

Introducer's Memorandum to Recommendation No. 30

Sponsored by Commission Member Andrea Ó Súilleabháin

The intent and purpose of this recommendation to Amend Section 2205 is to add greater accountability, engagement, and efficacy for Advisory Boards. This includes requiring each board to set purpose and objectives, to have criteria for membership, to have a public application process, to publish minutes in a timely manner, to publicly present its annual report in a meeting of the County Legislature, and other requirements outlined below.

Recommendation

Section 2205. Advisory boards. To better fulfill the purpose, responsibilities and goals of each department of the County, or comply with the requirements of NYS law, citizens' advisory boards may be established. Unless otherwise stipulated elsewhere in this charter or through NYS law, advisory boards for Erie County shall be constituted as follows:

1. New advisory boards may be established by the County Executive or the County Legislature. **For each new board, the relevant department will provide a statement of purpose and objectives for approval by the County Executive or the County Legislature.**
2. Advisory boards shall consist of an odd number of members, at least seven and at most fifteen. Members shall be residents of Erie County. **Each board should have criteria for membership to ensure broad representation, including seats for subject matter experts, relevant community representatives, and individuals from underrepresented populations.**
3. Members shall be appointed by the creating authority through a transparent application and selection process. **For each advisory board, the process shall include a public call for applications with public notice of the application requirements.**

4. Members shall serve three-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms; those who have served two consecutive terms shall be eligible again after a two-year absence.
5. The creating authority shall fill any vacancies **through a public application process opened** within sixty days. If a member leaves a board before the end of his or her term, the replacement shall serve for the duration of the term; if the time remaining in the term is less than eighteen months, the replacement shall still be eligible for two consecutive full terms at the conclusion of the partial one.
6. Each advisory board shall elect one of its members to serve a two-year term as chair; no chair may serve more than two consecutive terms.
7. Advisory boards shall meet at least ~~four~~ **six** times per year, and meetings shall be held in compliance with the Open Meetings Law. If a board fails to hold the minimum number of meetings, the creating authority shall investigate why, and is authorized to remove an ineffective chair or any inactive members, or to recommend that the legislature abolish the board when deemed appropriate. **Members with more than three unexcused absences within a year may be removed by the legislature.**
8. **Minutes of each advisory board meeting should be published within ten business days.**
9. Each advisory board chair shall submit an annual report to the County Executive and the Legislature stating the board's accomplishments during the past year and plans for the upcoming year. **Each advisory board should present their annual report publicly to the County Legislature to ensure oversight of their activities and efficacy.**
10. Members of advisory boards shall serve without compensation. **Members are required to complete an ethics acknowledgement form upon appointment and annually thereafter.**

11. To further define their structure and procedures, each advisory board may adopt bylaws that are not in conflict with this section, subject to the approval of the creating authority.
12. Every effort shall be made to achieve diversity on advisory boards. Added by Local Law No. 1-2017.

Introducer's Memorandum to Recommendation No. 31

Sponsored by Commission Member Andrea Ó Súilleabháin

The intent and purpose of this recommendation is to amend Article 2608 to allow Erie County residents to vote on all recommendations adopted by the next Erie County Charter Revision Commission. Rather than sending proposals for approval by the Legislature and County Executive, this would direct all recommendations to public referendum. This is the process utilized in New York City and allows for broader democratic review of Charter amendments.

Recommendation

Section 2608. Charter revision commission. The Erie County Charter shall undergo a mandatory decennial review and the review shall commence by seating a Charter Review Commission by October 15, 2024 which shall report its recommendations to the Erie County Legislature no later than May 15, 2025. **The recommendations for amendment shall be put before voters as ballot proposals. They may be submitted to voters as a question, a series of questions, or alternatives. The Commission Chair and the County Attorney will take all necessary action to effectuate the placement of questions on the ballot for the next general election following the Commission's term.**