

Today's report includes a review of all the various committees that receive County staff support, including attending their meetings. The review provides a status update on the utilization, purpose and need of each of the committees, the time and General Fund cost of County staff incurred in providing support and/or attending meetings, committee membership attendance, and the ability to have a quorum, and the committee's effectiveness. The Boards, Commissions and Committees Review Table (Attachment A) provides an informational summary of each of the various committees that were reviewed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of preparing this countywide status report for all the various committees is borne by the departments providing staff support to the advisory bodies and is included in their existing budgets. The County cost to support each of the various committees can be found on Attachment A.

DISCUSSION:

County government includes standing and special citizen boards, commissions, committees and task forces formed to advise the Board of Supervisors and County staff on issues and policies and to serve as links to the community. County committees are also created as a result of State and Federal legislation, agreements with public or private agencies, and local needs. Committees also advise the Board of Supervisors on issues relating to the welfare and quality of life in the County. They provide an inter-relationship between the citizens and the government of the County. Each focuses on specific issues or topics such as health and human services, criminal justice, elderly, planning, land use, parks, libraries, housing and others.

A review was completed of all the various committees that receive County staff support, including attending meetings, to evaluate the utilization, purpose and need of each of them, the time and General Fund cost of County staff to provide support to them and/or attend meetings, membership attendance, ability to have a quorum, and general effectiveness.

The review of the various committees was evaluated based on the following factors:

- 1) Has the purpose for which the committee was established become broader or narrower, and is it still consistent with Board of Supervisors' goals or priorities?
- 2) Is there a continuing need for the committee, or has the purpose concluded?
- 3) Have there been violations of County policy, such as the Brown Act or legislative mandates?
- 4) Is there an ability to maintain a quorum of membership attendance?
- 5) Due to recent actions related to addressing the General Fund's structural deficit, has there been a reduction in or lack of resources, including General Fund funding for County staff support to the committee?
- 6) Is the committee discretionary?
- 7) Is there an opportunity to consolidate and/or reorganize committee(s) to better facilitate outcomes, creating efficiencies in serving multiple purposes?

The Boards, Commissions and Committees Review Table (Attachment A) provides an informational summary for each of the various committees and includes the County department providing support, the estimated General Fund cost for staff to provide support and/or attend meetings, number of meetings lacking a quorum, and how or why each committee was established. Based on the review, the following recommendations have been provided in the Table for each committee:

- 1) Retain committee as is.
- 2) Reduce number of required annual meetings due to reductions in or lack of resources, including General Fund funding for support staff.
- 3) Reduce the membership size of the committee, due to the committee's inability to maintain a quorum for meetings.

- 4) Dissolve committee.
- 5) Merge committee with another committee to create efficiencies.

Based on the criteria mentioned above, the County Administrator's Office recommends the following:

- 1) Agricultural Advisory Committee (discretionary): The Committee lacked a quorum 2 out of 10 meetings in the past attendance reporting cycle; however, the Committee has reviewed the quorum requirements and feels that they have addressed the issue by adjusting the current meeting schedule to allow for more attendance during harvest season, by eliminating the July meeting and scheduling an August meeting. In addition, a Committee member is now recording the minutes of the meetings, relieving staff of this duty. Also, a language change is recommended to the Bylaws concerning the definition of a quorum which is predicated on the fact that not all positions are filled and that the current criteria hinders the Committee's effectiveness when a member is absent. The Bylaw change will be presented to the Board in the near future, and if accepted should resolve this issue.
- 2) Agricultural Grievance Committee: Per County Ordinance, requires 5 regular members (recommended by the Solano County Farm Bureau who receive a majority of their income from farming) to be appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve three-year terms. This Committee has no current appointed members and has not met in over 15 years. Staff recommends revising County Ordinance section 2.2-60 regarding membership requirements and the ability to meet on an as-needed basis, as an ad-hoc committee. It is recommended that the membership consist of one member selected by the Solano Farm Bureau President, one member selected by the Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and one member selected as a subject matter expert by the University of California's Cooperative Director. If affirmed by the Board, staff will return to the Board for approval in the near future. While most disputes over abatements and ag-urban interface conflicts have been resolved through mediation by the Agricultural Commissioner, having the Grievance Committee as a final administrative step before going to the Board of Supervisors or to court is still important. This Committee's existence is a useful negotiation tool during mediation.
- 3) Animal Care Advisory Committee (discretionary): Committee lacked the needed quorum to conduct business 6 out of 12 meetings primarily due to Committee member illnesses during the past attendance reporting cycle. However, the Committee is currently maintaining the quorum needed to conduct business and no changes are recommended at this time.
- 4) Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC): consider merging the with the Children's Alliance. The two groups have distinct but overlapping interests, categories of membership and mandates. Each has experienced difficulty with ensuring quorums. A merged group would eliminate the necessity to have liaison members between the two groups, help member organizations reduce their time and cost of participating and ensure these organizations continue to function with maximum effectiveness.

If the Board approves the merger of the CAPC and Children's Alliance, County staff will work with the Children's Network of Solano County (which currently staffs and serves as fiscal agent for both groups) and the membership of these groups to draft a new set of Bylaws that features membership categories designed to fulfill the mission of these groups and maximize their effectiveness, while ensuring that legal mandates are addressed. These Bylaws will be brought forth for the Board's review and approval in a timeframe consistent with a launch of the merged entity as of July 1, 2012.

In an effort to consolidate contract administration the suggestion is to transfer oversight and contract management of Children's Alliance from Health and Social Services to the County Administrator's Office, First 5 Division.

- 5) Reaffirm that the Historical Records Commission (discretionary) is an advisory board/commission of the Board of Supervisors and designate General Services as the County supporting department to provide oversight as part of the County records management function and to manage and direct the Commission's volunteers and the historical records facility.

- 6) Senior Coalition of Solano County Advisory Board: oversight is currently contracted out for an annual cost of \$45,000. This will be reviewed as part of the FY2012/13 budget process.

Below is a summary of recent changes to other boards/committees:

- 1) Health and Social Services and Family Justice Committee: regular meetings were suspended by the Board on January 10, 2012, as a result of decreased non-profit attendance, which is possibly due to the current economic climate, and lack of ability to have a quorum.
- 2) Law and Justice Committee: regular meetings were suspended by the Board on January 10, 2012, while staff work on implementation of AB 109.
- 3) There are no proposed changes to the Public Art Committee at this time. However, in the near future, there is renewed interest in expanding an existing program for local artists to display their art work in County buildings as a way to promote and provide exposure to the artists and as well as their work. The Public Art Committee could administer this program in much the same way as it administered the selection, commissioning and installation of major public arts in the new construction of County buildings.

ALTERNATIVES:

- a) The Board may choose not to accept all or part of this report regarding the need and utilization of the various committees; however, this is not recommended as the report provides an informative overview of all the various committees that staff provide support to and/or attend meetings.
- b) The Board may choose not to accept recommendations outlined in this report; however, this is not recommended as implementation of the recommendations will create efficiencies by reducing staff time and General Fund cost to support the various committees.
- c) The Board may choose to direct the various departments who provide support staff to prepare follow-up agenda items on any of the individual committees.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The County Administrator's Office has worked with staff from the Agricultural Commissioner's Office, Human Resources, Clerk of the Board, County Counsel, Health and Social Services, Sheriff, District Attorney, Probation, Library, Parks, Animal Care Services, First 5, Veterans Services, Resource Management and General Services to review and provide the information in this report.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION