

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE February 12th 2024

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Update on Human Rights Commission Discussion**

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide historical context on the establishment of both the Veteran Affairs Commission and Commission on Disabilities to inform the proposed idea to create a Human Rights Commission across multiple human rights areas, including but not limited to non-discrimination (LGBTQIA+), worker's rights, and women's rights. This memo advises on how the Human Rights Commission could function, suggest expertise and lived experience necessary for members, identify potential alignment with existing initiatives, including the FIFA World Cup 2026, and issues in need of further research by OEI and discussion by Workforce, Education and Equity Committee.

Background on Veteran Affairs Commission and Commission on Disabilities

Veteran Affairs Commission:

City Council passed the ordinance to establish the Veteran Affairs Commission (VAC) in January 2021 with a mission to represent Dallas' military veteran community.¹ The VAC is responsible for evaluating and recommending programs, policies, and practices to alleviate veteran difficulty in meeting basic needs, obtaining housing, employment, and comprehensive mental health assistance, as well as serve as a clearinghouse for information relating to the status of veterans in the Dallas community. Convening on a monthly basis, the VAC has been committed to enhancing awareness for resources and advocating for improved housing options for veterans. OEI supports the VAC with coordination efforts.

Commission on Disabilities:

City Council unanimously adopted the ordinance to establish the Disability Commission in December 2021 after earlier consideration of the ordinance by the Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee Mayor Eric Johnson proposed the creation of a 15-member Disability Commission in October 2021, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, to advise City Council on issues related to the "full spectrum of needs, rights, and privileges of people with disabilities"². C. A technical resource panel supports

¹ <https://cityofdallas.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4755071&GUID=C0274714-62C1-4B0A-99DA-931172D8B3C9>

² [https://cityofdallas.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5216758&GUID=2C5E5C94-4087-477F-AB44-D0703E63A9F8&Options=&Search=.](https://cityofdallas.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5216758&GUID=2C5E5C94-4087-477F-AB44-D0703E63A9F8&Options=&Search=)

DATE February 9, 2024

SUBJECT **UPDATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

the Commission and serves on a non-voting basis with nominations by the City Manager. Members should either have lived experience or be committed to advancing the needs of the disabled community. OEI supports the Disability Commission with coordination efforts.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Human Rights Commission could have the unique potential to encompass the concerns that the Veteran Affairs Commission and Commission on Disabilities are discussing and make part of the mainstream human rights conversation. Before proceeding, extensive discussion with both Commissions and the Dallas FIFA World Cup 2026 Host Committee would be needed to ensure effective collaboration and maximum alignment with existing efforts.

Outline of Tentative Purpose and Alignment of Human Rights Commission

Adopt an intersectional approach between human rights issues to advance human rights institutionally and at a grassroots level for the benefit of all Dallasites.

Governance and Structure: The creation of a Human Rights Commission could fulfill its goals through a structure aligned with the FWC2026 Host City Human Rights Framework and organized around three sub-committees:

1. Inclusion and Safeguarding
2. Worker's Rights
3. Access to Remedy

Each sub-committee incorporates intersectional human rights areas, such as Inclusion and Safeguarding bridging non-discrimination, safety and security, disability access, homelessness, and environmental justice, for example. The Commission could further the work to develop the required Human Rights Action Plan by the end of 2024 if additionally supported by an operational advisory group of non-voting members who have the technical expertise needed to advise on how to build out human rights programs at the systems-level. The Access to Remedy sub-committee would be key to Dallas' human rights efforts if it had the capacity to hear, refer, and resolve non-law enforcement related human-rights related grievances. The Human Rights Commission would also fulfill a key aspect of FIFA's expectations that host cities leave a positive human rights legacy since it would remain established after 2026. The Framework is tentatively set to be made public by FIFA by March 25, 2024, and once public we will follow up with a copy so Council Members can view details on FIFA's human rights standards.

Cross-Commission Collaboration: The Human Rights Commission should advance collaboration between existing Commissions with the Chair of the Disability and Veterans Commission each serving as members of the Human Rights Commission, pending first discussions with both commissions.

DATE February 9, 2024
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Ordinance Establishing the Veteran Affairs Commission:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3AscDs%3AUS%3Ac0aae257-c589-36f5-b540-5cf5fd814304&viewer%21megaVerb=group-discover>

Ordinance Establish the Commission on Disabilities:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3AscDs%3AUS%3A5e72b6f6-7c51-3958-ac9a-753d51719710&viewer%21megaVerb=group-discover>

15 memo
Advisory
4 - must be VETS & SERVING

210242

1-11-21

ORDINANCE NO. 31746

An ordinance amending Chapter 2, "Administration," of the Dallas City Code by adding a new Article XXIX, "Veteran Affairs Commission"; providing the creation of the veteran affairs commission; providing the terms, membership requirements, meeting requirements, and functions of the veteran affairs commission; providing a saving clause; providing a severability clause; and providing an effective date. Now, Therefore,

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

SECTION 1. That Chapter 2, "Administration," of the Dallas City Code is amended by adding a new Article XXIX, "Veteran Affairs Commission," to read as follows:

"ARTICLE XXIX.

VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION.

SEC. 2-170. VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - CREATED; TERMS; MEMBERSHIP; MEETINGS.

(a) There is hereby created the veteran affairs commission of the city, which shall be an advisory body of 15 members. Each city council member shall have one appointment to the veteran affairs commission. The mayor shall appoint the chair from among the members, subject to confirmation by the city council, and the full city council shall appoint the vice-chair.

(b) All members shall be appointed for an initial term to expire on September 30, 2021. Thereafter, nominations shall begin in August 2021 and each subsequent odd-numbered year, and members appointed shall serve a two-year term beginning on October 1.

(c) The veteran affairs commission will represent the city's military veteran community. The veteran affairs commission must have a balanced membership reflecting an outstanding interest in or knowledge of veterans' affairs, including having knowledge about veterans' concerns, or being affiliated with a service provider to veterans, and at least four members must be currently serving or have previously served in the United States military (including the Reserves or National Guard).

(d) The veteran affairs commission shall hold monthly meetings or as often as may be necessary. The chair, with assistance of staff, shall schedule and determine the agenda for such meetings.

SEC. 2-171. VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - FUNCTIONS.

(a) The veteran affairs commission shall act as an advisory body to the city manager and the city council and shall:

(1) evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices designed to alleviate veterans' difficulties in meeting basic needs, obtaining housing, employment, and comprehensive mental health assistance;

(2) act as a central clearinghouse for information relating to the status of veterans in the Dallas community;

(3) accumulate information about the needs of veterans in the Dallas community, including available services, and make recommendations to the city council regarding these needs;

(4) recommend ways to:

(A) educate the community on:

(i) the status of veterans' rights and needs; and

(ii) veterans' contributions to our community; and

(B) promote awareness among the public and private sector of veterans' full potential and of the importance of veterans' contributions to the development of the community; and

(5) identify and review the entire range of services available to veterans, and recommend ways to:

(A) strengthen existing services and pursue new services for veterans;

(B) promote collaboration between service providers; and

(C) expand resources available to veterans.

(b) The city manager shall provide staff to assist the commission in performing its duties and responsibilities."

SECTION 2. That Chapter 2 of the Dallas City Code shall remain in full force and effect, save and except as amended by this ordinance.

31746

SECTION 3. That any act done or right vested or accrued, or any proceeding, suit, or prosecution had or commenced in any action before the amendment or repeal of any ordinance, or part thereof, shall not be affected or impaired by amendment or repeal of any ordinance, or part thereof, and shall be treated as still remaining in full force and effect for all intents and purposes as if the amended or repealed ordinance, or part thereof, had remained in force.

SECTION 4. That the terms and provisions of this ordinance are severable and are governed by Section 1-4 of Chapter 1 of the Dallas City Code, as amended.

SECTION 5. That this ordinance shall take effect immediately from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas, and it is accordingly so ordained.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CHRISTOPHER J. CASO, City Attorney

By Casidy Byers
Assistant City Attorney

Passed JAN 27 2021



PROOF OF PUBLICATION – LEGAL ADVERTISING

The legal advertisement required for the noted ordinance was published in the Dallas Morning News, the official newspaper of the city, as required by law, and the Dallas City Charter, Chapter XVIII, Section 7.

DATE ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL JAN 27 2021

ORDINANCE NUMBER 31746

DATE PUBLISHED JAN 30 2021

ATTESTED BY:



Agenda Information Sheet

File #: 20-2517

Item #: 40.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Government Performance and Financial Management

AGENDA DATE: January 27, 2021

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): All

DEPARTMENT: Office of Equity and Inclusion

EXECUTIVE: M. Elizabeth Cedillo-Pereira

SUBJECT

An ordinance amending Chapter 2, "Administration" of the Dallas City Code by adding a new Article XXIX, "Veteran Affairs Commission" to: **(1)** provide the creation of the veteran affairs commission; **(2)** provide the terms, membership requirements, meeting requirements, and functions of the veteran affairs commission; **(3)** provide a saving clause; **(4)** provide a severability clause; and **(5)** provide an effective date - Financing: No cost consideration to the City

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Veteran Affairs Commission is to act as an advisory body to the City Manager and the City Council by evaluating and recommending programs, policies, and practices designed to alleviate veterans' difficulties in meeting basic needs, obtaining housing, employment, and comprehensive mental health assistance; acting as a central clearinghouse for information relating to the status of veterans in the Dallas community; accumulating information about the needs of veterans in the Dallas community, including available services, and making recommendations to the City Council regarding these needs; recommending ways to educate the community and promote awareness among the public and private sector of veterans' full potential and of the importance of veterans' contributions to the development of the community; and identifying and reviewing the entire range of services available to veterans.

The Veterans Affairs Commission will advise the City Council on City-related issues and provide a forum for voicing the concerns of and meeting the needs of the City's veteran's community.

All members shall be appointed for an initial term to expire on September 30, 2021. Thereafter, nominations shall begin in August 2021 and each subsequent odd-numbered year, and members appointed shall serve a two-year term beginning on October 1.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

The Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee was briefed on the draft ordinance on December 14, 2020.

On January 11, 2021, the Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee approved the draft ordinance for recommendation to the City Council.

FISCAL INFORMATION

No cost consideration to the City.

32070

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance amending Chapter 2, "Administration," of the Dallas City Code by amending Article XXI-a; creating a commission on disabilities; providing functions, terms, and meetings of the commission on disabilities; providing definitions; providing duties and responsibilities of the commission on disabilities; providing a saving clause; providing a severability clause; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. That Article XII-a, "Reserved," of Chapter 2, "Administration," of the Dallas City Code is amended to read as follows:

"ARTICLE XXI-a.
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES [RESERVED].

SEC[S]. 2-152.1. COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES - CREATED;
FUNCTION; TERMS; MEETINGS.

(a) There is hereby created a commission on disabilities, which shall be an advisory body of 15 members. Each city council member shall have one appointment to the commission on disabilities. The mayor shall appoint the chair from among the members, subject to confirmation by the city council, and the full city council shall appoint the vice-chair.

(b) All members shall be appointed for an initial term to expire on June 14, 2023. Thereafter, nominations shall begin in September and each subsequent odd-numbered year, and members shall serve a two-year term beginning on October 1.

(c) All voting members of the commission on disabilities shall be residents of the city.

(d) All voting members of the commission on disabilities shall share a commitment to the goals of the commission on disabilities and shall either be persons with disabilities or be committed to the community of disabled persons.

(e) Members shall be broadly representative of the disabled community at large, without dominance by any single disability group.

(f) The commission on disabilities shall meet at least six times a year and may hold additional meetings at the call of the chair.

SEC. [THRU] 2-152.2.**DEFINITION.**

In this article, DISABILITY means the same as the term is defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

SEC. 2-152.3.**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

(a) The commission on disabilities shall be responsible for advising and making recommendations to the mayor, city council, city manager, department directors, and the individual designated by the mayor to head the mayor's initiative on disabilities on issues pertaining to the full spectrum of needs, rights, and privileges of people with disabilities.

(b) The subjects to be addressed by the commission on disabilities include, but are not be limited to:

(1) Developing programs to provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

(2) Developing programs to address accessibility issues.

(3) Developing community-based programs to enhance the quality of life for Dallas residents who have disabilities.

(4) Developing programs to address the issues pertaining to alcoholism and drug abuse.

(5) Developing programs to take full advantage of all federal, state and local funding opportunities.

(6) Developing programs to ensure adequate housing for people with disabilities.

(7) Developing programs to ensure accessible communications for people with disabilities.

SEC. 2-152.4**TECHNICAL RESOURCE PANEL.**

(a) There is hereby created a technical resource panel to be comprised of eight members appointed by the city council to serve as non-voting technical members of the commission on disabilities.

(1) The technical resource panel is not a board or commission subject to Chapter 8 of this code or Chapter XXIV, Section 13 of the city charter.

(2) The city manager may nominate members of the first technical resource panel, as recommended by the Office of Equity and Inclusion for approval by the full council.

(3) Following the initial appointments, future technical resource panel members may be nominated by the city manager, as recommended by the Office of Equity and Inclusion, through consultation with the commission on disabilities, for approval by the full council.

(b) Each member of the technical resource panel shall be an individual with at least four years of experience in disability matters and shall share a commitment to the goals of the commission on disabilities. Additionally, appointments to the panel must, to the extent possible, be representative of the ethnic diversity of the city.

(c) Members of the technical resource panel are not required to be residents of the city or qualified voters in the city.

(d) Members of the technical resource panel shall serve two-year terms and are subject to the same conflict of interest and confidentiality restrictions that are applicable to members of the commission on disabilities. Members of the technical resource panel are subject to forfeiture of membership on the same basis as members of the commission on disabilities.

(e) Members of the technical resource panel shall attend and fully participate in all meetings and deliberations of the commission on disabilities, including closed sessions, but shall not be entitled to vote as members of the commission on disabilities.

(f) The technical resource panel shall use its expertise and experience in disability matters to assist the commission on disabilities to the fullest extent possible in the review of all issues coming before the commission on disabilities.

(g) The technical resource panel does not have any oversight responsibility or oversight authority with respect to the commission on disabilities.

(h) Nothing in this section prohibits the commission on disabilities from seeking additional outside technical expertise and advice as necessary.”

SECTION 2. That Chapter 2 of the Dallas City Code shall remain in full force and effect, save, and except as amended by this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That any act done or right vested or accrued, or any proceeding, suit, or prosecution had or commenced in any action before the amendment or repeal of any ordinance, or part thereof, shall not be affected or impaired by amendment or repeal of any ordinance, or part thereof, and shall be treated as still remaining in full force and effect for all intents and purposes as if the amended or repealed ordinance, or part thereof, had remained in force.

SECTION 4. That the terms and provisions of this ordinance are severable and are governed by Section 1-4 of Chapter 1 of the Dallas City Code, as amended.

SECTION 5. That this ordinance shall take effect immediately from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas, and it is accordingly so ordained.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CHRISTOPHER J. CASO, City Attorney

By  Assistant City Attorney

Passed DEC 11 2021



PROOF OF PUBLICATION – LEGAL ADVERTISING

The legal advertisement required for the noted ordinance was published in the Dallas Morning News, the official newspaper of the city, as required by law, and the Dallas City Charter, Chapter XVIII, Section 7.

DATE ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL DEC 08 2021

ORDINANCE NUMBER 32070

DATE PUBLISHED DEC 11 2021

ATTESTED BY:



Agenda Information Sheet

File #: 21-2263

Item #: 45.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Government Performance and Financial Management

AGENDA DATE: December 8, 2021

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): All

DEPARTMENT: Office of Equity and Inclusion

EXECUTIVE: M. Elizabeth Cedillo-Pereira

SUBJECT

An ordinance amending Chapter 2, "Administration" of the Dallas City Code, Article XXI-a, to: **(1)** create a commission on disabilities; **(2)** provide the functions, terms, and meetings of the commission on disabilities; **(3)** provide definitions; **(4)** provide the duties and responsibilities of the commission on disabilities; **(5)** provide a saving clause; **(6)** provide a severability clause; and **(7)** provide an effective date - Financing: No cost consideration to the City

BACKGROUND

The Commission on Disabilities will be responsible for advising and making recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Department Directors, and the individual designated by the Mayor to head the Mayor's initiative on disabilities on issues pertaining to the full spectrum of needs, rights, and privileges of people with disabilities. The Commission on Disabilities is charged with developing programs to provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities; developing programs to address accessibility issues; developing community-based programs to enhance the quality of life for Dallas residents who have disabilities; developing programs to address the issues pertaining to alcoholism and drug abuse; developing programs to take full advantage of all federal, state and local funding opportunities; developing programs to ensure adequate housing for people with disabilities; and developing programs to ensure accessible communications for people with disabilities.

The Commission on Disabilities will advise the City Council on City-related issues and provide a forum for voicing the concerns of and meeting the needs of the City's diverse disability community.

All members shall be appointed for an initial term to expire on June 14, 2023. Thereafter, nominations shall begin in September and each subsequent odd-numbered year, and members appointed shall serve a two-year term beginning on October 1.

A technical resource panel of up to eight non-voting members will be nominated by the City Manager and appointed by the City Council. This panel is charged with using its expertise and experience in disability matters to assist the commission on disabilities to the fullest extent possible in the review of all issues coming before the commission on disabilities.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

The Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee was briefed on "Consider an Amendment to the Dallas City Code to Create a Commission on Disabilities" on October 12, 2021.

[The Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee was briefed by memorandum on "Consider an Amendment to the Dallas City Code to Create a Commission on Disabilities" on November 8, 2021.](#)

FISCAL INFORMATION

No cost consideration to the City.