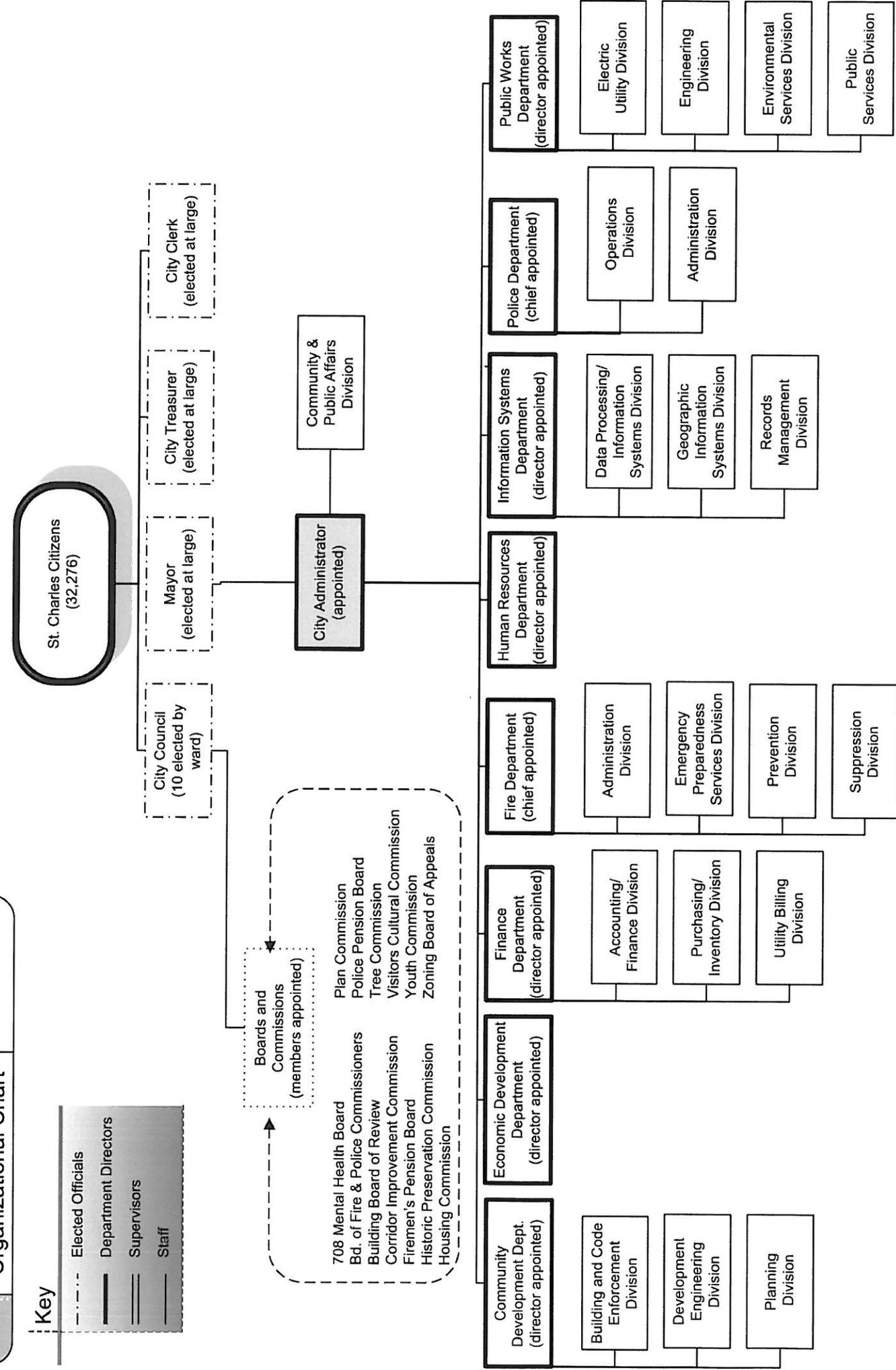
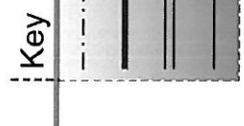
Tips for New Commissioners

INTRODUCTION

The City of St. Charles relies on the active participation of residents volunteering their time and effort to sustain the quality of the community. Advisory board and commission members exemplify this spirit of volunteerism by lending their talents to benefit the City. Appointment to a board or commission in St. Charles is an honor that brings both responsibility and opportunity. This manual has been designed to provide information on the organization of the City of St. Charles and the role served by board and commission members.

Advisory boards and commissions are established by ordinance in the City Code, which sets forth the composition and duties of each body. The Mayor recommends qualified candidates to fill vacancies, and the City Council votes to approve appointments. Board and commission member duties include reviewing items and issues at the request of the City Council or of interest to the advisory body. Board and commission members provide recommendations that assist the City Council in making decisions, and also serve as ambassadors to the community, informing and educating the public regarding the purposes of the board/commission, activities of the City, and the like.

The following materials provide general information on the City organization and its various advisory boards and commissions, including procedures and laws that apply to their activities. Please contact the City at 630-377-4400 to speak with your board or commission staff liaison regarding the role of board and commission members.



DESCRIPTION OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Number of Members: 5; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: Meets upon call of the Chairman. City Staff/Liaison: Police Chief Jim Lamkin, Lorna Marquis, Fire Chief Pat Mullen, Nonda Anderson

Intent and Purpose:

- The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners hire sworn police officers and fire fighters, conduct promotional exams, and holds disciplinary hearings.

Requirements

- Commissioners shall be officers of the municipality.

BUILDING BOARD OF REVIEW

Number of Members: 5; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of every month, and upon call of the Chairman; 7 p.m., City Hall, 2. E. Main Street, Council Committee Room; City Primary Staff/Liaison: Bob Vann. Supporting Staff: Rita Tungare, Chief Patrick Mullen, Debbie Graffagna

Intent and Purpose:

- The purpose of the Board shall be to facilitate the interpretation and administration of City ordinances governing electric, plumbing, building, fire/life safety and similar regulations of the City ("Building Regulations") and otherwise provide technical guidance to the City Council on matters relating to the same.

Requirements:

- The Mayor shall appoint five members to the Board with the advice and consent of City Council who shall be: a registered engineer or architect experienced in building construction; a person experienced in the construction contracting industry; a person experienced in fire suppression; a person with training and/or experience in electrical construction; a person with training and/or experience in plumbing construction.

CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Number of Members: 7; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: Meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month, 7:00 p.m., City Hall, 2 E. Main Street, 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Matt O'Rourke, Rita Tungare

Intent and Purpose:

- The Corridor Improvement Commission reviews all applications, makes recommendations, and administers the Corridor Improvement Grant Program, which provides 50/50 matching

grants for landscaping along Main Street, Randall Road, and Kirk Road. Grants are also available for downtown properties. Corridor Improvement Grants are awarded to property owners for landscape design services as well as plantings. The Commission reviews and approves a landscape plan, and a member will visit the site when landscaping is installed to ensure that the plan is followed.

Requirements:

- Members shall be chosen based upon their professional knowledge, commitment to the community, and who are: a design professional (i.e. landscape architect, landscape designer or artist); a land development professional; an owner or manager of a business located in the City; an “at large” member who resides in the City corporate limits, but does not necessarily own a business or work within the City; or possess other beneficial skills that include but are not limited to financial/accounting knowledge, interest in the arts (esp. a working knowledge of public art), and riverfront issues such as design or ecology.

FIREMEN’S PENSION FUND BOARD

Number of Members: 5; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: 1st Wednesday in March, June, September and December, 8 a.m., City Hall, 2 E. Main St., 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Nonda Anderson

Intent and Purpose:

- The Firemen’s Pension Fund Board controls the management of all funds belonging to or designated by law as part of the firemen’s pension fund or the administration of such funds, as provided by statute.

Requirements

- The board shall consists of five members – two members shall be appointed by the mayor; two members shall be active participants of the pension fund and elected by the active participants of the fund; and one member shall be a retired participant elected by active and retired firemen. Members will attend regular annual training as required under appropriate State law.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Number of Members: 7; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, 7 p.m., Committee Room, 2 E. Main Street, 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Russell Colby

Intent and Purpose:

- The Historic Preservation Commission reviews façade improvements and building permits for exterior work within the historic district and consults on projects for historic buildings.

Requirements:

- At least one member shall be a resident who is a representative of a local historical society or preservation organization; at least one member shall be an architect who is a resident or who works at an architectural firm located within the City; at least one member shall be a representative of the business community who is a resident or who owns and operates a business within the City; and the remaining four shall be at-large members. At-large members shall either reside within the City or own property within a Historic District, or own a designated landmark. All members shall have a demonstrated interest in historic preservation. Finally, there must be a non-voting, ex-officio member from the St. Charles Community Development Department who shall be a staff employee designated by the Director of Community Development.

HOUSING COMMISISON

Number of Members: 9; Length of Term: 3 Years, Meetings: 3rd Thursday of every month, 7 p.m., City Hall, 2 E. Main Street, 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Matt O'Rourke, Rita Tungare

Intent and Purpose:

- The purpose of the St. Charles Housing Commission shall include, but not be limited to, preserving the existing affordable housing stock, promoting public awareness of the need for affordable housing, encouraging and guiding market forces to build new homes that meet the St. Charles Housing Endorsement Criteria, and maintaining/increasing the availability of attainable/affordable housing for all members of the community by working with the private sector and major employers in the community.

Requirements:

- Mayor shall appoint five (5) members from the at-large community who are either: residents of the City, own a property or business in the City, or work in the City. In addition the Mayor, along with the approval of the City Council, shall also appoint one member representing the St. Charles Park District and one member representing Community Unit School District 303.

708 MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Number of Members: 7; Length of Term: 4 Years, Meetings: upon call of the Commissioner, City Hall, 2 E. Main Street, 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Tina Nilles, Mayor's Office

Intent and Purpose:

- The purpose of the Board is to aid individuals in the enhancement, maintenance, and/or restoration of their mental health within the context of their environment. Mandated as the local mental health authority for the City of St. Charles, the Board shall have the power to

construct, repair, operate, maintain, regulate and/or contract for community mental health facilities to provide services for City residents with, or at risk of:

- A. mental disorders
- B. developmental disabilities, including mental, retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism
- C. substance abuse
- D. drug abuse.

The 708 Community Mental Health Board reviews requests for funding and makes recommendations to distribute funds collected from the City's Mental Health tax, a special property tax levied to aid mental health services.

Requirements:

- The seven member Board shall be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the City Council. Members of the Board shall be residents of St. Charles and shall include citizens, consumers, and representatives of community groups concerned with mental health, development disabilities, substance addiction, as well as representatives of interested organizations such as local health departments, medical societies, local comprehensive health planning agencies, hospital boards, schools involved in such problem areas, lay associations concerned with mental health, development disabilities and substance abuse, as well as the general public. One Board member shall be a member of the City Council. No member of the Board may be a full-time or part-time employee of the Illinois Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities or the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, or a board member or employee of any facility or service operating under contract to the Board.

PLAN COMMISSION

Number of Members: 9; Length of Term: 4 Years; Meetings: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month following City Council Meeting (generally), 7:00 p.m., City Council Chambers, 2 E. Main St., 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Rita Tungare, Russell Colby, Matt O'Rourke, Colleen Johnson

Intent and Purpose:

- The Plan Commission shall:
 - A. Prepare and recommend to the corporate authorities a comprehensive plan for the present and future development or redevelopment of the city. Such plan may be adopted in whole or in separate geographical or functional parts, each of which, when adopted, shall be the official Comprehensive Plan, or part thereof, of the City. This plan may include reasonable requirements with reference to streets, alleys, public grounds, and other improvements hereinafter specified. The Plan, as recommended by the Plan Commission and as thereafter adopted, may be made

applicable by the terms thereof, to land situated within the corporate limits and contiguous territory not more than one and one-half miles beyond the corporate limits and not included in any municipality.

- B. Recommend changes, from time to time, in the official Comprehensive Plan;
- C. Prepare and recommend to the corporate authorities, from time to time, plans for specific improvements in pursuance of the official Comprehensive Plan;
- D. Give aid to the municipal officials charged with the direction of projects for improvements embraced within the official Plan, to further the making of these projects, and, generally, to promote the realization of the official Comprehensive Plan;
- E. To hear and make recommendations on applications for Zoning Map Amendments, Text Amendments except for Amendments to Chapter 17.32 hereof (Historic Preservation), Special Uses and Amendments to Special Uses, and Planned Unit Developments. To sit as a Zoning Commission to consider comprehensive Zoning Map Amendments and/or Text Amendments, pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/11-13-12, as amended.
- F. To review and make final decisions on appeals of decisions by the Director of Community Development regarding Design Review except for property in the CBD1 and CBD2 Districts.
- G. To review Concept Plans.
- H. In addition, the Plan Commission Chair may attend Pre-Application Meetings.
- I. Exercise such other powers as may be conferred by the City Council.

Requirements:

In making appointments to the Plan Commission, the Mayor may consider the following guidelines:

- A. Approximately half the commission should have education, job experience or significant volunteer experience in fields related to planning or land development, i.e. real estate, landscape architecture, community planning, civil engineering, etc.
- B. The remainder of the Commission membership should have a demonstrated interest in the future of the St. Charles community by participation in a community group or other activity related to the public interest.
- C. The Mayor shall not appoint more than five members of the Plan Commission residing on one side (east or west) of the Fox River. In the event a member moves from one side of the river to another, no such member shall be required to resign nor shall the Mayor be prohibited from re-appointing any such member even though the number of

members from that side of the river in which he or she then resides shall continue to be more than five.

POLICE PENSION BOARD

Number of Members: 5; Length of Term: 2 Years; Meetings: 1st Wednesday in March, June, Sept., and Dec. at 11 a.m., St. Charles Police Dept.; City Staff/Liaison: Lorna Marquis

Intent and Purpose:

- The purpose of the Police Pension Board is to administer, manage, invest, and control the Police Pension Fund and all monies pertaining thereto in the manner provided by statute and to pay beneficiaries as provided by statute.

Requirements:

- The board will consist of five members: two shall be appointed by the mayor; two shall be elected from the regular police force of the city by active members thereof; and one shall be elected by and from the beneficiaries of the fund. Members will attend regular annual training as required under appropriate State law.

TREE COMMISSION

Number of Members: 9; Length of Term: 4 Years; Meetings: 2nd Wednesday in January, March, April, May, July, September, November) at 6:30 p.m., Council Committee Room, 2 E. Main St., 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Ben Deutsch, Isabel Soderlind, Pat Konishi

Intent and Purpose:

- The Tree Commission advises the City regarding matters related to city-owned trees, including trimming, Tree City USA designation, disease & pestilence, etc. Also:
 - a. Amendment to the code, and alteration or revision of the urban Forestry Plan.
 - b. Policy concerning selection, planting, maintenance, and removal of trees, shrubs and other plants within the City.
 - c. Recommend allocation of funds and expenditures of funds by Dept. of Public Works for planting and maintenance of trees and shrubs on city-owned property or right-of-way.
 - d. Establishment of educational and informational programs including, but not limited to, yearly Arbor Day celebration.

VISITORS CULTURAL COMMISSION

Number of Members: 9; Length of Term: 3 Years; Meetings: Meets upon call of the Chairman; City Staff/Liaison: Chris Minick

Intent and Purpose:

- The Visitors Cultural Commission will encourage, support and recommend organizations that will support and promote culture, history and the arts in St. Charles. Members review requests for funding, and make recommendations for the distribution of funds collected from the share of the Hotel/Motel Tax allocated for this purpose.

YOUTH COMMISSION

Number of Members: 9; Length of Term: 2 Years; Meetings: 1st Monday of the each month, 6 p.m., St. Charles Police Conference Room, 10 State Ave.; City Staff/Liaison: Tina Nilles, Mayor's Office, Police Chief Jim Lamkin.

Intent and Purpose:

- The Youth Commission directs services and grants to support the welfare of the City's youth. The commission shall encourage the continuing betterment of opportunities for the wholesome development of youth in the St. Charles community.

Requirements:

- Of the nine commission members, no more than three can reside outside the city limits.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Number of Members: 7; Length of Term: 5 Years; Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m., City Council Chambers, 2 E. Main St., 2nd Floor; City Staff/Liaison: Bob Vann, Debbie Graffagna

Intent and Purpose:

- The Zoning Board of Appeals makes decisions on variations to the zoning ordinance setbacks, decides on fence heights, reviews appeals and holds hearings on appeals to zoning decisions.

Requirements:

- Commission members must reside within the city limits.

SCHEDULE OF OFFICIAL MEETINGS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CITY OF ST. CHARLES

Youth Commission	Plan Commission	Building Board of Review	Corridor Improvement Commission	Historic Preservation Commission
1 st Monday	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday <small>(following City Council Meeting)</small>	2 nd Tuesday	1 st Wednesday	1 st and 3 rd Wednesday
6 p.m.	7 p.m.	7 p.m.	7 p.m.	7 p.m.
Tree Commission	Housing Commission	Zoning Board of Appeals	Firemen's Pension Fund Board	Police Pension Board
2 nd Wednesday, (except Feb., June, Aug., Oct., Dec.)	3 rd Thursday	4 th Thursday	1 st Wednesday March, June, Sept., Dec.	1 st Wednesday March, June, Sept., Dec.
6:30 p.m.	7 p.m.	7 p.m.	8 a.m.	11 a.m.

- Meetings of the following Boards are held on an "as called" basis:

***Board of the Fire and Police Commissioners, Liquor Commission,
708 Mental Health Board, Visitors Cultural Commission,***

- Meetings as called will be posted in the Reception Area at City Hall and on the City's website.

OPEN MEETINGS ACT - A BRIEF GUIDE

The Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA) was created in 1957 with the purpose of promoting free and open communication between government and citizens. The OMA, along with the Freedom of Information Act, determines what types of information citizens have access to and by what method. These laws put emphasis on open communication and access to information with few exceptions made. Please find below information intended to act as a basic guide for open meetings. Additional information may be found at the Illinois Attorney General's website or in consultation with the City Clerk. You may also contact Sue Torres, the City's FOIA officer.

The OMA applies to all public bodies. This includes "all legislative, executive, administrative or advisory bodies of the state, counties, townships, cities, incorporated towns, school districts and other municipal corporations, boards, bureaus, committees or commissions of this state..." This also includes committees and subcommittees of these public bodies.

- A "meeting" as subject to the OMA is "any gathering of a majority of a quorum of members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business."
 - This means if a public body has seven members, three would constitute a majority of a quorum of that body (four is quorum; three is a majority of a quorum).
 - The act is not intended to apply to chance meetings/social gatherings as these do not include the discussion of public business. However, if a *deliberation of public matters* were to begin at a chance meeting/social gathering, this would become a public meeting.
 - This act also applies to telephone conversations, online conversations or chats (via blogs/instant messenger services, etc.) and email correspondence between members.
- The OMA requires notification be given for all meetings. This includes a yearly schedule of all regularly held meetings and the posting of an agenda at least 48 hours in advance through the City Clerk's Office.
- Minutes must be kept for all meetings and should include: date, time and location of meeting; members present or absent; and a summary of the discussion. The minutes are to be available for public inspection within seven days after the approval of the minutes.
- For certain topics, meetings may be closed. These include discussions of employment/appointment matters, legal matters, land acquisition, security/criminal matters, and a few miscellaneous exceptions.
 - The body must vote in open meeting to go into a closed session.
 - No votes may be taken in closed meetings.
 - A verbatim recording should be made of closed meetings. These recordings are to be kept confidential unless a question arises as to whether a meeting violated the OMA.

The Chart below provides quorum information specific to the City of St. Charles’s Advisory Boards and Commissions:

Commission	Number of Members	Quorum	*Quorum Majority
Corridor Improvement	7	4	3
Historic Preservation Commission	7	4	3
Mental Health Board	7	4	3
Plan Commission	9*	5*	3
Housing Commission	9	4	3
Tree Commission	9	5	3
Visitors Cultural Commission	9	5	3
Youth Commission	9	5	3
Zoning Board of Appeals	7	4	3
Building Board of Review	5	3	3
Board of Fire and Police Commissioners	5	3	3
Firemen’s Pension Fund Board	5	3	3
Police Pension Board	5	3	3
<i>*Any deliberation of public matters by this number or more Board/Commission Members, outside of a scheduled/noticed public meeting, is a violation of the Open Meetings Act.</i>			

*Please note the quorum may change based on the “number of seated members.” For example, if there are 7 seated members on the Plan Commission, the required number for a quorum is 4, not 5.

ETHICS ORDINANCE NO. 2007-M-78
TITLE 2 “ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL”

Chapter 2.44 - Ethics

Sections:

2.44.010 Adoption of Certain Provisions of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act

2.44.020 Ethics Advisor

2.44.030 Penalties

2.44.010 Adoption of Certain Provisions of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act

- A. The provisions of Section 5-15 (5 ILCS 430/5-15) and Article 10 (5 ILCS 430/10-10 through 10-40) of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/1-1 *et seq.*, (hereinafter referred to as the “Act” in this Chapter) are hereby adopted by reference and made applicable to the officers and employees of the City to the extent required by 5 ILCS 430/70-5. Three (3) copies of the Act are, and have been for not less than thirty (30) days prior to the enactment of this section, on file in the office of the City Clerk.
- B. The solicitation or acceptance of gifts prohibited to be solicited or accepted under the Act, by any officer or any employee of the City, is hereby prohibited.
- C. The offering or making of gifts prohibited to be offered or made to an officer or employee of the City under the Act is hereby prohibited.
- D. The participation in political activities prohibited under the Act, by any officer or employee of the City, is hereby prohibited.
- E. For purposes of this Section, the terms “officer” and “employee” shall be defined as set forth in 5 ILCS 430/70-5(c).
- F. This Section does not repeal or otherwise amend or modify any existing ordinances or policies which regulate the conduct of City officers and employees. To the extent that any such existing ordinances or policies are less restrictive than this Section, however, the provisions of this Section shall prevail in accordance with the provisions of 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a).
- G. Any amendment to the Act that becomes effective after the effective date of this section shall be incorporated into this Section by reference and shall be applicable to the solicitation, acceptance, offering and making of gifts and to prohibited political activities. However, any amendment that makes its provisions optional for adoption by municipalities shall not be incorporated into this Section by reference without formal action by the corporate authorities of the City.

- H. If the Illinois Supreme Court declares the Act unconstitutional in its entirety, then this Section shall be repealed as of the date that the Illinois Supreme Court's decision becomes final and not subject to any further appeals or rehearings. This Section shall be deemed repealed without further action by the corporate authorities of the City if the Act is found unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court.
- I. If the Illinois Supreme Court declares part of the Act unconstitutional but upholds the constitutionality of the remainder of the Act, or does not address the remainder of the Act, then the remainder of the Act as adopted by this Section shall remain in full force and effect; however, that part of this Section relating to the part of the Act found unconstitutional shall be deemed repealed without further action by the corporate authorities of the City.

(Ord. 2007-M-78 § 1; Ord. 2004-M-39 § 1.)

2.44.020 Ethics Advisor

- A. The Mayor, with the advice and consent of the City Council, shall designate an Ethics Advisor for the City of St. Charles. The duties of the Ethics Advisor may be delegated to an officer or employee of the City of St. Charles unless the position has been created as an office by the City of St. Charles.
- B. The Ethics Advisor shall provide guidance to the officers and employees of the City of St. Charles concerning the interpretation of and compliance with the provisions of this Chapter and State ethics laws. The Ethics Advisor shall perform such other duties as may be delegated by the Mayor and City Council.

(Ord. 2007-M-78 § 1; Ord. 2004-M-39 § 1.)

2.44.030 Penalties

- A. A person who intentionally violates any provision of Section 2.44.010 relating to prohibited political activities is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.
- B. A person who intentionally violates any provision of Section 2.44.010 relating to prohibited gifts is guilty of a business offense subject to a fine of at least \$1,001 and up to \$5,000.
- C. Any person who intentionally makes a false report alleging a violation of any provision of this Chapter to the local enforcement authorities, the State's Attorney or any other law enforcement official is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(Ord. 2007-M-78 § 1; Ord. 2004-M-39 § 1.)

ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

DECLARATION OF POLICY

The proper operation of democratic government requires that members of City boards and commissions be independent, impartial, and responsible to the "City of St. Charles," the sole purpose of which is to serve and protect the common well-being and good of the people of St. Charles.

Accordingly, it is imperative that decisions of the City and its policies be made in the proper channels of the City structure as described on the following page; that members not interfere in the management of the City or the duties assigned to staff by the City Council; that City appointments not be used for personal, financial or political gain, or to advance the interest of family, relatives, or friends; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government.

PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to implement the above Declaration of Policy by establishing ethical standards of conduct for all City board and commission members, setting forth those actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the City and its residents and by requiring disclosure by board and commission members of private, financial and/or other interests in matters affecting the City. These guidelines are founded upon the principle that there should be no favoritism or appearance of favoritism. No citizen of the City or other party (including board and commission members and/or their family members) should receive any benefit from City actions beyond that which is available to any other citizen or party because of their relation to any board or commission member. In recognition of these goals, the following guidelines are established for all City board and commission members:

1. REPRESENTATION

At no time shall a board or commission member represent him or herself as an agent of the City or represent statements as City policy to residents, businesses, vendors, visitors, or any other outside party. Boards and Commissions shall not make use of City letterhead or the City logo unless approved by the City.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No board or commission member shall engage in any business or transaction, or have a financial or personal interest, whether direct or indirect, that is incompatible with the proper discharge of his/her official duties in the public interest or that may tend to impair his/her independence, judgment, or action in the performance of these duties. Further, Kane County requires members of the following advisory groups to file statements of economic interest every January: Board of Fire and Police Commissioners, Plan Commission, Police Pension Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.

3. ABUSE OF POWER

No board or commission member shall use the power or prestige of his/her office for his/her direct or indirect private financial gain.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

No board or commission member shall disclose confidential information concerning the property, government or affairs of the City or use such information to advance the financial or other interests of him or herself or others.

BOARD AND COMMISSION ROLES

Boards and commissions serve in an advisory role, making recommendations to the elected City Board, which has the responsibility for decision-making and policy-setting. Effective boards and commissions follow an established procedure, making use of an agenda and practicing Robert's Rules of Order in the conduct of business. It is important to maintain a relationship of respect between various participants and understand roles.

ROLE OF COMMISSIONER

The commissioner's main responsibilities are to come prepared for meetings and make contributions towards board/commission efforts. Commissioner suggestions on new initiatives are encouraged, and commissioners should be willing to perform associated legwork where appropriate. An effective commissioner should endeavor to attend all board or commission meetings on time, and phone the Chairperson or staff liaison in advance if he/she is expecting to be late or absent. Commissioner attendance is critical because it ensures that good discussions, decisions and recommendations occur at the commission level. The commissioner should read all agenda packet materials prior to the meeting and be prepared to participate in board/commission discussions. Commissioners may on occasion be approached by residents or other parties, including the media, to speak on behalf of the City. Commissioners should exercise care in these situations to avoid statements contrary to the general position of the City, and are advised to direct inquiries to the board or commission chairperson or staff liaison as appropriate. Similarly, with requests for assistance, commissioners should direct inquiries to City staff, who are trained to handle resident issues, or bring the issue to the commission for discussion. Allowing staff to work directly with citizens reinforces that all are treated equally by the City.

ROLE OF CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson has several main responsibilities including presiding over the board or commission and conducting its business in an orderly fashion. In addition to these central duties, a chairperson often acts informally as the board or commission representative to the outside world. The role of the chairperson also includes compiling the agenda with the staff liaison prior to each board/commission meeting, ensuring that business is properly conducted, periodically reviewing the board's/commission's charter with members to verify that the outlined goals are being met, assigning subcommittees of the commission, and calling special commission meetings with the assistance of City staff as necessary.

ROLE OF COUNCIL LIAISON

The Council liaison's main role is to be an observer and a link to the City Council when deemed necessary by the Mayor and Council. Council liaisons are non-voting members and are not expected to steer the conversation at the board or commission level. As the City's representative, the liaison provides factual information with regards to the City and clarifies the City Board's position on particular issues when necessary. Liaisons should also update the board or commission with information on programs/activities/legislation or interest garnered through various City resources.

ROLE OF STAFF LIAISON

The staff liaison's main role is to serve as facilitator. Staff liaisons are non-voting members and should not be involved directly in the deliberations of items before the board or commission. As the City staff representative, the staff liaison provides factual information as needed and clarifies City policy if there is uncertainty on a particular issue. As the facilitator, the staff liaison is responsible for ensuring that commission members have all necessary information to allow them to make informed recommendations to the City. Staff liaisons also work with the chairperson to develop the agenda and packet information.

ROLE OF RECORDING SECRETARY

The recording secretary is charged with providing the City with draft minutes of board and commission meetings.

APPOINTED OFFICIALS GUIDELINES

The following guidelines shall be used by commissions in order to guide the actions and set the expectations for appointed officials in the City of St. Charles. These guidelines contain summaries of various statutes, rules, and regulations. These summaries provide only general overviews and should not be used to decide specific issues. Any questions regarding specific circumstances should be directed to the staff liaison.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF APPOINTED OFFICIALS

A commission shall have the duties and responsibilities as set forth in the City's Municipal Code, state statute, or other procedure or policy. Further duties and responsibilities may be assigned by the Mayor and City Council.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

In St. Charles, the City Council, consisting of a Mayor and ten council members, is the legislative and policy-making body of the City. The City Council is elected by the residents of the City and serves for a term of four years. The Mayor presides at all City Council meetings. The Mayor serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the City. The Mayor appoints the positions of City Administrator, Staff Officers and City Attorney with the consent of the City Council. In addition, the Mayor appoints all members to the City's Commissions and Boards. The Mayor also serves as the Liquor Commissioner.

The day-to-day administrative operations of the City are the responsibility of a full-time, professional City Administrator. The City Administrator provides policy advice, directs the daily operations of the City government, handles personnel functions, and is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of a budget (this includes reviewing and monitoring all expenses).

ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

It is the obligation of each appointed official to attend all meetings of their respective commission. In the event of illness or unavoidable absence, it is the responsibility of the appointed official to notify the staff liaison.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

The Chair of each commission shall be responsible for the following:

- Presiding at all meetings of the commission.
- Calling special meetings of the commission, in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act.
- Signing any appropriate documents prepared by the commission, including recommendations to the City Council.
- Ensuring that all actions of the volunteer body are properly taken.

- Conducting all meetings in a proper and efficient manner.
- Working with the staff liaison to set the meeting agenda.
- Focusing discussion at meetings on agenda items to attempt to achieve a consensus on issues.
- Ensuring that the commission's actions are consistent with the interest of the City as dictated in the policies set by the City Council.

CITY COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS

The Mayor and City Council may recommend a City Council liaison to represent the City Council and provide a link to the commission.

The City Administrator may designate a staff liaison for each commission. These staff liaisons shall, under the direction of the City Administrator, advise and provide technical support in addition to any other defined duties.

ROLE OF CITIZENS/PUBLIC

The City encourages residents to attend open sessions of all commission meetings. A formal agenda shall always be prepared for each open meeting and, where applicable, public notices shall be distributed to all identified, affected parties.

If the agenda provides an open forum for general questions on non-agenda items pertinent to the role of the volunteer body, such discussion shall be permitted. However, the open forum may be limited at the discretion of the Chair, with concurrence of the majority of the members of the volunteer body.

TRAINING

If any appointed official believes that training should be provided in order to improve the performance and understanding of the obligations of that member or the volunteer board collectively, such appointed official should contact either the Chair or staff liaison. The staff liaison shall then request that the expenditure be included in the next fiscal year's budget.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Pursuant to the Illinois Municipal Code, each public body may decide the manner in which it will hold its meetings. In St. Charles, the rules and procedures for City Council meetings are set forth in Title 2 of the St. Charles City Code. As a general rule, when neither the City Code nor other enactment sets forth a particular rule regarding a particular situation or vote, rules established in Roberts' Rules of Order will control.

RESIGNATIONS

Members of a commission who find it necessary to resign shall notify the Chair in writing. The Chair shall then notify the Mayor of such resignation. The Mayor shall appoint a replacement to fill the vacant position as soon as practicable.

STAFF LIAISON GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

ROLE OF THE STAFF LIAISON

- A. The staff liaison's main role is to serve as a facilitator. Liaisons are non-voting members and should exercise restraint when becoming involved directly in the deliberations of items before the commission. As the City's resource, the liaison should provide factual information as needed and clarify City policy if there is uncertainty on a particular issue. As the facilitator, it is the liaison's responsibility to ensure that commission members have all necessary information that allows them to make informed recommendations to City Council.

- B. The staff liaison needs to keep the Department Head/City Administrator apprised of issues that are discussed at meetings.

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMISSIONERS

New Commissioners

Each new commissioner should receive a welcome letter and orientation packet from the staff liaison. Information should include the following:

1. Appointed Officials Guidelines
2. Ethics Guidelines
3. List of all commissions, boards, and sub-committees with their respective City Council and/or Staff Liaison
4. Meeting Minutes from five previous meetings
5. Relevant Contact Information
6. Relevant City Code sections
7. Other key documents

Meeting Packets

Staff liaisons will work with the commission chairperson to develop the agenda and information for the packet for each meeting. The information provided should present a thorough background of all items scheduled for deliberation at the meeting. This packet should be distributed to all commission members at least four days prior to the meeting date. Meeting packets are to include the following:

1. *Agenda*
In preparation for each meeting prepare and post the agenda (and other required legal notices) in accordance with Open Meetings Act requirements. Meeting notices should be sent to the City Administrator's office at least one week in advance for public posting.
2. *Meeting Minutes*
The draft minutes should be reviewed by the staff liaison as well as the other commission members and included in the packet as a draft.
3. *Support Information*
Prepare any necessary handouts for all non-participant attendees, which will assist in educating interested parties and assist in framing the issue under discussion.
4. *Agenda Summary*
The meeting packet shall include an agenda summary. The memo, prepared by the liaison, will include a brief description of the contents of the packet, will provide information to help frame issues and will provide staff recommendations for items requiring a commission vote.

TIPS FOR NEW COMMISSIONERS

CITY COUNCIL

Commissions serve as independent advisors to the City Council. Keeping this in mind is important when considering the Commission's relationship to the Council. Not having the final word can be a difficult thing. It is especially hard when the Commission has a different view than the staff recommendation and expends great amounts of time on its advice knowing that it may be rejected by the Council. Do not let this discourage you. Instead, look for ways the Commission can advance their cause and strengthen its relationship with the staff and City Council.

The Council begins with the responsibility of appointing the members of the Commission. It is the Council's job to create a capable Commission with a balance of experience and expertise. The Council then leaves the Commission to do its job. The two groups have distinctly different responsibilities. Council members are policymakers. They are elected by and are responsible to the public who they represent in all its various constituencies. Commission members are not policymakers. They are appointed to work within the ordinances adopted by the Council. They work within already established policies and do not change policy based on public comment. The Commission functions like a technical consultant to the Council recommending effective ways to accomplish the general community goals requested by the Council. The Council gives a sense of direction to the Commission. The Commission then uses its specialized background and expertise to make recommendations back to the Council.

CITY STAFF

It is important that the Commission and staff agree on ways to foster a mutually beneficial work relationship. Clarity regarding roles, duties, and expectations should be viewed as a top priority. While the Commission typically focuses on the "bigger picture" associated with policy, direction, and goal setting, the chief responsibilities of staff involves providing technical assistance and guidance – and managing the many competing daily functions of the City.

Don't forget that the staff is there to assist. It is composed of very capable professional people with vast experience. Lean on them heavily. They can pull you out of many a bad spot if you give them a chance. Remember that their usual practice is to remain silent unless they are specifically asked to comment. Most of them consider it presumptuous and unprofessional to inject any unsolicited comments during meetings. Always ask them to comment prior to a final vote.

Do not take staff recommendations lightly. These recommendations are made after much study by professional people with years of experience in their field and are based on pertinent laws, ordinances, regulations, policies, and practices developed by the City Council. A Commissioner's job is to support staff recommendations with information developed during Commission meetings.

Effective staff/commission relations are vital to the overall success of the Commission's mission. Resist the temptation to micro-manage. Commission members are not expected to be professional staff. Control public behavior and never be guilty of berating, downgrading, or insulting the staff or the City. There will always be some tension between Commissioners and staff; each has different responsibilities and, often, different perspectives. Therefore, it's important to develop a creative partnership.

APPLICABLE LAW

When considering applications or requests from the public, the Commission is operating within a prescribed set of procedures and standards, as set out in state and local regulations. When someone appears before the Commission, the question is not whether or not the members “like” the proposal, but whether or not it complies with the regulations.

OBSERVATIONS

Avoid tunnel vision and the “we’ve always done it that way” approach. Be familiar with other communities with similar situations. Be able to direct staff where to search out resources. Be open to new suggestions and be proactive in the planning for the community’s future. When Commissioners are viewed as promoting their own interest, citizens may legitimately wonder about the fairness of the process. However, each Commissioner needs to be guided by what is in the best interests of the City.

Being a Commissioner can change your perception about how plans are made and cities are governed. It is very easy to take pot shots at elected and appointed officials when you are a concerned citizen. Once you have made the transition to being a policy advisor, you realize how difficult the decisions can be. You may be called upon to approve plans that are unpopular with a group of citizens. Think carefully before you respond to demands from citizens. Often a salient issue will come to the attention of citizens before you as a Commission member, have all the facts. Resist the urge to express your opinion until you are sure about where you stand on the issue.