



# RAMSEY COUNTY

## **Ramsey County Board Workshop:**

### **Evaluation of Advisory Councils**

County Manager's Office

May 21, 2019

Estimated start: 9:45 a.m.

220 Courthouse, Large Conference Room

## **Agenda**

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|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Introduction          | Janet Guthrie, Director of Administrative Services/Chief Clerk-County Board       |
| 2. Presentation          | Janet Guthrie<br>Lidiya Girma, Senior Policy Analyst<br>Mee Cheng, Policy Analyst |
| 3. Discussion, Questions | All   |

# County Board Workshop: Evaluation of Advisory Councils

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## Today's Purpose and Outcomes

### Review:

- ...evaluation project scope
- ...summary of key themes
- ...staff action plan
- ...recommendation for County Board
- ...next steps

# Advisory Councils' Efficacy in Meeting Community and County Needs

Project Timeframe: January – April 2019

Project Scope:

- Assess current state for effectiveness, representation, value to community and county
- Propose recommendations for improvements

Note: Reference to 'councils' represents advisory councils, committees, commissions, boards and groups

## Project Team: Cross-department effort

- **Co-sponsors:** Janet Guthrie, Elizabeth Tolzmann
- **Core Team:** Anne Barry, Mary Capuzzi, Mee Cheng, Janet Guthrie, Womazetta Jones, Mark McCabe, Elizabeth Tolzmann
- **Work Teams:** Lidiya Girma, Mee Cheng, Abby Goldsmith, Mary Capuzzi, Kristen Jackelen, Katie Haselman, Maria Sarabia, Karen Schreck

## Methods

- Surveys, interviews, focus groups:
  - 32 advisory groups
  - 110 advisory participants
  - 37 staff engaged
- Informational research on councils

## Key Themes

What is working well:

- Opportunity to learn and teach
- Relationship-building and networking
- Variety of perspectives
- Being a community voice
- Taking action – tangible outcomes

## Key Themes (cont.)

What is not working well:

- Lack clarity about purpose and roles
- Under-utilized, lack connection to work
- Lack diverse representation
- Struggle with recruitment, attendance
- Uncertainty about their impact
- Lack of engagement with county leadership
- Lack of dedicated resources



## Key Themes (cont.)

### Systemic / Process issues:

- No county-wide standards, accountability
- By-laws
- Unclear role with County Board
- Barriers to participation
- Lack of transparency
- Wide variation in processes (recruitment, orientation)

# Effective Practices

## IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



- “Residents First” approach
  - Focus on emerging issues, programs/services
- Diverse representation
- Minimize barriers to participation
- Dedicated resources (staff and financial)
- Accountability and transparency regarding impact
- Active engagement from county leaders

## Resulting Actions

### Staff will:

- Realign and leverage existing councils
- Create county-wide standards, processes, accountability
- Develop 'one-stop' countywide website for information and access
- Establish Board Leadership program
- Recruit and recommend appointees (with council representatives)
- Facilitate joint councils meeting 1-2 times/year

## Recommendation for Board Consideration

- Maintain an appointment process for mandated councils with improvements

## Next Steps

- Share findings with advisory groups and staff
- Meet with advisory councils about action plan
- Develop transition and communication plan
- Create board leadership development program
- Develop centralized standards, processes, accountability
- Develop one application for all councils