



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MAY 2, 2018

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING. CONSIDERATION. PASSAGE ON FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 2-4-190 (CREATION, COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION) of Article X (ALEXANDRIA BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION) of Chapter 4 (COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS) of Title 2 (GENERAL GOVERNMENT) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of an amendment to the Alexandria Beautification Commission (“Commission”) ordinance to designate three of the sixteen seats to be filled by persons with a specific expertise.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council approve on first reading and set for second reading, public hearing on Saturday, May 12 and adoption of an amendment to the ordinance amending the Alexandria Beautification Commission membership by requiring three qualified professional member seats be created on the Commission with expertise in: 1) architecture, urban planning or a historian with architectural knowledge; 2) landscape architect or landscape design; and 3) a Master Gardener, Master Naturalist or Tree Steward.

**BACKGROUND:** The City ordinance states in its section Sec. 2-4-190(b) that the Commission “*shall consist of 16 members to be appointed by the city council. All 16 members shall be citizens of the City of Alexandria*”. In recent years the Alexandria Beautification Commission has increased in the volume of projects that require qualified professional skills and technical expertise to effectively get the desired results. Areas such as sustainable landscaping and gardening, architecture, environmental design, and arts are becoming key elements of the new beautification projects. The selection process for the Annual Beautification Award is now a multidisciplinary process that requires the participation of a broad range of expertise to properly assess all aspects of the beautification efforts. The Commission is proposing that the composition of the Commission could be improved by requiring three of the Commission’s 16 positions be designated for a specific skill set, rather than all members being “citizen-at-large”. This will enhance internal processes and results.

**DISCUSSION:** It is in the best interest of the Alexandria Beautification Commission with the number of projects it has, to have qualified professional members with expertise in the fields previously mentioned. The Commission is not looking to add seats. The Commission would like to convert three existing at-large seats to seats requiring specific skill sets. These specific skills are described in the proposed amendment. At this time, it is also recommended by staff that as part of the ordinance clean up that the specific language that the Beautification Commission be comprised entirely of citizens of the City of Alexandria be amended to delete this language. Such a residency requirement exists in the overall Board and Commission ordinances as well as the ability of Council to waive that requirement. Hence, it is also not needed within the specific Beautification Commission Ordinance.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Letter from Alexandria Beautification Commission
2. Alexandria Beautification Commission Transition Plan Memo
3. Ordinance Cover
4. Ordinance

**STAFF:**

Adrienne Sakyi, Assistant City Attorney

Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager

James Spengler, Director, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities