

Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission

Commission Structure Plan – May 8, 2019

Mandate:

The Commissioners in attendance at the retreat on March 13 agreed that a subcommittee (the Structure Subcommittee) should meet to discuss:

1. The current committee structure as set forth in the Alexandria City Code, and potential alternative committee structures to more effectively tackle the Commission's priorities from time to time; and
2. A proposed work plan for the 2019-20 term to tackle the most recent priorities of the Commission, as voted on by the full Commission at the February meeting and included in the letter from the Budget and Finance Committee to City Council in March 2019.

The full Commission discussed the Structure Subcommittee's proposal, and approved it subject to certain clarifications. This report reflects that discussion, as well as previous and subsequent discussion by the Executive Committee.

Preamble:

The Commission is an advocacy body. It engages, researches, advises, informs, and—at bottom—advocates. It does not take on its own projects, but rather identifies priorities of focus, and particular advocacy initiatives it can take up, in order to elevate, or otherwise comment on the systems and projects led by others within Alexandria City that have any impact on the city's children, youth, and/or families.

Conclusions and Proposal:

Following extensive discussion, the Structure Subcommittee agreed to the following, which they submit for review by the Executive Committee and vote by the full Commission:

1. Committee Structure

- a. Committees should be aligned with the goals (Goals) of the Children and Youth Master Plan (CYMP), or any future vision document adopted by the Commission, with the addition of two administrative committees: Executive and Membership. Accordingly, following the structure of the CYMP, there will currently be seven total committees (Goal Committees).
- b. Committees should further be tasked with identifying priorities (Priorities) that either align with their respective Goals, or with an emerging issue the Commission has agreed to adopt pursuant to the attached decision tree; and further setting initiatives (Initiatives) for elevating such Priorities over the following Commission term.
- c. The Commission should prove itself to be effective in this new structure before seeking modification of the City Code, so the goal-oriented committees (the Goal Committees) will begin as ad hoc committees. Furthermore, each Goal Committee will require the same supporting tasks as outlined by the current committee

structure (i.e. research, advocacy, budget), so each person assigned to that particular task will become a de facto member of the corresponding codified committee (the Code Committees) for any particular Initiative, and everyone is effectively now a member of the Implementation Monitoring Committee. (For example, a Commissioner is assigned to Goal Committee 1, she is given the research task on the 2019-20 Initiative, she will be fulfilling her duty for the term of that Initiative on the Research & Data Committee, as well as the Implementation Monitoring Committee.)

- d. Members of the staff of city or schools who believe they have a conflict in performing tasks that advocate directly (such as testimony, op-eds, letters, etc.) should not be assigned to an active advocacy role (or be a member of the de facto Advocacy Committee), as each Commissioner should be willing and able to fulfill his or her role on a Goal Committee.
- e. The Code refers to the Executive Committee as comprising leaders of subcommittees. Accordingly, each Initiative can have a “leader” representing it to the Executive Committee without any need for “Chairs” of the Code Committee.
- f. The Outreach & Membership Committee should be referred to as the Membership & Recruiting Committee, and should include at least the current and past chairs as members.

2. Creation of Priorities and Initiatives

- a. Summary:
 - i. Each year, the CYMP Coordinator (Chelsea Eickert) will meet with each Goal Committee to discuss gaps and downward trends under each Goal.
 - ii. Based on those discussions, each Goal Committee will decide on its Priority for the year, with at least one corresponding Initiative it commits to take on and anticipate success by the end of the year.
 - iii. The full Commission will vote to approve Priorities and Initiatives, if only to ensure no overlap or enable coordination.
 - iv. Goal Committees will provide brief summary reports at every Commission meeting, but will provide full accountability reports two times per year (mid and end).
 - v. Speakers will be both welcomed and invited to address the Commission to further Initiatives in progress and inspire future term Initiatives.
 - vi. See attached calendar for additional timeline.
- b. Examples of Priorities:
 - i. Explore funding opportunities...
 - ii. Explore programs...
 - iii. Invest in...
 - iv. Increase initiatives toward...
- c. 2019-20 Priorities:
 - Goal 1 Committee Priority: Explore funding opportunities, programs, and initiatives that address and strengthen preschool, school, and community safety.

- Examples: community safety fair, community resource guide
- Goal 2 Committee Priority: Invest in college and career readiness programs, including work-based learning programs and apprenticeships; increase investment and access to early childhood education programs
 - Example: increased funding for VPI (VA Preschool Initiative).
- Goal 3 Committee Priority: Increase youth empowerment initiatives.
 - Examples: decrease bullying and substance abuse; increase children's mental health
- Goal 4 Committee Priority: Increase investment and access to programs that empower families.
- Goal 5 Committee Priority: Increase investment and access to early childhood education programs, including increased funding to address facilities, infrastructure, and school capacity.
 - Example: represent Commission in enhanced CYMP planning process
- d. Emerging Issues: In addition to the Goal Group priorities and Initiatives, if any Commissioner has identified (or has been approached with) an issue he or she wants to bring to the full Commission for consideration on account of being an emerging local, state, or national issue, the Commission will consider it using the Emerging Issues Decision Tree (attached). If the Commission votes by majority that it is an issue the Commission should take on, the Commission will then decide which Goal Group is most appropriate, and in what order of priority the emerging issue should be dealt with as compared to the group's current Initiative(s).
- e. Examples of Initiatives:
 - i. Public forum or fair
 - ii. Community or service provider questionnaire
 - iii. Written guide to information or resources
 - iv. Public testimony
 - v. In-person legislative visits or meetings
 - vi. Op-ed
 - vii. Research memo or report
 - viii. Representation in task force or work group