

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****August 4, 2020**

Page 1 of 2

SUBJECT: THE APPOINTMENTS PROJECT

Mayor Price has publicly announced the goal of reaching gender parity and greater diversity for the City of Fort Worth's boards and commissions, in partnership with the Appointments Project®. The Appointments Project works to strengthen communities by increasing the gender diversity of civic boards and commissions.

Overview

Numerous studies of boards and group dynamics document multiple benefits of diverse voices and viewpoints. Diversity drives innovation, by allowing ideas that are "out of the box," and creating a culture where the ideas of all members are heard, creativity is facilitated, and problem solving is maximized.

A diverse board or commission also provides better representation of the organization's stakeholders, including clients, constituents, and the broader community. Such boards are able to more effectively leverage the needs of underserved groups and markets, understand the broader culture and context within which the organization is embedded, and represent the concerns of those served.

About the Appointments Project

The Appointments Project® was established based on a study conducted by the Women's Foundation in 2014, in an effort to identify the barriers causing women to be underrepresented on civic boards and commissions. The research showed that women are less likely to apply to serve on boards and commissions because they are not asked to serve or generally feel that they do not have the needed expertise to serve, and they want to ensure their time is spent efficiently. The research also showed that women would be more likely to serve when exposed to greater training and mentorship opportunities. Since that time, the Appointments Project has worked with organizations to serve as a talent bank, advisor, and advocate for women seeking opportunities to serve on boards and commissions. This award-winning program provides on-line training, candidate tool kits, and the expertise to make a significant impact in Fort Worth.¹

The Current State of Boards and Commissions

Currently the City of Fort Worth's 322 board and commission seats are made up of 36% female and 64% male representatives. The goal of the Appointments Project is to partner with city and other civic organizations to provide training and recruitment that would result in an increase of diverse, qualified candidates for boards and commissions and ultimately more diverse boards that better reflect the community.

¹ "Key Findings from the KU study commissioned by the Women's Foundation"

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/545815dce4b0d75692c341a8/t/54c17203e4b063fc8ab0b6d3/1421964795071/Women%27s+Foundation+Research+Findings+2.pdf>

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****August 4, 2020**

Page 2 of 2

SUBJECT: THE APPOINTMENTS PROJECT**Next Steps**

The City Secretary's Office, the Diversity and Inclusion Department and the Mayor's Office have been engaged with the Appointments Project and are currently identifying community partners that will work with The Appointments Project to help train, mentor, and encourage qualified candidates to apply for positions on city boards and commissions.

Application processes and appointment procedures will not change. What is changing is the increased focus, public training, and partnerships supporting qualified community leaders to apply to serve on boards and commissions. Staff will provide an update on this initiative in six months or at the request of City Council.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact Chelsea Adler, Chief of Staff to Mayor and Council at 817-392-6363 or chelsea.adler@fortworthtexas.gov.

David Cooke
City Manager