

## **Background**

The successful operation of a municipality is a complex task requiring the time and effort of many people. Many times the elected officials and employees have insufficient time or expertise to personally become involved in every aspect of Township government. The First Class Township Code and state legislation allow the Board of Commissioners to enlist the capabilities of citizens of the municipality through the creation of Authorities, Boards and Commissions. Although some of these entities are mandatory, such as a Zoning Hearing Board if the municipality has enacted a zoning ordinance, many others are permissive. The concept of Authorities, Boards and Commissions not only allows the municipality to draw on citizens with particular expertise, but also provides a channel for citizens to become more directly involved in their government.

In Upper Allen Township, the members of Authorities, Boards and Commissions serve without pay and their primary reward is the satisfaction derived from helping the people of the Township. When the opportunity to recommend appointments to an Authority, Board or Commission exists, such appointment should reflect as large a cross section of the Township as possible. It is therefore desirable to attempt to appoint people with different interests.

Since many appointed offices are semi-independent of the governing body, such as the Zoning Hearing Board or municipal authority, it is especially important that the persons appointed have certain personal qualifications such as patience, understanding, courteousness, reasonableness and fairness. The governing body should attempt to utilize people who can make unbiased judgments that reflect the best interest and views of the majority of Township residents.

## **Purpose**

The primary purpose for establishing these procedures is to document the responsibilities of the various Township boards and commissions and the procedures for filling vacancies on various boards and commissions due to death, disqualification, resignation or removal of a member. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) establishes the basic legislation for a municipality in Pennsylvania to plan for community development through a comprehensive development plan through zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances. The Act provides for the establishment of Planning Commissions, Planning Committees and Zoning Hearing Boards, and authorizes these bodies to charge fees, make inspections and hold public hearings.

The term of office for several of the boards or commissions is also regulated by the MPC or by the local governing body if not specifically addressed in the MPC. Term length on each board or committee will be staggered so that a maximum of 50% of its member's terms expire at any one time. The purpose for having staggered terms is to keep continuity on the board while new members become knowledgeable about the process.

Solicitation for volunteers to fill vacancies may be by advertising in the Township newsletter, Board of Commissioners recommendation, word of mouth, and by advertising on the Township

website. Potential candidates may be selected from a pool of names on file with the Township. Interested candidates should complete the Volunteer Form in the back of this document or submit a letter of interest and explain any relevant experience or training on the enclosed form that may be of interest to the committee. While experience and training is not required, it is desirable.

### **Vacancy Selection/Appointment Process**

A recommendation for selection will be made by a selection committee comprised of the commissioner liaison (primary and/or alternate), and committee chair and/or vice chair. Upon notice of vacancy, the Township Manager will forward all relevant applications on file to the selection committee. Interviews may be conducted over the telephone or in person (preferred method). At the completion of the interview process the selection committee will forward its recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval. Once approved, the individual will finish the remaining term, unless removed from the relevant board, commission or authority.

### **Reappointment**

The reappointment of existing committee or board members is not automatic. Upon bi-annual consideration at the Board of Commissioners reorganization meeting, the Board will gather input from the commissioner liaison and committee chair and may remove an existing member at its discretion or at the recommendation of a committee, board, or authority chair and appoint a new member.

### **Training**

Training is available throughout the year by various agencies on planning, zoning and recreation issues. The Township may have funds available for board members who want to attend formal training. If interested in finding out about what training is available, please feel free to contact the appropriate Township official for information. All training requests must first be approved by the appropriate committee chair before registering for training.

### **Resignation**

The Township requests that a written notice of resignation be forwarded to the Authority, Board, or Commission Chair and to the Commissioners at least 30 days before the effective date so there is sufficient time to find a replacement. The written notice to the Board of Commissioners shall come from the member resigning, with confirming copy from the appropriate committee chair.

### **Removal of Committee Members**

Any Board member may be removed for malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance in office or for any other just cause by a majority vote of the Township Commissioners, taken after the member has received fifteen (15) days' notice of the intent to take such a vote. Such action shall be taken at a public meeting. Any appointment to fill a vacancy created by removal shall be only for the unexpired term.

## Boards and Commissions

### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission consists of seven (7) members who must be residents of the Township. The Planning Commission plays a major role in giving advice and providing recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on matters of community growth and development. The Planning Commission can be a fact finder by holding public hearings and/or meetings to filter concerns and ideas from citizens. It can serve as a sounding board for new or innovative concepts. A commission can then report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Commissioners for action. The Planning Commission members give the elected officials an opportunity to expand their contact and understanding of community concerns. The normal appointment term is four (4) years. The Planning Commission usually meets on the last Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (For additional details see copy of Ordinance at APPENDIX A.)

Chairman  
Vice Chairman  
Five additional members

### Sewer Advisory Board/Authority

The Sewer Advisory Board/Authority consists of a minimum of five-members appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Sewer Advisory Board's major role is to advise and make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on all aspects of the sewer system including extensions, rate schedules, intermunicipal agreements, financing, planning, construction guidelines, operations, maintenance and repairs. The normal appointment term is five (5) years. Meetings are normally held on the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Special meetings are held as necessary and may occur infrequently during normal business hours. (For additional details see copy of Ordinance at APPENDIX B.)

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Secretary  
Two additional members

### Zoning Hearing Board

Any Township that has enacted a zoning ordinance must appoint a Zoning Hearing Board. The board's purpose is to hear appeals on the validity of the zoning ordinance or map or any decision of the zoning officer. In addition, the board has the power to grant variances and special exceptions to the ordinance. The Zoning Hearing Board is a three-member quasi-judicial board consisting of residents of the municipality who may hold no other elected or appointed office. The Zoning Hearing Board acts independently and does not answer to the Board of Commissioners. The normal appointment term is five (5) years. Meetings are normally held on

the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. (For additional details see copy of Ordinance at APPENDIX C.)

Chairman  
Two additional members

### **Park and Recreation Board**

The Board shall be composed of seven (7) members to be appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Board shall have the power to provide and maintain public recreation areas and facilities, subject to all of the responsibilities of Article XXX of the First Class Township Code. The Board members shall serve for terms of five (5) years. The terms of no more than three (3) members shall expire in any given year. Meetings are normally held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. (For additional details see copy of Ordinance at APPENDIX D.)

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Five additional members

### **Police Civil Service Commission**

The commission consists of three members who have the power to provide for the examination of applicants for positions and promotions, establish minimum qualifications for positions, test applicants for appointments and provide hearings in cases of dismissal or reductions in rank for those employed under civil service status. The normal appointment term is six (6) years. The members of this commission meet on an as needed basis.

### **Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB)**

The Historical Architectural Review Board is composed of seven (7) members appointed by the governing body. One (1) member shall be a registered architect; one (1) shall be a licensed real estate broker; one (1) shall be the Building Inspector of the Township; and four (4) shall be persons who own property and reside in one of the Historic Districts and who have a knowledge of and interest in the preservation of the Historic District.

HARB members shall each be appointed for a term of five (5) years, and the terms of no more than two (2) members shall expire in any one (1) year. Persons appointed to HARB must show interest and/or knowledge in historical districts or structures. The members of the HARB meet on an as needed basis on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (For additional details see copy of Ordinance at APPENDIX E.)

