

CITIZENS ORDINANCE ADVISORY TEAM
Policy No. 06-04

PURPOSE:

To create an advisory council of citizens for input to the Board of County Commissioners regarding proposed regulatory changes to the Hernando County Code of Ordinances and to set forth the duties and responsibilities of the council.

POLICY:

From time to time, the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) requires advice on matters relating to regulatory ordinances proposed for addition or modification to the Code of Ordinances. An advisory council composed of a cross-section of persons representing community areas and concerns should consider changes to the Code as designated by the Board.

The Citizens’ Ordinance Advisory Team (“COAT”) is created to perform advisory functions set forth in this policy. Nine members shall be appointed by majority vote of the Board after considering applications solicited pursuant to Policy No. 06-1, as amended from time to time, except that current members of the existing informal COAT committee need not submit a formal application to be considered. Of the initial appointees to the re-organized COAT, four shall be appointed for one-year terms and the remaining five shall be appointed for two-year terms as committee members. If more than four persons currently serving on the existing informal COAT committee are granted new appointments pursuant to this policy, four of the appointees shall be chosen by random drawing to serve one-year terms, and the remainder of the persons appointed shall be designated for two-year terms. If four or fewer current committee members are re-appointed, each shall be assigned a one-year term. Each year thereafter, the Board shall solicit applications pursuant to Board policy and fill the seats of any members with expiring terms by majority vote for new two-year terms.

In selecting and voting upon County residents for service on COAT, the Board shall strive to equalize COAT membership with respect to geographic residence location and demographics, such that COAT members fairly represent all areas of the County and are reflective of the total County community of residents.

The Board may appoint a County Commissioner as liaison to COAT, and shall rotate the task of COAT liaison among Board members on a yearly basis. The Board liaison shall act as COAT chairperson, shall have no voting privileges but may participate in general COAT discussions.

The County Code Enforcement Director shall serve as staff to COAT and shall be responsible for providing public notice of COAT meetings, arranging for a meeting room based on reasonably anticipated public attendance, requesting that other staff members attend, and preparing an agenda for each meeting. The agenda for each meeting shall include such matters as have been delegated or assigned to COAT by the Board, and such other matters as to which staff may seek informal guidance or direction. COAT members may also discuss other matters not specifically placed on the agenda, but if consideration of such matters requires staff time and resources for investigation or research, Board authority shall be requested by majority vote of COAT members. In such cases, the Code Enforcement Director shall present such matters by memorandum to the Board. The Board may then assign such matters for COAT consideration by majority vote or consensus, or decline to assign such matters to COAT. Staff investigation or research into issues raised by COAT shall be undertaken only where authorized by the Board.

Meetings shall be noticed and open to the public. COAT may adopt rules of procedure or other internal policies not inconsistent with this policy, subject to legal review. At each meeting of COAT, the Committee shall consider such matters as have been delegated by the Board or otherwise scheduled by agenda placement for discussion, review and advice. Staff may cancel any scheduled meeting prior to formal public notice if there are no items for review as of that date.

COAT may make formal written recommendations with respect to advice to the Board on additions or modifications to ordinances and may make informal recommendations to be conveyed to the Board by the Board liaison or staff.

Members of COAT serve at the pleasure of the Board and may be removed by majority vote of the Board in the event of unexcused absences, failure to comply with this policy or other directions of the Board, or for any other reason, with or without cause. In the event of any vacancy in COAT's membership as designated by this policy, a new member shall be selected and appointed pursuant to the terms of this policy for initial appointments, with specific consideration given to geographic and demographic balance for COAT to reflect the Hernando County community of residents.

Adopted: July 29, 2003