

Highlights

Why We Did This Audit

City Council committees discussed the management and oversight of city boards following the release of our two audit reports assessing board governance practices:

- [2023 Governance Assessment: Component Unit Boards and Commissions](#)
- [2023 Governance Assessment: Other Governing and Policy Boards](#)

Objective

Do boards and commissions follow requirements established in city and state legislation?

This audit focuses on survey responses from board chairs in spring of 2024.

Background

Boards, commissions, and similar groups such as task forces (“boards”) fulfill a variety of functions for the city. These range from providing policy and funding recommendations to overseeing important public functions and activities. Boards influence the city’s decisions and actions across a variety of topics such as public safety, climate protection, ethics, public improvements, and economic development.

Although these boards operate mostly independently, there are rules and procedures they must follow. City and state legislation establish rules related to transparency, operation, and accountability for boards. These requirements include Missouri’s Sunshine Law and the city’s standing rules for boards, commissions, and task forces.

[Click here to view the full report.](#)

PERFORMANCE AUDIT – September 2024

City Should Confirm Need for Inactive Boards, Provide Training on Board Operating Requirements

What We Found

City boards need to be reviewed to determine if certain boards should be eliminated from city code or the city clerk’s website. Nearly half of the boards we intended to survey appeared inactive. Most of these boards have not met within the last year or we were unable to identify a chair to contact.



Not all references to boards are removed after dissolution. Six boards are still listed in city code and two boards remain on the city clerk’s website after they no longer exist.

We received completed surveys from 40 city boards. Most boards reported following city and state legislation. Nearly all boards reported they post meeting notices and agendas. All but two boards reported keeping meeting minutes. About one quarter of the boards reported submitting meeting minutes to the city clerk. Sending meeting notices and meeting minutes to be posted on the city clerk’s website is not a requirement for boards, but centralizing this information can improve transparency.

Boards may be confused about submitting financial disclosure forms. Some boards reported they did not need to file but are required to in city code. Other boards reported they filed a form but are not required to in city code. Most boards reported their meetings are open to the public and the chair completes roll call. More than half the boards reported they do not know how the board meets the city’s records management policies. Developing a training program can increase understanding of various requirements.

What We Recommend (full list on back)

We make five recommendations to improve transparency and ensure boards are operating as intended. We recommend the Mayor’s Office prepare an ordinance to update city code, direct staff to update boards information and develop a training program.

The Mayor’s Office agreed with all the recommendations.



**KANSAS CITY
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Recommendations	Management Agreement
1. The Mayor’s Office should consider reviewing boards reported as inactive to determine whether they should be dissolved and either prepare an ordinance to remove the board from city code and direct removal from the city clerk’s website; or take steps to ensure board is fulfilling its purpose.	Agree
2. The Mayor’s Office should direct the city attorney to prepare an ordinance to update or remove references and address conflicting information in city code for the following boards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness in City Contracts Board • Global Commission Kansas City • Health Commission • Independence Avenue Special Review Districts • Land Trust of Jackson County • Main Street Special Review Board 	Agree
3. The Mayor and City Council should clarify how they would like boards created by means other than ordinance or resolution to publish board meeting notices and agendas and potentially include this requirement in contract and service agreements.	Agree
4. The Mayor’s Office should introduce an ordinance for City Council consideration to update city code section 2-732, city boards’ standing rules, to require boards to send their meeting minutes to the city clerk and consider updating operating agreements to include similar requirements with outside boards.	Agree
5. The Mayor’s Office should direct city staff to develop a training program to ensure board members’ understanding of various requirements in city and state legislation.	Agree

