

## **PROCEDURE FAQs**

### **1. What is the procedure when a citizen comes to the HCC body or a specific member with an issue they would like to have addressed?**

Example 1: Someone comes to a district representative and expresses concern about major changes that will be happening within the subsidized housing system in their district. In response to this, the Chair goes to the next Helena Housing Authority Meeting, does any necessary additional research, and writes an informational letter to the HCC representatives and the city commission explaining the concerns that have been brought forth in light of the current issue.

Example 2: Someone came to the HCC and said that the flashing lights on the casinos along Prospect Avenue were hazardous to drivers. We look over the ordinance, which turns out to be complaint-driven. We tell the person that they must make a formal complaint to the city in order for any action to be taken and give them the proper contact information. If the debate should be discussed further, the issue is put onto the HCC monthly agenda and possibly on the quarterly district meeting agendas.

### **2. What is the procedure if a commissioner comes to the HCC with an issue they would like citizen input on?**

HCC members or the coordinator will complete any research that needs to be conducted concerning the issue (i.e. city ordinances or state law regulating the issue, etc). The issue is put onto the next HCC agenda or directly onto the district/neighborhood meeting agendas if necessary. Feedback may be reported directly back to a specific member of the city commission or may be presented to the city commission through a report at an administrative or commission meeting. The HCC may also use the information gathered to make a formal recommendation to the commission.

### **3. What is the procedure for reporting relevant issues to our constituents? Examples of this often have to do with money: raises in fees or bonds citizens can vote on.**

If appropriate within the time constraints, the HCC can assign a speaker to come to district or neighborhood meetings to educate the citizens about the issue. This person could be from a city department or simply someone who is educated about the subject. HCC representatives are also encouraged to educate themselves on a particular subject and present it to the neighborhood. Other methods for disseminating information to the public are through the monthly HCTV show, radio spots on KMTX and KBLL (AM), contact with news reporters at the Independent Record and the Queen City News, and letters to the editor. If necessary, a public meeting may be hosted by the HCC or a particular district within the HCC.

#### **4. How and when does the HCC make recommendations?**

"...Operating independently from the City Commission or City Officials, the HCC shall advise the City Commission of the various problems relating to the annual budget and make recommendations relating to the future development of the City" (HCC By-Laws: Article 1, Section 1).

Recommendations allow the HCC to present information about specific issues to the city commission and propose solutions to these issues as a group. The commission is not bound by a recommendation, but it is hoped that a recommendation from the HCC is representative of the majority of citizens' beliefs. A standard format is used for all recommendations, which can be found on the following pages.

The HCC will make a recommendation to the city commission when it has sufficient evidence from the citizens that there is a distinct sentiment with regard to a certain issue.

The city commission may also request citizen input on certain issues. The HCC may take an issue back to neighborhood or district meetings for discussion, report back to the HCC body, and the HCC may make a recommendation to the commission based on these neighborhood discussions as well as common opinion among HCC representatives.