



City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk
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Legislation Text

File #: 1079-2016, **Version:** 2

BACKGROUND: This ordinance creates the new Department of Neighborhoods and makes the needed code changes to ensure that the new department has all the necessary tools and resources it will need to better deliver more comprehensive services to Columbus' diverse neighborhoods. This new department will streamline the reporting structure and increase accountability by reporting directly to the Administration.

The Department of Neighborhoods will consolidate constituent services - Neighborhood Pride, the Community Relations Commission, Neighborhood Liaisons and 311 Call Center, and will be more accessible to the public.

Through these changes, an efficient and effective department will emerge, allowing for an improved neighborhood focus. The administration of the neighborhood liaison communication program, Neighborhood Pride program and the Neighborhood Pride Centers will be transferred from the Department of Development to the new department. Administration of the 311 Call Center will be transferred from the Department of Public Service to the new Department of Neighborhoods. The Community Relations Commission will also be incorporated into this new department.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no immediate direct fiscal impact associated with this reorganization and associated code changes, however, in the long term, the new department should create operational efficiencies and streamline existing functions. Separate legislation will be forthcoming to propose the transfer of budget authority and authorized strength to this new department.

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested for the new Department of Neighborhoods to become effective on July 1, 2016 to allow for the correct and proper accounting of these organizational changes under the City of Columbus 2016 Operating Budget.

To enact, amend and repeal various sections of the Columbus City Codes to create a new Department of Neighborhoods, to move neighborhood service activities from the Department of Development to the new department, and to move the administration of the Community Relations Commission to the new department, **and to declare an emergency.**

WHEREAS, this ordinance creates the new Department of Neighborhoods and makes the needed code changes to ensure that the new department has all the necessary tools and resources it will need to better deliver more comprehensive services to Columbus' diverse neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, this new department will streamline the reporting structure and increase accountability by reporting directly to the Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Neighborhoods will consolidate constitute services - Neighborhood Pride, the Community Relations Commission, Neighborhood Liaisons and 311 Call Center, and will be more accessible to the public; and

WHEREAS, through these changes, an efficient and effective department will emerge, allowing for an improved neighborhood-focus and greater accessibility for the public; and **now, therefore,**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That Title 2 of Columbus City Codes is hereby supplemented by the enactment of new Chapter 233, entitled "Department of Neighborhoods," and reading as follows:

Chapter 233 - DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

233.01 Department of neighborhoods established.

There is established a department of neighborhoods. The department of neighborhoods shall consist of a director and two (2) department deputy directors. The department of neighborhoods shall have as its primary duties the coordination, management, implementation and promotion of programs to encourage healthy, safe and revitalized neighborhoods. The department of neighborhoods shall perform all other lawful functions as directed by the mayor or ordinance of council.

233.02 Duties of director and deputy director.

The director of the department shall be appointed by the mayor and shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor with a salary fixed by ordinance of council. The director shall have all powers and duties connected with and incident to the appointment, regulation and government of the department of neighborhoods. A deputy director shall serve in the absence of the director.

SECTION 2. That existing Sections 139.01, 139.02, 139.03 and 139.04 of the Columbus City Codes are hereby amended to read as follows:

139.01 - Created, membership-Compensation and term of members-Meetings.

There is hereby created and established ~~in the office of the mayor~~ a commission to be known as the community relations commission, consisting of twenty-three (23) members to be appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council. The mayor, president of council, safety director and two (2) citizens appointed by the mayor shall sit ex officio on the commission. It is important that a community relations commission be fully responsive to the diversity represented by the city of Columbus' various racial, religious, national, cultural and ethnic groups. They shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for expenses actually and necessarily incurred in connection with their duties as members of the community relations commission subject to approval by the department of finance and management. Of the twenty-three (23) members so appointed, eight (8) shall be one (1) year, eight (8) for two (2) years and seven (7) for three (3) years and thereafter appointments shall be for three (3) year terms. In the event of death or resignation of any members, his or her successor shall be appointed by the mayor to serve for the unexpired term for which such member had been appointed. The community relations commission shall meet when necessary to conduct business and shall adopt, by majority rule, such rules as it shall deem expedient for the conduct of its business. Such rules shall be adopted in accordance with Section 121.05 of the Columbus City Codes, 1959.

139.02 - Establishment of department Duties.

The community relations commission is created and established to recommend ways and means of initiating and improving city government programs designed to eliminate discrimination or to remove the effects of past discrimination. In performing this function, the commission shall strive to increase the effectiveness of these programs, to increase the fairness with which these programs are operated and to increase inter-departmental harmony in the operations of these programs. To achieve these objectives the community relations commission shall:

(a) Promote the development of mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious, nationality, cultural and ethnic groups in the city of Columbus by making recommendations to city officials on means to prevent discriminatory

practices against such groups.

- (b) Aid in seeing that no person is deprived of equal services by city government by reason of discrimination on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, political orientation, sexual orientation or handicap.
- (c) Encourage, receive, investigate and evaluate from any person of discrimination by city employees, and make public the procedures which a person may use to complain of discrimination.
- (d) Confer with the city attorney on such complaints pertaining to the city of Columbus or criminal conduct as appear to require a legal process after initial investigation and/or failure to achieve conciliation.
- (e) Initiate and conduct mediation hearings in situations in which the commission has reason to believe that discrimination has occurred.
- (f) Investigate upon request or initiate investigation of racial incidents and make recommendations for corrective action and coordinate efforts toward their resolution.
- (g) Verify information relating to complaints of alleged discrimination practices.
- (h) Formulate, develop and disseminate programs of community information, educational materials, and reports which will assist in the elimination of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination or which promote good will and result in better human relations.
- (i) Coordinate with the city's equal employment officers, local employers, unions, and employment agencies to improve employment opportunities in city government for persons who have been the traditional targets of discrimination in employment.
- (j) Assist community groups and various fraternal, service and benevolent organizations in the promotion of educational campaigns devoted to the elimination of group prejudices, racial or neighborhood tensions, and tolerance and discrimination.
- (k) Conduct research to ascertain the status and treatment of racial, religious, and ethnic groups in the city and the best means of progressively improving human relations in Columbus.
- (l) Cooperate with and render assistance to the mayor's action center, the equal employment opportunity officers and other branches of city government in the area of human rights.
- (m) Cooperate with and render assistance to county, state, federal and other governmental agencies in the area of discrimination.
- (n) Prepare and publish an annual report and such other factual reports and recommendations as it deems necessary concerning problems relating to the discrimination, racial tensions and other human relations concern. Copies of all such reports and recommendations shall be filed with the city council.

139.03 - ~~Budget-Office space Staff.~~

~~The department of neighborhoods shall provide the necessary staff support for the community relations commission shall be granted an annual budget adequate to provide such professional and clerical staff as is reasonable and proper to enable it to carry out its responsibilities, and shall be assigned office space adequate for the conduct of its business and the fulfillment of its duties. The mayor shall act as appointing authority for any employees of the commission.~~

139.04 - Obtaining of factual information.

The obtaining of factual information by the community relations commission in the performance of its duties under this article ~~are~~ is hereby declared to be necessary to its functions. All other departments of the city shall cooperate with the community relations commission, upon its request, relative to the gathering of factual information; provided however that the opinion of the city attorney shall be obtained in such manners as appear to involve some liability on the part of the city.

SECTION 3. That existing Section 139.05 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby repealed in its entirety.

SECTION 4. That existing Section 215.10 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby amended to read as follows:

215.10 - Office of administration.

The office of administration is established as an office of the department of development within the director's office. The office shall have as its primary duties the facilitation of human resources, public information, fiscal, legislative, contracts management, ~~neighborhood liaison communication program~~, and other employee support functions of the department as needed and other duties as may be authorized by the director or ordinance of council.

SECTION 5. That prior existing Sections 139.01, 139.02, 139.03, 139.04 and 215.10 of the Columbus City Codes are hereby repealed and replaced as provided herein.

SECTION 6. ~~That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.~~ **That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.**